

John de Lancie Master Classes

By Carrie Vecchione
Muncie, Indiana

Eminent oboist **John de Lancie** was on the campus of Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana from August 16-20, 1997 to teach a five-day series of master classes. These unique classes allowed those in attendance to become acquainted with the man who, to name a few achievements, was principal oboe of the Philadelphia Orchestra for over twenty years, who was also the teacher at the Curtis Institute from 1977 to 1985. The focus of the classes was basic musicianship. The only musical materials studied were the articulation studies and the progressive melodies from the Barret *Oboe Method*.

Twelve participants representing high school to the seasoned professional level were chosen to perform in the classes. Each performer received individual time with Mr. de Lancie in two different sessions for 40 minutes at each class. This extended time proved very beneficial



John de Lancie explaining an idea during a master class.

to the performers who all seemed to improve noticeably. Each class also included time for Mr. de Lancie to lecture on special topics. Some lectures included: the basics of musicianship, the history of pitch, the history of the Strauss *Oboe Concerto*, and conductors - the elements necessary to make a conductor effective - with an inspiring film of Fritz Reiner. There was also time for extended question and answer sessions and some very interesting stories were told about Tabuteau, the Curtis Institute, Richard Strauss, and the story behind the commission of *The Flower Clock* by Jean Françaix. Aside from the film of Fritz Reiner, Mr. de Lancie also brought a fascinating video about the life of Richard Strauss, and another video of the Philadelphia



(L to R) Carrie Vecchione, John de Lancie, David Weber and Ferald Capps.

woodwind quintet - which also included an interview with **Marcel Tabuteau**.

The daily schedule included a morning and an evening class with Mr. de Lancie. In the afternoon there were optional extra sessions - a trip to the Fox Factory in South Whitley, IN, a talk about cane in France by Guy Hardy, a demonstration of oboe maintenance by Carlos Coelho, and a final get together and cookout.

Two days before the master classes began **David Weber** and **Ferald Capps** were also on campus to teach the Reed Maker's Workshop. This workshop marked its second year at Ball State University. Reedmaking in the Tabuteau Philadelphia style was discussed with Mr. Weber and Mr. Capps offering much insightful information in lectures. The participants were also able to put the information into practice with the two instructors walking around the room and spending much one-on-one time with individuals during the sessions. This workshop proved an invaluable prelude to the master classes, as participants first learned about the reeds in the Workshop and then how to put them into use in the master classes.

Participants and auditors in both the Reed Maker's Workshop and the John de Lancie Master Classes came from all parts of the country. With such respected and accomplished teachers such as John de Lancie and David Weber and Ferald Capps, it was an exciting week of learning about the Philadelphia-style of reed making and playing. ❖