

## Robert Langevin Dazzles at Flute Fair

Guest artist Robert Langevin, renowned principal flutist of the New York Philharmonic, and pianist Irina Lupines kicked off the RFA's Flute Fair with a stunning recital at Hochstein School of Music and Dance on November 7<sup>th</sup>. Although we all know of Mr. Langevin's prowess in the orchestral setting, it is a rare opportunity to hear him in a solo format, and what a treat it was! The evening's program ran the gamut from elegance and restraint to boldness and virtuosity, and Langevin's carefully honed and polished tone left the audience hanging on to every single note.

Langevin began the program with the *Three Romances* of Robert Schumann, and with these lyrical pieces he set the stage for a magical evening. The weaving of the flute and piano lines evoked an ancient German fairy tale, and Langevin's silvery, spinning sound narrated each movement with an air of eloquence and experience. Langevin and Lupines brought a renewed sense of imagination and variety to these beloved and well-worn pieces.

The audience was perhaps most excited to hear Langevin's interpretation of Debussy's unofficial ode to the flute, *Prelude a l'apres-midi d'un faune*, here arranged for flute and piano. From his orchestral background Langevin clearly has a deep-rooted understanding and love of Debussy's orchestral scoring of *Faune* that shone throughout in his incredible sensitivity, nuance, and shading. From the opening solo to the final notes, Langevin and Lupines successfully created a mesmerizing soundscape that deftly captured the colors of the orchestra while remaining true to the intimacy of the singing and sinuous voice of the solo flute.

Langevin wove the Debussy into a beautiful dream that only began to fade as he started the next piece, a lesser-known work by Jacques Hetu, a composer who shares Langevin's French Canadian heritage. Hetu's *Quatre Pieces pour flute et piano* broke the ethereal atmosphere of the Debussy and the Schumann with a wild opening followed by music that was at times angular, and other times lyrical. The abstraction of Hetu's music lent it an air of novelty on the program of mostly older works.

The final piece of the program, a flute transcription of Richard Strauss's violin sonata, allowed for the boldest playing of the night from both Langevin and Lupines. Whereas the first half of the program had centered on atmosphere and finesse, both the flute and the piano took on more extroverted, dramatic roles here. Elements of Strauss's orchestral and operatic works appear throughout the sonata, providing a showcase of Langevin's huge spectrum of timbre and artistry, which moved nimbly between delicate tenderness and brilliant grandeur.



The Strauss was such a tour de force performance that Langevin returned for two encores, brief pieces by Faure and Debussy that held the audience captive with their elegant simplicity.

Langevin's playing throughout the evening was perfectly refined, luxurious, and effortless while remaining entirely unpretentious. It was truly a special night, a model performance not only for the flutists in attendance, but for all musicians striving to play beautifully and from the heart. Langevin left the audience enchanted, inspired, and rejuvenated by the power of his simply outstanding performance. Many thanks to Mr. Langevin and Ms. Lupines for an evening that will not soon be forgotten!

-Emlyn Johnson

# Rochester Flute Association

## Mission

- To promote the enjoyment and appreciation of the flute.
- To assist members in achieving musical excellence.
- To facilitate an exchange of ideas among flutists, teachers, and flute enthusiasts.

## Membership Rates for September 2014-August 2015

Corporate \$80; Contributor \$50; Family \$30; Adult \$20; Student \$10

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Kudos, Events, Classified Ads, and news articles may be sent to the editor at the email address above. Deadline for the spring issue is March 15.

The Rochester Flute Association is a registered non-profit organization. Contributions are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by the law.

## Letter from the President

Congratulations to all for the wonderful 2014 RFA Flute Fair. So many people worked hard to bring the fair to life, with outstanding feedback from those who attended. This is a very supportive flute community.



We were privileged to hear Robert Langevin in recital, and very pleased that he shared so much with us at Flute Fair. Thank you again to our special guest artist, flute fair committee, and all participants.

I will be back later in the spring with some

stories, words of wisdom, and hints for keeping up with your fluting! Have a very happy New Year!

*-Sally Ann Hart*

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All photos from Flute Fair used in this issue were taken by Angela Possemato.  
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## Top 11 “Take-Aways” from Flute Fair Day with Robert Langevin

Robert Langevin, principal flutist of the New York Philharmonic, generously shared his expertise with all of us who attended the Flute Fair on November 8th. He gave thoughtful, practical advice at the Q&A session, and imparted terrific tips to the five fabulous flutists who performed at his masterclass: Susan Walders (*Piston Sonata*), Hannah Hammel (*Liebermann Sonata*), Christy Kim (Schubert “*Trockne Blumen*” *Introduction and Variations*), Lauren Scanio (*Dutilleux Sonatine*), and Anna Miller (Bach *E Major Sonata*). In lieu of a traditional narrative of these sessions, I have distilled his advice into eleven important points, as follows:



1. “Theme of the Day”—Pay attention to your airstream!  
This was pretty important and Mr. Langevin demonstrated this in different ways. The basic principle is to use more air when playing *pianissimo*, and not to blow so much when playing *forte*. (This idea is so important that it reappears in several of the other points that follow.)
2. Practicing harmonics can help us feel how support works. The softer you play, the more support you need. Review page six of the Trevor Wye’s Tone Book (a resource highly recommended by Mr. Langevin) and practice harmonics both *pp* and *ff*. Refer to point #1.
3. The way to play long phrases is to use the air more efficiently. Don’t push! Let the instrument do the work. Don’t blow so much—it will just be sharp and you’ll have to breathe extra. Imagine you’re playing *mp* instead of *forte*. Just use an open embouchure and vibrato. Refer to point #1.
4. Make sure we hear *all* the notes in runs and practice slower. If not, you might get a speeding ticket . . . Remember, chances are you’ll be nervous in the performance and play faster anyway!
5. When working on Baroque music, it really helps to listen to recordings made on the period instruments because these performers have done so much research on the style of a time so far removed from us. We can learn a lot from their careful study.
6. You as the performer are allowed to question the tempo markings . . . and make adjustments if necessary. Ultimately, you have to like the tempo you are playing. The Schubert *Variations* are indeed based on a tragic love story, but if you play the opening too slowly the flutist might not make it either! Same considerations apply for the opening of the Liebermann *Sonata*. Sometimes composers will write a tempo or metronome marking faster than the one they actually want because they think performers will always play a little slower.
7. When choosing college audition repertoire, play something that shows your best qualities and don’t play something too hard. If you can play at a level 10, plan on a level 9 piece and just focus on the music. Also, be sure to perform your program for someone, somewhere before the audition.
8. This is great to know: The committee listening to your audition is pulling for you! They WANT you to do a good job!
9. Technical studies are like vegetables—you must “eat” them before enjoying the dessert of the solos. (Mr. Langevin learned four etudes per week in college; finished four books in a year; graduated with 16 etude books mastered . . . Lots of healthy vegetables pay off great dividends!)
10. Tailor your warm-ups to address your problems. A helpful tone exercise from Mr. Langevin: Practice your 2-note long tones as an echo, *forte* and then *piano*, with *no breath* in between the group of 4 notes. Pay attention to your air stream as you play softer. Play the four notes first without vibrato, then with vibrato. Use a tuner as a visual aid to train your ear. Refer to point #1.
11. Daily long tone practice is like taking a shower or brushing your teeth. Don’t go through your day with it!

OK, now a piece of bonus trivia for those who missed the Q&A session.

Fill in the blank (answer on pg. 6):

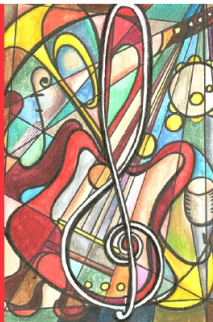
Mr. Langevin used to have a pet \_\_\_\_\_ who would sit at his feet whenever he practiced his flute, enraptured with his music.

- A. DOG      B. RABBIT      C. CAT      D. ARMADILLO

-Sophia Gibbs Kim

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## What Makes a Good Teacher? Teaching the Adult Flutist

On Saturday morning of Flute Fair about two dozen musicians gathered to discuss good teaching, and the nature and unique needs of the adult flute student. Facilitated by Kate Sussman, participants first considered differences between adult and young learners.

“We worry more!” someone started. “No differences at all!” said a music teacher. “All ages bring the same excuses!” We all laughed, but we were off and running.

“Adults bring a lifetime of experiences and expectations. They know Rampal and Galway, so they can be very hard on themselves,” said a teacher initiating a recurrent theme. However, if adults bring high standards, they also bring an appreciative frame of mind. “Older students are enthusiastic. It’s an absolute joy to teach them,” said a teacher who works with students as old as age 87. Adults consider their goals and the “whys” of their playing. Their commitment and motivation are often enhanced by their knowledge of the repertoire. They more actively participate in their learning. “Younger students often don’t know what to ask,” said one teacher. “I like it when adults say, ‘I want to learn \_\_\_\_\_. I don’t understand \_\_\_\_\_.’”

“Often we as adults value the process more than the goal or product,” one woman said. “We enjoy being in ensembles. Ensemble playing nurtures close friendships. We also enjoy practicing in the peace of our own homes.”

A good teacher understands different learning styles and notices the unique challenges and desires of each student.

As flutists age, physical challenges increase. Problems seeing and hearing may increase. Muscular tensions and arthritis can be frustrating. One accomplished amateur flutist said that he couldn’t practice more than 1 ¼ hours a day, and stressed that everyone should take a 10 minute break to prevent strains, especially shoulder strains. Adaptations – the correct glasses, hearing aids, earplugs and/or Bo Peps can help. A good teacher can recommend a physical therapist for breathing and stretches. Again, a good teacher listens, notices, and offers suggestions tailored to individual student needs. A good teacher has realistic expectations for each student.

Accepting that aging is inevitable, participants were glad to hear that playing a musical instrument may delay the onset of Alzheimer’s by five years!

Even our one pedagogical question fit into the overall theme. “When,” asked a young teacher, “do you stay the course and when do you try a new technique, a different way of explaining or showing?”

“I find,” an experienced teacher offered, “that with adults you stay your course a little longer. Let them process. With a younger student you would jump more quickly because their minds jump quickly. But,” she emphasized, “ask around.”

Ask around. Our discussion concluded with this advice: Seek the help of the village. Look for courses at Oasis (e.g. in music theory). Play duets with teachers and fellow musicians. Seek out master classes – live and online. Listen to CDs and You Tube. Seek out free, 5-8 week courses in music from [coursera.org](http://coursera.org).

It takes a village.... As always, thank you, RFA!

-Kate Sussman



Kate Sussman (on the right) leads and listens to the discussion.



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## Flute Fair Competitions Display Exceptional Talent

This year's RFA Flute Fair competitions for flute and piccolo showcased seventeen competitors of impressive musical ability from areas of upstate New York and northern Ohio.

The annual flute performance competition, which took place on Friday, November 7<sup>th</sup> at the Hochstein School of Music and Dance, was divided into two categories. The College/Emerging Artist category included nine players who are currently in a college music degree program or recently completed such a program. The required music was the first and third movements of Copland's "Duo for Flute and Piano," as well as a piece of their own choosing. The five players in the High School category each performed Honegger's "Danse de la Chevre" and a second piece which they selected themselves.

Judges for the flute competition included Ms. Emi Ferguson, a popular performing flutist in the New York City area and former Adjunct Professor at SUNY Buffalo; Dr. Christine Moulton, Professor of Flute at Mansfield University; and Dr. Alan Woy, former Professor of Clarinet at SUNY Potsdam's Crane School of Music. The competition was coordinated by Philip Nash.

Lengthy deliberation by the judges resulted in the following decisions. The winner of the College/Emerging Artist competition was Martha Chan, a student at the Eastman School of Music. Honorable Mentions in this category were awarded to Esther Efthimiou who studies at Houghton College, and Turi Scilipoti who is also an Eastman student. In the High School category the winner was Lauren Scanio from Clarence Center, New York, with an Honorable Mention awarded to Anna Miller of Spencerport, New York.

The biennial Frank and Mary Louise George Memorial Piccolo Competition took place on Saturday, November 8<sup>th</sup> at French Road Elementary School. This event is sponsored by Rita George Simmons in memory of her parents. Three college level players each performed the second movement of Lowell Liebermann's "Concerto for Piccolo," as well as another piece selected on their own.

Co-coordinators for the piccolo competition were Jan Angus and Cassie Dries. The judging panel consisted of Wendy Mehne, Professor of Flute at Ithaca College; local flutist and piccolo player Diane Peters, who has significant orchestral piccolo experience; and Diane Smith, a member of the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra and faculty member of the Hochstein School.

The judges chose Benton Gordon as the piccolo competition winner. He is a student at the Eastman School of Music.

The three winners performed their competition pieces for an appreciative audience at the annual Flute Fair Winners' Recital. Each player received a monetary award as well as a decorative wall plaque to commemorate their outstanding participation in this exciting event.



Winners (L to R): Lauren Scanio, Martha Chan, and Benton Gordon

-Philip Nash

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# Kudos!

Annie Chen performed in Area All-State Band on Nov. 7/8. She is a 9th grader at Pittsford Mendon High School, and a student of Joanna Bassett.

Lisa Abe performed in Area All-State Orchestra on Nov. 7/8, and the 2014 Hochstein Junior Wind Symphony. She is in 8th grade at Barker Road Middle School, and a student of Joanna Bassett.

This fall, Heather Havens was selected to participate in NYSSMA's Area All-State High School Orchestra and Conference All-State Symphonic Band. She is in 11th grade at Spencerport High School, and is a student of Joanna Bassett.

In November, Kyle Yuan performed in Area All-State Jr. High Band (1st chair); Radha Pandya performed in Sr. High Area All-State Band; and Anna Miller performed in Area All-State Sr. High Orchestra. They are all students of Sophia Gibbs Kim.

Congratulations to RFA member/former Newsletter editor, Julie Smith, on the birth of her second son. Owen Nicholas Smith was born on October 30th, 2014 and is welcomed by Julie, her husband Roy, and big brother James who just turned 3.

## A few more photos from events at Flute Fair:



Above: (L) Annette Farrington leads *The Complete Flute Warm-Up*; (R) Susan Gates leads a flute choir reading session

R: Wendy Herbener Mehne, flute, and Pablo Cohen, guitar, perform *Pan American Music*



L: Juliana May Pepinsky and Elizabeth Shuhan perform works for two flutes by contemporary female composers

Teachers are encouraged to submit student kudos to the newsletter editor. The deadline for the spring issue is March 1.

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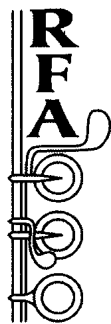
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## 🎵 Events Calendar 🎵

<b>Saturday, January 3</b>	<b>1:00 p.m.- 4:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Pre-Solo Festival - to register visit <a href="http://rfaonline.org">rfaonline.org</a>; submit the online application under the education tab; deadline Dec. 22, 2014</b>	<b>Hochstein School of Music &amp; Dance 50 N. Plymouth Ave. Rochester, NY</b>
Thursday, January 22	7:30 p.m.	Telos Trio: Chapel Concerts by Candlelight "Gathering Light" A program of music and readings focusing on inspirational points of light that will warm your spirits; <i>Free and open to the public</i>	Third Presbyterian Church 4 Meigs St. Rochester, NY
Friday, January 23	7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.	Masterclass with Demarre McGill; Free and open to the public, with a required reservation; visit <a href="http://bpo.org/tickets-and-events/events">bpo.org/tickets-and-events/events</a> for tickets and more information	Kleinhans Music Hall 3 Symphony Circle Buffalo, NY
Saturday, January 24	8:00 p.m.	Happy Birthday, Mozart! - Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra concert; program includes Demarre McGill, <i>flute</i> , and Yolanda Kondonassis, <i>harp</i> , performing Mozart's Concerto for flute and harp in C major; visit <a href="http://bpo.org">bpo.org</a> for tickets	Kleinhans Music Hall 3 Symphony Circle Buffalo, NY
Sunday, January 25	2:30 p.m.		
Thursday, February 19	7:00 p.m.	Marla Smith, <i>flute</i> ; Master's Degree Recital; works by Villa-Lobos, Debussy, Piazzolla, and Schubert	Hatch Recital Hall Eastman School of Music 26 Gibbs St. Rochester, NY
<b>Saturday, April 18</b>	<b>9:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m.</b>	<b>FLUTOPIA - a day of educational and fun activities for flutists grades 3-8 and their families! Look for more information at <a href="http://rfaonline.org">rfaonline.org</a></b>	<b>French Road Elementary School 488 French Rd. Rochester, NY</b>

**Bold face indicates an RFA-sponsored event. Teachers and performers are encouraged to submit events and performances to the newsletter editor. Deadline for the spring issue is March 15.**