

Dear RCers,

While most of us have been away for the summer months, a few stalwarts have been exceedingly busy with the work of the Renaissance Chorus Association. We present here Sig's detailed summary of the recording of Harold's music to date, followed by other news items of interest to friends of the Renaissance Chorus. And please take note of Sig's special appeal at the end of this newsletter.

SIG's JOURNAL: THE READING and RECORDING of HAROLD BROWN'S WORK

May 22 THE READING:

We are thrilled to report that Juilliard room 529 resounded with great music, great spirits and supreme musicianship of great artists.

The Tessera Quartet:

Emily Daggett Smith, Violin I (1935, 1932), Violin II (1930)

Cordelia Paw, Violin II (1935, 1932), Violin I (1930)

Edward Klorman Viola I

Karen Ouzounian, Cello

And Louise Schulman, Viola II (1935)

We look forward to tomorrow's recording session, to which Marc Aubort invited me to help out. What an honor: to assist a six times Grammy Winner! At the reading were our own VP/webmaster/editor/conductor John Hetland, Dorrie, Theo & I, Marc Aubort and his wife Esther, who also keeps the recording logs, etc., Josh Mailman, who will do the record notes, our friend, composer Roger Blanc, Ed's cousin visiting from London, producer-engineer Marcos Klorman and his friend, video/photo/musician, Evelyn Velleman, and conductor Alexandra Ludwig the daughter of noted engineer Bob Ludwig, incidentally a colleague of Marc. Several had friends in common and the atmosphere was convivial. The program started in reverse chronological order with the 1935 Quintet. By now we knew to expect the great Brownian mode changes, they remain as amazing as ever. The 1932+ Quartet received its best rendition in our memory. We are unclear about when the second movement was completed and think it may be the last composed by Harold. Letters indicate a very long gestation period.

The surprise, saved for last, was the 1930 Bearns Prize-winning quartet. This is a sprawling 4 movement work of large ambition, effective contrasts and technical security belying the work of a 20 year old. As Ed observed, there is influence and inspiration from Richard Strauss. Josh remarked it had the sound of 1895. I detected a Cesar Franck influence which may have accounted for Nadia Boulanger's admiration. Although impressive without need for excuse, Harold never allowed it an opus number; I think he felt it too influenced to stand as a sole reflection of his developed harmonic language. All the works required and received virtuoso playing and great ensemble. We are VERY fortunate. Marc congratulated the ensemble who had been working on this for a month for their preparation.

May 27 THE RECORDING SESSIONS:

You will note that from our description of the May 22 Juilliard readings that Tessera really has the work(s) in its blood. The recording sessions conducted by Marc Aubort showed the hard work behind and beyond that accomplishment: the precision and infinite tuning, harmonic and blending care were something to behold. I followed score and noted if I saw a disconnect between score and performance - there were some variances to resolve between the 1930 score and the parts! In all, Marc followed the quartet's lead - they knew exactly what to redo, when a finger or bow slipped, when timing was off. Sometimes they were satisfied but Marc would perceive a passing jet or street noise so repeats were required. In all, 118 separate tracks were recorded: nine movements spread out three per session. No dissension or ego was apparent, all the fire was in the performance. The degree of friendship and mutual support was itself impressive. Chamber music is for them a calling! Esther (Marc's wife) recorded the detailed logging required. The post-production editing will occur after mid-June.

August 7

Sadly, on July 30th, Marc lost Esther, his dear wife of 49 years. They both came from the same small town in Switzerland. Esther helped Marc, keeping the logs at our recording sessions and at many venues where her friendliness was valued by all. We are glad she had the pleasure of hearing Harold's work in concert at Juilliard. On their CD, "A Feast for the Senses" -- Marc's last June recording, which I recommend to all -- our colleagues the TENET vocal ensemble have a beautiful picture and dedication to Esther. We will do the same. Work on the HB project was temporarily suspended due to Esther's passing and a subsequent accident that landed Marc three weeks in Norwalk hospital. By late September, Marc had returned to work in his office with ongoing physical therapy.

October 13

We are happy to report that our esteemed engineer-producer Marc Aubort has recovered, after three weeks in hospital, from his injury sufficiently to resume processing the artists' notes about the proofs. This extraordinary collaboration in face of personal loss is inspiring to all. Esther Aubort was an integral part of the track logging procedure, supplemental of course to 49 years of a famously deeper one. The consolidation of notes is the Tessera role of Cordelia Paw, and the first stage is the 1930 quartet. We are grateful for her work. We, of course, are awaiting the professional work, and the careful, systematic approach inspires confidence.

The HB project continues... At last report Cordelia Paw is collating the Tessera Quartet notes for Marc. It's hoped they will be processed and sent to ALBANY Records, who expect all materials by February. Additional costs of processing, as well as our ordering CDs for our Alumni and Kickstarter Supporters ALBANY will require us to order a minimum of 100 at \$5 each. If you want more than one CD for gifting, please contact us so we may order accordingly. We also ask that you share this information with other alumni and former

students. If you are associated academically, please call to the attention of your teaching and library staffs. You can listen to concert previews at www.RenaissanceChorus.org. Once again, these works are beautiful, original, and passionately realized by the finest players on the scene.

In the near future, we will be holding a launch Concert/Party to honor our artists and begin the 'marketing' effort and encourage you to participate in any way you can. We'll keep you informed of time and place.... We estimate a minimum of \$2,200 is needed to wrap up our HB Project work and that this sum is required by December. We have been able to raise money elsewhere - the family of Harold Brown, the Aaron Copland Foundation, Kickstarter donors - for which we are extremely grateful. We count on you for the financial support needed to bring this project to completion. Please give generously through Paypal on our website homepage or mail a check payable to Renaissance Chorus Association to Dorrie Rosen, Treasurer, 116 Pinehurst Avenue, #B61, New York 10033.

Other News from our circle: Founding members and former officers Rowena (Staplefeldt) & Hugh Rosenbaum are associated with I Fagiolini, which just won the prestigious Gramophone prize as THE Best recording - the amazing Striggio 40-voice mass. Congratulations!

We wish to call your attention to James Gollin's recent book: "Pianist"- a biography of Harold's friend Eugene Istomin. It contains the clearest exposition of Harold's aesthetic as well as his undeniable personality quirks, which were not as apparent to his later choristers and students. It clearly is important witness for the historian as well as a fascinating read. James, former editor of Early Music America, was closely associated with HB's performance circle and recordings.

We are continuing our efforts to explore and perform the work of Harold's "discovery," Heinrich Finck, c.1444/5-1527". There is now a Facebook page for same. Our circle seems alone in this! A project in mind could be to make widely available Harold's pioneering recording of his Missa à 3. Please indicate if you are interested in this or other recordings.

If in New York on October 31, 2011, Harold's birthday, please join us for dinner at the Kismat Restaurant, Fort Washington Avenue at 187th street, and a toast to HB and our good fortunes in being part of this circle! We will have a short Association meeting to update all the project news, and also expect a surprise.... Please indicate if you are coming and wish to see the agenda.

All best wishes from the RCA board,

Sig Rosen, president
John Hetland, vice-president

Dorrie Rosen, treasurer
Ruth Horowitz, corresponding secretary
Andras Vig, member

P.S.
Dear Supporters,

A gross listing of donations to the RCA since the Centennial shows the following:

Post-2009 Centennial 2010:	9 donations	\$ 613
2011:	17 donations	2,215
2011 (Kickstarter):	61 donations	2,786
Total:	87 donations	5,614

I feel this is an impressive result, considering that many donations, particularly through KickStarter, came from those without direct contact with Harold Brown and the Chorus! We wish to acknowledge especially the Barbara Bell Cummings Foundation for their grant of \$1,000. We thank John Hetland for his role. The \$3,000 Copland Fund grant is not listed as it is applied directly to ALBANY records for their development. A few, particularly family members, contributed several times as well as working on many essential facets of this project, and we are especially grateful for their inspiration and trust.

We believed the Kickstarter project would have been the ticket to releasing the HB CD set; unfortunately, that is not the case, and we are still in need of an estimated \$2,200 by December. We are looking to you, the alumni, for your support now.

The costs for the Harold Brown project were as we planned; our total expenditure to date is \$11,965.85. The last stage of the project requires the manufacture and marketing of a minimum of 100 CDs, which we know means \$1,000 is still owed to ALBANY Records. An unknowable amount of final editing costs is driven by the artists' needs, payment for record notes and the cost of a launch party.

Please take note: the total number of donations for this project from our alumni and others in 2011 was only 17(!) So we're thinking, very few indeed of our 117 alumni have chipped in so far. And we're also thinking, this is such a great project that 61 people outside our organization believed in its importance and gave generously. So if you haven't yet kicked in whatever you think you can afford, please do it now. We ask you to help in completing this noble task; it 'belongs' in a real way to the givers. The estimate of \$2,200 is only an estimate, but we do need immediate funding if the project is to end happily.

Sincerely,
Sig