

Wednesday Editor's Summary – Gary Mortenson, ITG Publications Editor

With the first full day of the conference behind us the ITG Conference Reporting Team submitted a full slate of reports that will be presented in their entirety in the October issue of the *ITG Journal*. I was struck by the variety and quality of the events conference attendees experienced throughout the day. Here is a summary of all that transpired on a jam-packed day of non-stop music making.

Stephanie Beatty reported on the **Early Morning Warm Up** session: “Roy Poper, the associate professor of trumpet at the Oberlin Conservatory, conducted the Wednesday Warm-Up session, which focused on the James Stamp Method. There was a large crowd, and at the start he exclaimed, “Never in my wildest dreams did I think I’d see this many trumpet players ready and willing to warm up this early in the morning!” After opening remarks, Poper engaged the audience in this lecture/activity by leading them in many mouthpiece buzzing techniques and excerpts on the trumpet in the style of the James Stamp exercises.”

Paul Mueller’s report on the **Composers Forum** began: “This year’s composer forum brought together Stanley Friedman, David Gillingham, Erik Morales, and Bruce Yurko. Prompted by questions from the audience, the composers shared their views on a wide array of topics ranging from compositional process and the art of manuscript to the creation of new music for young musicians and the wide use of grade levels for band music. The composers stressed that although composition requires a great deal of patience, every musician should try to compose.”

Eric Starnes had this to say about a session devoted to **Growing Old Gracefully** as a trumpeter: “Brian Evans and Don Roeder presented an informative and enjoyable class on a subject that either already is, or in time will be, applicable to all of us! Don Roeder detailed his problems after coming back after a hiatus. His biggest problems included aging health problems, breathing, and muscle use. Both Evans and Roeder pushed the importance of keeping to a consistent exercise schedule to keep the body in the best condition for trumpet playing. They both expressed that the most important thing to do to keep yourself in shape as you age is ‘basics, basics, basics.’”

Neville Young’s opening paragraph for the wildly entertaining **Meridian Arts Ensemble** concert is given here. “With this stunning program the Meridian Arts Ensemble provided just the stimulus your jaded and jet-lagged reporter needed for ITG 2009’s first morning. The concert celebrated *Timbrando*, Meridian’s ninth CD, but added a couple of other pieces. Board member David Baldwin, introducing Meridian, told us, ‘these guys are crazy ... crazy good’ and spoke of their ‘cutting edge playing’ – it turns out that he was right on both counts.” You’ll just have to ready your October *Journal* to get the full scoop on this amazing concert from one of ITG’s best writers!

Richard Tirk began his report with these words: “Attendees of Denver Dill’s clinic knew they were in for something different as they were handed an ‘Official Trumpet Lecture Barf-Bag’ when they walked in the door. Dill’s clinic focused on symptoms, prevention,

and recovery from **Orbicularis Oris Injuries**. The session started with Dill's assertion that musicians often ignore signs of injury and continue playing, and that this often leads to more serious damage."

Paul Mueller's report on the **Stephen Burns/Frits Damrow Recital** included the following:

"Trumpeters Stephen Burns and Frits Damrow shared the stage to perform a recital that was impressively diverse. Burns began the concert with Karlheinz Stockhausen's *Aries*. On a number of different levels this composition (with pre-recorded electronic sounds) is a demanding work for both the musician to perform and for the audience to grasp... The program continued with a beautiful rendition of Copland's *Quiet City* performed on trumpet and flugelhorn with Frits Damrow performing the English Horn part on flugelhorn. *Quiet City* is all about contrast and the two soloists performed with the sensitivity and power this piece requires as it unfolds." From there Mueller went on to discuss additional repertoire on the program that included offerings from David Stock on the contemporary side, to Handel, Neruda, and Vivaldi on the Baroque/Classical side.

Neville Young had this to say about one of the afternoon sessions: "Tom Dambly's "**Technology for Trumpet Geeks**" clinic gave us an interesting trip through some of the key ideas of recording and live technology as they apply to the trumpet. Dambly, a clear and enthusiastic presenter, gave us definitions and effective examples to get us up to speed on the differences between sound data and performance data." He concluded by saying, "This was a fascinating session for all who attended!"

Stephanie Beatty drew the assignment to cover a recital devoted to **U.S. Military Trumpet Soloists**. Her report included the following: "*Absolutely amazing!* These were the words that came from a fellow audience member in regard to the Celebration of Military Soloists concert. Throughout the entire performance, the soloists – Eric Lopez, Karl Sweedy, Kelly Watkins, Amy McCabe, and Luke MacDonald – impressed the crowd through their demonstration of excellent musicianship and complete control of the trumpet. Every performer expressed wide ranges, much lyrical movement, flawless technical skill, and tremendous consistency."

ITG Vice President/President Elect Kevin Eisensmith's had this to say about **Ambrose Akinmusire's Jazz Recital**: "He began his program with three original works, moving seamlessly from one tune to the next in what became a 40-minute long "set." Included were *Confessions to My Unborn Daughter*, *Aroca*, and *Henya*. Next came three standards in the jazz repertoire, ending with a trumpet-and-piano-only rendition of *In a Sentimental Mood*. Akinmusire's sound is both sweet and powerful; his musical lines imaginative and varied."

Richard Tirk's comments on a recital by the **Charles Lazarus Quartet** included: "Lazarus adeptly wailed on a full arsenal of trumpets throughout the show that mainly featured his original compositions. The group's 2008 CD release, *Zambava*, is named after widely used term for music centered parties in Eastern Europe. The group performed several selections from the album including *Gypsy Dances* and *Melelani*

Smiles... Lazarus' fantastic sound and blazing solos were well supported by the other members of the ensemble who had plenty of opportunities to shine in their own ways during the performance."

Comments from Gary Mortenson on the **New Works Recital** (The first of two) included the following excerpts: "The Wednesday afternoon recital featured eight recently composed works for trumpet in a variety of settings. The recital opened with *Fanfare a 4* by Michael Stewart. This work was dedicated to the memory of Michael Ewald. The uplifting nature of the composition and the flawless precision displayed here would have, no doubt, brought a smile to Professor Ewald's face. *Liturgical Suite* by Edward Knight, began in a very contemplative fashion...As the piece progressed the musical dialogue between the trumpet and organ intensified. John Stevens' *Sonata* was introspective in nature, sensitive in interpretation, and fluid in linear content. *One for the Colonel* by George Chave (dedicated to Colonel Earl Irons) featured bold lines within a tonal framework. *Bagatelle* by James Stephenson demanded fine precision from the soloist and organ accompaniment. *The Saddest of all Keys* took the form of a quasi-improvised jazz-inspired composition as imparted by Trent Austin. *Sonata* by Thomas Reeves was the second place winner in the ITG Composition Competition. The writing on this piece was delightful in its inquisitive nature, its optimistic mood, and its energetic use of rhythm, technique, and melodic contour. The recital concluded with *Knuckleball* by Whitman Brown. The composer included many layers of complexity throughout the piece requiring equal parts of musicality, rhythmic precision, and sensitivity to dynamics and balance from all of the members of the quintet."

Elisa Koehler's report on the evening concert began these words: "Now in their 16th year, the **Washington Symphonic Brass** is composed of some of the finest brass musicians in the Baltimore/Washington area. The program, billed as "Classic Rock for Brass," began with the Boston tune, *More Than a Feeling*, on a darkened stage with mood lighting just like a rock concert. Augmented by some amplified effects and brilliant set drummer Ken McNair, WSB dazzled with a powerful blend of artistry and energy." From there repertoire for the concert included the Beatles tune, *Eleanor Rigby* (featuring Vince DiMartino on piccolo trumpet), Pink Floyd's *Comfortably Numb* (which was arranged by Jennifer Jester), a medley of music by Blood, Sweat & Tears, a terrific medley of six Elvis tunes, Paul McCartney's *Live and Let Die*, Chick Corea's Latin flavored tune, *Spain*, Björk's poignant music for the film *Dancer in the Dark*, and closed with Freddie Mercury's irrepressible *Bohemian Rhapsody*. What a concert!

The day ended with the finals of the **Jazz Improvisation Contest**. The pertinent facts of that competition end the summary of a *very* busy day:

Finalists:

John Britton

Eastman School of Music
Student of Clay Jenkins

Nick Frenay

Manlius Pebble Hill High School
Student of Joe Columbo

Aaron Linscheid

University of Missouri, Kansas City
Student of Keith Benjamin

Finals Rhythm Section:

Kirk Reese – piano
Steve Meashey – bass
Jeff Stabley – drums

Finals Judges:

Vince DiMartino
Ambrose Akinmusire
Tim Warfield

Repertoire:

All of the finalists performed four compositions for the 2009 ITG Jazz Improvisation Competition. Repertoire included: *Donna Lee* by Charlie Parker, *In a Sentimental Mood* by Duke Ellington, *Gentle Rain* by Luis Bonfa, and *Have You Met Miss Jones* by Rodgers & Hart.