

Glass Music World

SPRING 2003

History of Glass Music International, Inc. Part 1 of 4 (1986 -1989)

— By Carlton Davenport —

Glass Music International, Inc. was founded in August 1986 as a not-for-profit organization to promote glass music and help those interested in the art form. The original officers who signed the incorporation papers were Norman Rehme, President; Gerhard Finkenbeiner, Vice President; Greg Sorcsek, Secretary; and Vera Meyer, Treasurer. The first Glass Music World (GMW) newsletter was published on July 1, 1987. In that newsletter issue it was announced that the golden mark of 50 members was surpassed on May 29, 1987.

Starting with the second issue of GMW on October 1, 1987, the major focus was on the planning of a Glass Music Festival to be held in Corning, New York in October 1988. This Festival would actually be the third Glass Music Festival. The first two had been held at Capitol University in Columbus, Ohio in November, 1983 and at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio in 1985.

Dennis James wrote a very interesting article for the July 1, 1989 GMW on how the first festival came about. Dennis had become fascinated with the glass armonica which he at first thought was the instrument played by Bruno Hoffman. At a wine and cheese reception following a 1982 performance by the Columbus Cornet and Sacbut Ensemble, he mentioned the armonica during a discussion of favorite exotic instruments. Someone suggested that he get one and the next morning he called the

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Yatri Kathryn Taussig

— Edited by Carlton Davenport —

GMI members attending the festivals in 1997 and 2000 had the pleasure of listening to the healing sounds of Yatri and her Glass Armonica at King's Chapel in Boston and the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia. Many of us were able to spend some time with her at these festivals and were taken by her peaceful nature. Some of us have also been fortunate in that we have purchased her CD, *Crystal Spirit*, and spent many hours in peaceful relaxation while listening to it.

Yatri's Glass Armonica, consisting of 35 crystal bowls, was made by Gerhard Finkenbeiner. The beautiful housing and many of the inner mechanical workings for this instrument were provided by Canadian inventor Oscar Bookbinder. Bookbinder also included a 12-volt battery and a hand-turned crank as alternate ways of powering the bowls' rotation.

The soothing sound vibrations produced by the crystal bowls induce a centered state of deep relaxation. Therapists and music lovers around the world have been using Yatri's *Crystal Spirit* for massage and deep relaxation therapy, for insomnia relief and improved sleep, and for the pure joy of listening to her ethereal music.

Kathryn Taussig – Classical Pianist
Kathryn had an impressive

background in classical music before becoming interested in the healing aspects of music and then discovered the Glass Armonica in the late 1980's. She obtained an Honour BA in English Literature in 1967 from McMaster University in Canada, an Artist's Diploma in 1970 from the University of Toronto, and a Master of Music in 1972 from the University of Indiana at Bloomington. She taught piano at Indiana University as a graduate student, and later joined the piano faculties of the University

of Western Ontario in London and Mount Alison University in New Brunswick, Canada. From 1972 through 1982, she was concertizing and recording as a solo pianist and with the chamber music group, CAMERATA, in Canada, Europe, the US, and Latin America. She also wrote and acted in a concert-theater piece about the life of Clara Schumann and her

relationship with Johannes Brahms.

Yatri's Glass Armonica

From 1982 to 1987, Kathryn took time out from her music career for full-time mothering. In 1987, she became fascinated with the study of the healing aspects of music and began volunteering as a musician in a 17-bed Hospice in Toronto.

In 1989 she fell in love with the ethereal sound of crystal music, introduced to her by Eric Cadesky of Toronto's Glass Orchestra. She commissioned the construction of her Glass Armonica by Gerhard Finkenbeiner, taught herself to play

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PRESIDENTIAL NOTES



Thomas Bloch has continued to meet with Emmanuel Hondre at the Cité de la Musique in Paris in an attempt to get the timing of the festival changed from January 2005 to the spring of 2005. Emmanuel is still trying to move it, but is not very optimistic at this time.

As reported in the last issue of GMW, Thomas has been named Artistic Director of the Evian Festival and will be holding his first festival on the first weekend of June 2004. After that, the town will decide whether to continue that festival or not. An alternative to having our festival in Paris in January 2005 could possibly be having it in Evian in June 2005.

Thomas has the following question for the GMI membership:

If the date for the festival in Paris cannot be moved from January 2005 and a festival in Evian in June 2005 becomes a good possibility, what would the members' preference between those two possibilities be?

Members should email (or mail) their preference to me (GMIPres@earthlink.net) and copy Thomas (thbloch@club-internet.fr).

Evian is a pretty little town on the southern shore of Lac Lemman (Lake Geneva) about an hour's drive east of Geneva, which has a major airport, and an hour's drive west of Montreux, the site of one of the world's foremost jazz festivals. It is at the base of the beautiful Alps. It has a population of 20,000 compared with 10,000,000 of Paris. While Evian would not have the same possibilities for additional engagements and

street playing for members as would Paris in the spring, Geneva and Montreux might have some good possibilities, especially in June.

Paris, of course, is one of the world's most beautiful and interesting cities and sightseeing, shopping, etc. would be a wonderful experience, especially for those members who have not been there before. It would also be an excellent location for those members who want to cover some of their expenses by lining up additional engagements or playing in the street. However, while all this would be great in the spring, it would be seriously limited in January.

As I stated in the last issue, it is becoming increasingly difficult to find new articles for this newsletter and I greatly appreciate those who have done so. I want to thank Yatri for agreeing to be the subject for a feature article in this issue and Clemens Hofinger for agreeing to be the subject for a feature article in the last issue. I want to also thank Cecilia Brauer for volunteering an article which will appear in the next issue and Sally Prash for volunteering an article for the last issue.

I have a few additions to our list of members' email addresses. These are:

Jim Doble	xylojim@tidewater.net
Ingeborg Emge	emge@swissonline.ch
Dennis James	muscur@aol.com
Carolinn Skyler	CSkyler@ucwphilly.rr.com

Also, Yatri Kathryn Taussig can now be best reached by email at yatri@kripalu.org.

Glass Music World

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Membership — Alisa Nakashian-Holsberg

GMI HAPPENINGS

— By Elizabeth Mears —

Wonderful news to begin with -- **Alisa Nakashian-Holsberg**, Westford, MA gave birth to a daughter, Sara, on May 14th at 7:46 AM. Sara weighed in at 8 lbs., 2 ounces. Congratulations to Alisa, her husband **Alan**, and Sara who is beginning her great adventure of life on this planet.

We also congratulate **Norm and Carol Rehme**, Loveland, CO, who celebrated their 30th wedding anniversary in June. Norm is a co-founder of GMI and served as its President for many years. They traveled to Boston as part of their celebration and got together with **Vera Meyer**, Malden, MA, the other co-founder of GMI back in 1986. Norm also had lunch with **Carlton Davenport**, Princeton, MA, present President of GMI, and his wife **June**.

Carolinn Skyler, Philadelphia, PA, performed in a concert at the Unitarian Universalist Church in Worcester, MA on April 12th. An audience of more than 100 attendees showed a great deal of interest in her instrument and her skillful playing both during the performance and in a question and answer session following it. The opportunity to perform in Worcester was a homecoming for Carolinn who was born there. **Carlton and June Davenport**, Princeton, MA, are members of the Church and Carlton gave a talk on the History of Glass Music prior to the performance.

In an example of ingenuity, **Thomas Degnan**, our representative at **Franklin Court**, Philadelphia, PA, wrote GMI requesting information on the next festival. He is planning to apply for a grant to receive funding to attend. When notified that the festival is now being planned for 2005, he said that he will wait and apply next year.

Our New Orleans "Glassman", **Peter Bennett**, will be staying closer to home than usual this summer due to the price of gasoline. However, he will make a trip to the northeast to visit family, play at the Ithaca Farm Market, and perform a pro bono concert at the Ithaca Science Center. He will also spend time in Cambridge playing on Harvard Square. In April he played in shows at the 735 Bourbon Club and was interviewed on a New Orleans Cable TV show. A full page picture of him playing for an extraordinarily slim fashion model appeared in the April issue of New Orleans magazine as part of a fashion spread that was shot with various local street performers. Peter's website, www.glassharper.com, gets an incredible number of hits especially from students who need information on glass music for physics classes. He now has posted a lesson plan to guide students on how to build a goblet-style instrument and demonstrate it. Peter has recently moved into an apartment in the

French Quarter, just a block from Jackson Square, and at long last has his full collection of goblets in one place. His next project is to get them all laid out in chromatic order so he can see what notes are missing to build a small traveling instrument that he can take with him to Paris in 2005.

For those of you who have seen the movie, *Frida*, you may have recognized the sounds of an Armonica. **Cecilia Brauer**, Merrick, LI, NY performed on the soundtrack which won Oscar and Golden Globe Awards for its composer, Elliott Goldenthal. In May, Cecilia performed on the Armonica in New York City Ballet's new production of Saint Saens' *Carnival of the Animals*. The Armonica was written into the Aquarium segment.

Thomas Bloch, Colmar, France, continues to be very busy with both concerts and recordings. Recent and future concerts include:

- 8 performances of Richard Strauss' *Di Frau ohne Schatten* at the Paris Opera
- A tour in Sweden with the National Swedish Chamber Orchestra
- A concert/live radio program on Belgian National Radio and Television
- A tour in the La Reunion islands
- 3 weeks in Teatro Sao Carlos (Lisbon) with the Portuguese Symphony Orchestra and French comedian, Isabelle Huppert
- A concert with glass harmonica and ondes Martenot in La Chaux-de-Fonds, Switzerland, with local musicians
- A concert in Barock Music Festival from Budapest with a local orchestra and soprano
- A tour in Mexico with two orchestras

Last April, Thomas finished a new CD dedicated to the ondes Martenot which will be published by Naxos in 2004. He is also working on additional recordings including some with his own compositions. These will be covered in GMW in the future.

Yours truly, **Elizabeth Mears (Liz)**, northern Virginia, after taking the months of March and April off from glass endeavors to work on projects in the house and out in the gardens, has been on the road vacationing, teaching, and attending conferences in New Jersey and Seattle. I will now be working furiously in the studio to prepare for major exhibits and shows in the fall, along with making pieces which were ordered at wholesale shows in February — yes, caught in Philadelphia in that Major snowstorm in February — was great fun for several days to walk around the city in the center of major thoroughfares with absolutely no traffic — so peaceful and quiet.

— **HISTORY** from page 1 — Library of Congress in pursuit of the instrument. Through a phone search he found out that Bruno Hoffman was planning a U.S. tour and that one scheduled performance had been cancelled. He also learned of several American musical glass performers. Dennis invited Bruno to play in Columbus and then, in a series of phone calls, lined up several others including Jim (Jamey) Turner, Jay Brown, Ken Piotrowski, and Howard Quick. *Editor's Note: I know that Liselotte Behrendt and her uncle Hans Graf were also in attendance and Hans received a standing ovation for his playing.* So, in the 48 hours following a chance remark at a wine and cheese reception, the foundation of the Festival was laid. The working title of the Festival was "The First (and Probably Last) International Glass Music Festival." The first international festival sponsored by GMI under the direction of Norm Rehme was held at the Corning, New York, Museum of Glass on October 12 – 16, 1988. Participants and the public heard music from fourteen performers, as well as lectures and discussions from other speakers.

An historical highlight of the festival was the simultaneous performance by ten musi- *please see HISTORY, page 5*

— **YATRI** from page 1 — it and began collaborating in dance and theater productions in the Toronto area.

In 1991 she moved with her family to the Berkshires in Lenox, Massachusetts, joining the staff of the Kripalu Center for Yoga and Health. It was at this yoga center that she was given the Sanskrit name Yatri. At the Kripalu Center she had ample opportunity to explore the practical application of using armonica music to achieve altered states of relaxation, and was evolving a type of music that combined contemplative listening with therapeutic benefits.

While at the Kripalu Center, Yatri often joined other artists of varying musical disciplines in concert. She frequently appeared with Mark Kapner (of Woodstock's Country Joe and the Fish fame). Other collaborations were with recording artists pianist Mark Kelso, singer Bhavani Lorraine Nelson, pianist Todd Norian (founder of the Shakti Fusion Band), and with actor George Mueller, poet Bob Rose, actress Olivia Woodford, jazz pianist Rebecca Kane, Russian violinist Galina Heifetz, and jazz vocalist Chaula Hope Fisher.

In 1995 Yatri recorded in New York City for Israeli poet/composer Ora Bat Chaim, with Daisy Paradis (sitar, tamboura), Brad Cutler (tabla, bodhran, dumbek), and renowned Israeli Klezmer clarinetist Giora Feidman.

Yatri's website was developed in 1996 after she created her first solo Glass Armonica CD. This CD, called *Crystal Spirit*, consists entirely of her own music and has sold thousands of copies in 30 countries.

In 1998, before taking leave from her full-time position at the Kripalu Center to have more time to focus on playing and writing music, Yatri made a spontaneously arranged appearance in a workshop of Don Campbell, the author of *The Mozart Effect*. Mr. Campbell wrote of this occasion, "your heart, your sounds, and your performance for us was one of the highlights of my whole summer."

In 1999, she did further experiments using the acoustic sounds of crystal bowls combined with electronic simulated sounds. Highlights in the year 2000 included performing at the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia as part of the International Festival of Glass Music. She continued her studies related to the therapeutic effects of crystal music, meeting and playing for French musician-scientist Fabien Maman. On July 28th, she performed at the Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival with world-music composer Nana Simopoulos and Caryn Heilman of the Paul Taylor Dance Company. Yatri also recorded on a Nana Simopoulos CD, *Daughters of the Sun*. For the Women and Yoga Festival at the Kripalu Center, in *An Evening of Thunder and Soul*, Yatri joined singer-choreographer Jawole Willa Jo Zollar, artistic director of the Urban Bush Women Dance Company.

In 2001, Yatri was the featured musician in the two-day Festival of Wine and Glass at the Corning Museum of Glass. In October of that year, Yatri was playing in Quebec City in conjunction with the National Convention of the American Massage Therapy Association. She was delighted to be able to hear fellow glass musician Real Berthiaume (whom she had met at the Philadelphia Glass Music Festival) playing on the beautiful streets of old Quebec.

Healing Benefits of Crystal Sounds

Yatri's basic nature is quiet and contemplative and she is drawn to healing and meditation. Her playing of the Glass Armonica brings her a feeling of serenity and deep relaxation. She says, "Beyond the haunting sound and the sense of ancient familiarity which seemed to tug at my soul, what really drew me most to this instrument was the bodily effect that the sound of the crystals had on me. Whenever I played the bowls, I would enter into a state of great serenity. I felt like I had just come out of a deep meditation. I was as curious about this relaxed feeling as I was about the purity of the sound. It seemed to effect my listeners also... not just me."

For the recording of *Crystal Spirit*, Yatri improvised for seven hours in a small studio beneath the Chapel at the Kripalu Center. She says, "My mood during the recording session was contemplative and prayerful, and my intention was to freely go with the music, allowing it to take me where it would, and to basically keep my left-brain out of the picture as much as possible. What I wanted this album to be was a medium for creating stillness." The bell-like sound and glissandi heard in the album were created by playing the Armonica bowls with some tiny rubber tipped mallets. Yatri added



some synthesized string and nature sounds created on a Roland JV880 during the editing process.

Several experts have praised the healing effects of Yatri's CD, *Crystal Spirit*. The following statement appeared in the *Yoga Journal*: "Yatri's penetrating and restful recording would greatly enhance a relaxation practice or bodywork session." Don G. Campbell, author of *The Mozart Effect*, stated: "Peaceful, sublime and ever lovely, *Crystal Spirit* connects the beauty of tone with the elegance of music. Yatri captures the sounds that inspired Mozart, mystics and muses." From *The American Polarity Therapy Association*: "This CD would be a wonderful accompaniment for any number of inward activities such as relaxation, light meditation, gentle movement, etc. I love this CD and recommend it highly!" And from Darlene Cheek, author of *A Million and One Ways to Relax*: "I found a CD this week that I think is absolutely fabulous...the artist has taken 35 crystal bowls and made music with them. The effect is extremely hypnotic - they even say not to listen to it while driving."

(continued on next page)

— **HISTORY** from page 2 — cians (the last time a group of glass musicians had tried to perform together was in the 19th century - everything came to a crashing halt that time when several of the instruments were dropped). This time the attempt was a huge success. Under the inspiration and organization of Vera Meyer, ten musicians washed their hands and performed Beethoven's *Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee*. The musicians were Clem Fortuna, Liselotte Behrendt, Norm Rehme, and Jay Brown - musical glass style instruments; Vera Meyer, Walter Meier, Gerhard Finkenbeiner, Alisa Nakashian, and Ardis Leyman, - glass harmonicas; and Sascha Reckert - glass organ (glass rod instrument). Dennis James conducted. The audience asked for and received an encore.

One concert included a performance by Norm Rehme on his glass harp and Vera Meyer on her glass harmonica. To contrast and compare the differences in sound and technique, the two played alternating phrases of Mozart's *Adagio for Glass Harmonica* and Schulz's *Largo in C Minor*. Jay Brown, glass harpist from Miami, Florida, dazzled the crowd with his performance of Mozart's *Adagio and Rondo for Glass Harmonica* on which he was accompanied by four members of the Ithaca College faculty on flute, oboe, viola, and cello. Jay introduced the Festival to the technique of playing with his left forearm to get just the right chord.

Over 600 people from the Corning community attended the Friday performance by Dennis James and Liselotte Behrendt. Dennis played both the glasses and the armonica and was accompanied by India Dennis on the gothic harp. He also covered the history of glass music with slides. A popular event during his performance was the opportunity for audience participation. Young and old played glasses he passed out to the audience. After an intermission, Liselotte performed

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About Yatri Today

Locally, Yatri appears at artists' galleries, dance festivals, and churches, as well as at the Kripalu Center where she is again on the staff. She also has returned to something she did on the side while at college, -- playing the organ. She plays organ as well as Glass Armonica at the Richmond Congregational Church in Richmond, Massachusetts.

Yatri is married to pianist Peter Elyakim Taussig who is currently recording the complete keyboard works of Bach. His website can be accessed from hers and is very interesting as well. Their daughter Elena is a junior at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island.



Gerhard Finkenbeiner and Dennis James in Columbus (1983)

a number of tunes written by her uncle, Hans Graf. She also discussed "glass music in Europe today" during the Festival.

One eerie unplanned moment that deserves special mention occurred when the protective glass doors at the Museum were opened to expose a James Smith set of glasses. The room hushed as Professor Walter Meier of Switzerland played a Largo by Handel on them. The instrument may not have been played since it was built in 1825 in Edinburgh, Scotland. After Professor Meier was finished, the heavy glass doors were shut and the instrument was silent again. A handful of witnesses had experienced a rare moment in time.

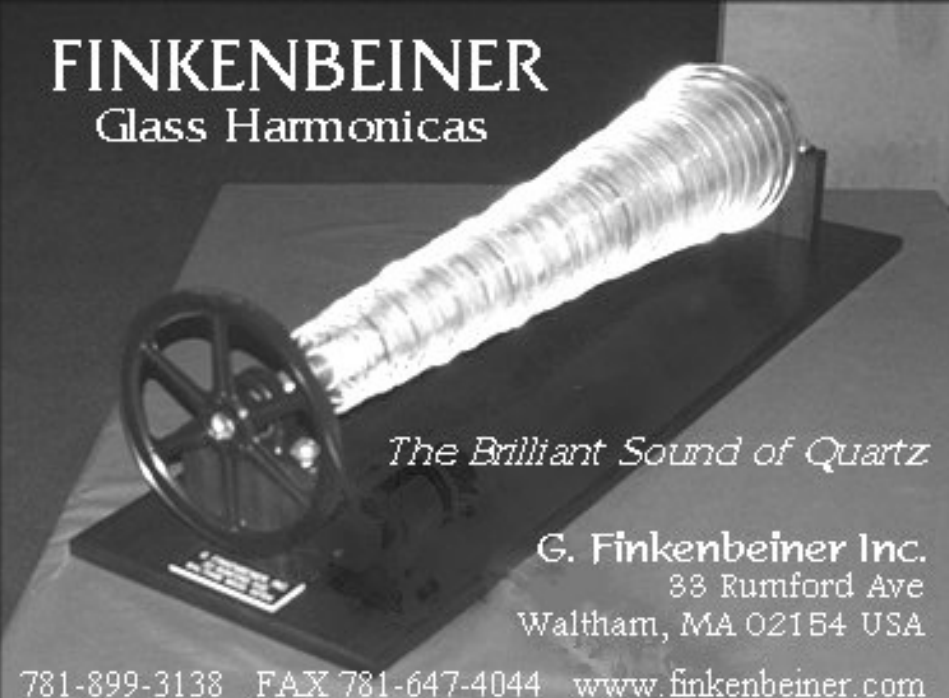
At the festival, the first organizational meeting was held and new officers were elected - Walter Meier, Vice President; Ardis Leyman, Secretary; and Liselotte Behrendt, Member-at-Large. Also, special awards were presented for the first time. Another highlight was a preliminary proposal from Lionel Lissot and Alain Pacquier to hold the next GMI Festival in conjunction with the Festival France de Musique de Sarrebourg in Sarrebourg, France in the spring of 1990.

From the very beginning, Norm Rehme (founder of GMI) encouraged members to share their ideas and information. With the first GMW publication in 1987, Norm included a column entitled "Technical Topics" and gave the configuration for his own glass harp (he included his modified configuration with three additional glasses in the April 1, 1991 issue). Contributors during the first three years of the column included Ed Stander, James S. Pederson, and Jamey Turner. Subjects covered included the mounting of glasses; methods of storing, shipping, and transporting glass instruments; techniques

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Yatri's website (www.crystallmusic.com) contains much of the material included in this article. In addition, the section of the website on Yatri's Glass Armonica contains subsections on how the instrument is played, Gerhard Finkenbeiner, Benjamin Franklin's original Glass Armonica and its history, and classical music written for the instrument. The section of the website on the healing benefits of crystal sounds also contains subsections on "connections between health and the sound of glass music" and "comments from our professional clients." The website also contains a listing of links to 33 relaxation and healing sites and 16 music and glass armonica sites.

Her CD, *Crystal Spirit*, can be ordered from Pilgrim Records, P.O. Box 2394, Lenox, MA 01240, by emailing yatri@crystallmusic.com, or online at the website (www.crystallmusic.com).



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— **HISTORY** from page 5 — of playing; tuning methods; water and hand washing.

A Glass Music International, Inc. Journal compiled and edited by Ken Piotrowski was published in 1988. It contained historical articles "The Glass Harmonica: A Return From Obscurity" by Gerhard Finkenbeiner and Vera Meyer and "Marianne Davies, The Glass Harmonica and Nerve Derangement" by Ken Piotrowski. It also contained eight scores, six of them by Hans Graf and one each by Harold Genzmer and P.J. Frick.

In the second issue of GMW, published in October 1, 1987, it was announced that GMI Library Curator, Ken Piotrowski, had completed the cataloging of a list of related musical works for the glass harmonica and musical glasses. Ken had succeeded in collecting, assembling, and obtaining releases of a large number of items. The list contained in that issue of GMW included 52 items. In the July 1, 1988 issue, it was announced that Vera Meyer, who was already the GMI Treasurer, had voluntarily taken on the task of building our GMI library files. Ken Piotrowski had stepped down as curator. That article stated that "of all the services currently a part of GMI, the library, except for the festival, has the most interest among members."

The third issue of GMW, published January 1, 1988, contained a list of the locations of old/original glass instruments from all over the world compiled by Vera Meyer. Vera's letter writing and detective work turned up some 14 armonicas and another 14 sets of musical glasses (the editor found it interesting to see the name Stephen Sondheim listed as an owner of a set of musical glasses).

Between 1986 and 1989, nine members were profiled in a column entitled "Introductions Please." They were Frances Armentrout, Vera Meyer, Ken Piotrowski, Monica Rogers, Julie Kabat, Kenneth M. Wilson, Alan Nuske, Liselotte Behrendt, and Gerhard Finkenbeiner. A review of the introductions shows that our membership included glass enthusiasts, collectors, curators, and students of glass as well as instrument manufacturers and numerous glass

harmonica and glass harp performers.

The April 1, 1989 issue featured the article entitled: "Hans Graf Awarded Lifetime Membership Honor by GMI Board" and also an article written by Hans on the construction of his glass harp. Hans, the uncle of GMI member and glass harpist Liselotte Behrendt, first assembled his instrument when he was working for a glassware dealer in Zurich. At the time he had no knowledge that playing music on glass had been done before. He learned of the work done by Benjamin Franklin and that of Bruno Hoffman later on. Hans Graf composed many songs for his instrument and became the first recipient of the GMI Lifetime Membership Award in recognition for his contribution to the world of glass music.



Jim Turner, Bruno Hoffman and Jay Brown in Columbus (1983)

The October 1, 1989 issue of GMW featured an article on glass harpist Jamey Turner. Jamey grew up in a very musical family, trained as a clarinetist, and then taught himself the musical saw. For ten years he would pass out glasses to his audience and let them accompany him while he played the saw. Only later did he solo on the glasses. After unsuccessful work



Liselotte Behrendt and her Uncle Hans Graf in Miami, Ohio (1985)

with agents, he decided to hit the streets and malls and found that his career took off. Almost immediately he began booking engagements with major ballets and symphonies. By 1989, television viewers had seen and heard Jamey on *The Tracy Ullman Show*, *The Tonight Show*, *CBS Evening News with Dan Rather*, *The Today Show*, *PBS Live from the Lincoln Center*, and *PBS Great Performances*. In addition, he had appeared at Disney World, the World's Fair in New Orleans, the New Orleans Jazz Festival, International Glass Music Festival I, the Library of Congress Summer Chamber Music Festival, and hundreds more events. He has found that he had the ability to greatly lift people's spirits. He said "too often musicians forget they can uplift the world."

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