

# Glass Music World

SUMMER 2010

## Thomas Bloch, Performer of Rare Instruments



**Left: Thomas with Bernard Baschet in Bernard's Studio; Right: Thomas and His Glassharmonica**

*The New York Times* has stated, "Thomas Bloch is unquestionably a virtuoso and a musician."

Thomas Bloch was born in Colmar, France in 1962 and lives in Paris. He is a worldwide prominent classical soloist specializing in rare instruments (ondes Martenot, glass harmonica, and cristal Baschet). His performances range from classical and contemporary music to songs, rock, theatre music, opera, improvisation, film music, world music, and ballet music. He is also a composer and a producer. He received a First Prize for ondes Martenot at the Paris Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique (with Jeanne Loriod) and a Masters Degree in Musicology at the University of Strasbourg.

Thomas has now performed over 3,000 times in 40 countries and appears on over 100 recordings, some of them personal ones and some as an invited performer. His notable collaborations in concerts or recordings include: Radiohead, John Cage, Gorillaz/Damon Albarn (Monkey: Journey to the West, after 2007), Tom Waits/Marianne Faithful/Bob Wilson (The Black Rider/2004-2006), Emilie Simon/Luc Jacquet (The March of Penguins), Milos Forman (Amadeus - long version "the director's cut", 2001), Deft

Punk (Thomas Bangalter)/Gaspar Noe (Enter the Void), Pierre Boulez, Valery Gergiev, Michel Plisson, Myung-Whun Chung, Paul Sacher, Jean-Francois Zygel, Maurice Bourgue, Alexei Ogrintchouk, Patrick Gallios, Andras Adorjan, Pierre-Yves Artaud, Vladimir Mendelssohn, Philippe Muller, Gil Sharon, Roger Muraro, Jay Gottlieb, quatuor Rosamonde, Balanescu quartet, Orlando quartet, Artis quartet, Michel Redolfi, Marcel Landowski, Jacques Chailley, Philippe Sarde, Isabelle Huppert, Charles Berling, -M-, Yvan Cassar, Manu Dibango, Arno, Marc Almond (Soft Cell), Fred Frith, Phil Minton, Lara Fabian, Vanessa Paradis....

He has taught ondes Martenot at the Strasbourg Conservatoire since 1992. He is a musical director for the Evian Music Festival in France and directed the Glass Music International Festival at the Cite de la Musique in Paris in 2005. He writes articles for various books on music and has been responsible for presentations of his instruments at the Paris Musee de la Musique since its opening in 1997.

As a soloist of his rare instruments, Thomas plays the complete classical and modern repertoire (Messiaen, Varese, Honegger, Jolivet, Bussotti, Mozart,

see **BLOCH**, page 2

### Next GMI Festival Planned for Williamsburg in March 2011

Dean Shostak and I have started the planning process for the 9<sup>th</sup> Glass music Festival which will be held in Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia, USA from 24 March through 27 March, 2011. We suggest that GMI members try to keep their calendars clear for that month and we will zero in on the exact dates soon.

As members are aware from the feature article in the last issue of GMW, Dean has given concerts regularly in Colonial Williamsburg for many years and those concerts have become that historic landmark's major musical attraction. Dean has informed me that Colonial Williamsburg will be donating the space required for all our concerts and lectures.

We request that members email Dean ([DeanArmonica@aol.com](mailto:DeanArmonica@aol.com)) and copy me ([gmpres@verizon.net](mailto:gmpres@verizon.net)) with any ideas you may have that could help make this festival a successful one. Also, if you could let us know if you believe you will be able to attend and if you would like to perform and/or give a lecture.

see **FESTIVAL**, page 3





# GMI Happenings

– By Liz Mears –

**Tom Degnan** sent news from Franklin Court at Independence National Historic Park in Philadelphia. The big news is that it will be closing in fall 2010 to undergo a major renovation, which is sorely needed. It will be closed for about two years. State-of-the-art exhibits will then be installed; some of them are from the Franklin tercentennial traveling exhibit that is now ending. It is not known how the Franklin Court glass armonica will be featured during the closing and reopening. There will, however, be another spring/summer season of regularly scheduled glass armonica demonstrations by the rangers before the work begins.

From Yokohama Japan **Mikio Kozuka** writes **Sascha Reckert** will be in Japan in May, along with his wife, for his performances in Tokyo. **Hidekatsu Onishi**, who is the only armonica player currently in Japan, will perform Mozart in February 2011 with the Yokohama Baroque Ensemble Orchestra at Minatomirai concert hall. **Cecilia Brauer** will come to Japan next year in April for the MET Japan tour.

**Ann Stuart** writes that her son, GMI's own **Jonathan Stuart-Moore** is now in graduate school at UNC Greensboro studying music composition.

I continue to perform in k-12 schools across the country, writes **Brien Engel**, as well as, the occasional overseas gig and lately some county fairs. He has enjoyed a new experience as an artist in education in South Carolina at a facility where students made their own instruments and then recorded with a looper to give the effect of a natural soundscape of critters in the wild. He continues to develop new object lessons and has a great time with his shows, in addition to making and filming his own original compositions for glass harp which can be viewed on his YouTube page or directly on his website ([www.glassharp.org](http://www.glassharp.org)).

**Steve Jobe** mentions that his work may be found on [www.stevenjobe.com](http://www.stevenjobe.com). The Big Instruments page has his version of Harry Partch's Cloud Chamber Bowls. The *Melusine* page has his more recent work, which features his set of Pitched Glass Bells which he constructed with the help of **Tom and Diane Hession** of Finkenbeiner Scientific Glass, Inc.

**Cecilia Brauer** continues to maintain her rigorous schedule of performances: at the Met Opera with Tosca, Turandot, Tristano, Rosenkavalier, Ariadne and House of the Dead. With the armonica, she performed in December at King Manor in Jamaica, NY, Gloucester Historical Society, NJ, and for the fourth time, Patriot's week in Trenton, NJ. In January she played the armonica in Saint Saens' Carnival of the Animals with members of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra at the Parlance Chamber Series in Ridgewood, NJ. She has just returned from Montpelier, Vermont, where she was featured in a Family Concert with the Vermont Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra. She also did a school program the next day. She will be returning to Vermont to play the armonica in Lucia di Lammermoor with the Green Mountain Opera for their summer festival in June 2010.

**Peter Sterki** sent information from Switzerland about two concerts he participated in during the last year. The first given by Peter on glassharmonica and Martin Derungs on piano included works by Mozart, Reichardt, Rollig and Wartensee as well as Martin Derungs himself and was given in Basel on June 18<sup>th</sup>. The second was given by Peter on glassharmonica with the Chamberorchestra 65 and included works by Sombach, Mozart and Reichardt and was in Baden and Lenzburg on November 24<sup>th</sup>. Peter says, "It was great fun, specially the Adagio written by Holt Sombach. Let's hope more of his compositions for glassharmonica will be found."

**Carlton Davenport** received a nice note from **Gerda Venzmer-Finkenbeiner** in which she said that they always

read the GMW with interest and are glad to find something about her brother, Gerhard, for example, the letter from his three sons in the last issue.

The websites of some GMI members are an excellent source of information about them and other members. **Vera Meyer's** "My Space" ([www.myspace.com/verameyer](http://www.myspace.com/verameyer)) includes the news that she was named "Bostonian of the Week". The write-up on this reads, "Do you know Vera Meyer? You may not be aware of it, but you probably do. She's the woman who plays the glass (h)armonica in Harvard Square most weekends. She is also the co-founder of Glass Music International, a YouTube sensation, and a real hoot to boot. 'It was thought to cause insanity, but I feel fine', Meyer says of the glass harmonica in her YouTube video, and she certainly plays fine as well. Meyer's "My Space" is a wealth of information about her instrument, which was invented by Benjamin Franklin in 1761, based on the idea of simply rubbing a wet finger around the rim of a wine glass... Vera writes that she performed at Robbins Brook retirement community in Ayer, Massachusetts on April 10<sup>th</sup> and also at the Amherst, New Hampshire Library on April 13<sup>th</sup>."

**William Zeitler's** website ([www.glassarmonica.com](http://www.glassarmonica.com)) has a blogs section which also included the information about Vera. Among the additional articles of interest was one that told of a concert in Rochester, New Hampshire given by The Brinkler Trio which included **Ken Piotrowski** on piano. To quote from this article, "Pianist Piotrowski studied piano, theory, counterpoint, composition and glass harmonica. He has performed in North and South America, Europe and Asia, has made nationwide radio and television appearances and is the author of numerous articles for American and European musicological journals."

**Lynn Drye** informs us that while her website remains the same, [www.glassvirtuoso.us](http://www.glassvirtuoso.us), her email has now been changed to [tldrye@cableone.net](mailto:tldrye@cableone.net).

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## ***FESTIVAL from page 1***

Some members who have informed us that they will be attending after receiving my first notice about the festival are: Norm and Carol Rehme (Norm is one of our founders and has offered to lecture), Liselotte and Peter Behrendt (Liselotte has attended every Glass Music Festival), Steven Lash (will attend and bring his armonica), Doug Smith, Sherwin and Ruth Borsuk (would like to attend, not definite yet), Greg Temmer (new member, has offered to play and lecture), and of course, June and Carlton Davenport and Dean and Valerie Shostak and their family. This list will be updated in the next GMW issue.

Much more information on the festival and Colonial Williamsburg will follow in the next issue to be published within three months.

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## **Glass Music World**

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**BLOCH** from page 2

Amplification is obtained by fiberglass cones fixed on wood and by a tall cut out metal part in the shape of a flame.

Born at the same time as “musique concrete” (Pierre Schaeffer, Pierre Henry), electro-acoustic music and early syn-



**Thomas and His cristal Baschet**

thesizers (Bob Moog), the cristal Baschet is their close relative, but completely acoustic, without any electric amplifying device. The Baschet brothers' aim was to get closer to the new tones born in the early fifties.

Thomas' website lists 19 composers who have written music for the cristal Baschet. There are some excellent examples of his playing of the instrument to be found in YouTube.

### ondes Martenot

The rare instrument that Thomas has mastered that is the least familiar to GMI members is the ondes Martenot. This is because that instrument is not a glass instrument. When it was invented it was one of the first electric instruments in the world and it is the only one of that time to have given rise to a vast repertoire and to be still played today.

Maurice Martenot (1898-1980), the inventor of the instrument, found the principle of ondes Martenot when, as a serviceman in radio transmissions during the first World War, he noticed the purity of the vibrations produced by the lamps of a condenser whose intensity can be made to vary. Maurice was also a cellist and, with his sister, he invented a method of artistic education. He was above all interested in the musical means offered by electricity and not so much by research in sound. He started doing research work on ondes Martenot in 1919, but did not present the instrument to the public until May 1928 at Paris Opera. His immediate triumph was followed by a world tour.

Seven successive specimens made by him were born, each one bringing innovations. The basis of the last instrument, transistorized, still played, and taught in about ten music academies in France and Canada were fixed in 1975. The building of the ondes Martenot stopped in 1988. However, Maurice's son, Jean Louis, started working on a digital instrument on 1995 and engineer, Ambro Oliva, makes the ondéa, a similar instrument. Starting in 2008, Jean-Loup Dierstein has been working on rebuilding the original ondes Martenot. Production is expected to begin around the end of 2009.

Summarizing the description of instrument found in Thomas' website: It is monophonic and consists of three dif-fusers and the metallique (a gong set in vibration by an engine, the metal replacing the membrane of the loudspeaker, which creates a metal sound halo at a precise pitch). A mobile keyboard allows a vibrato controlled “online” and also micro intervals. In front of and along the keyboard there is a ribbon with a ring through which the interpreter puts the forefinger of his

right hand. The frequency corresponds to the key facing the ring and allows obtaining of the same effect as with a string instrument without frets or with a voice (glissandi, effects, lyric, song) on nine octaves. On the left, a drawer contains all the controls:sounds (one hundred possible combinations), trans-position buttons (among others - quarter tones), loudspeaker controls, balance, pink noise and intensity key. As with a bow, no sound is produced if the interpreter does not press that key which allows the creation of intensities and attacks. Two foot-controlled pedals (mute and intensity) complete the instrument.

There are about 1,500 works composed for the ondes Martenot by Varese, Messiaen, Honegger, Scelci, Boulez, Jolivet, Murail, and others. It is also widely used in film music (Mad Max, Mars Attacks, Fantomas, The March of the Penguins...) and in popular music (Brel, Radiohead, Gorillaz, Vanessa Paradis...). Thomas Bloch is one of the very rare professional ondistes (around ten in the world).



**Thomas Playing the Ondes Martenot with Glassharmonic Behind Him**

### Waterphone

The waterphone, invented by the American Richard Waters between 1967 and 1970, has since evolved into a whole family of instruments resulting in today's MegaBass Waterphone.

A steel resonator contains a small quantity of water which can be set in motion when you play the instrument holding it by its neck, giving birth to aquatic effects and variations in pitch. On its periphery, the flat tank of the resonator is provided with a number of vertical metal rods of various lengths which you rub most of the time with a bow and occasionally strike.

The invention of the Waterphone originated in the early sixties when Richard Waters, then a student at the California College of Arts and Crafts, discovered the Thibetan water percussion instruments. He later heard the Kalimba, an instrument of African origin also called thumb board. Historically, it can be paralleled with the nail violin (also called nail fiddle or nail harmonica) invented in 1744. Like the glassharmonica and the musical saw, it belongs to the family of friction idiophones. Its tone has often been compared to a whale's song or to the sound of an acoustic synthesizer (some of its sound effects are definitely akin to those of the cristal Baschet) or to those of a water harp. Tom Waits describes it as ‘a cascading crystal waterfall of light amidst the songs of a whale’. Some composers such as Sofia Goubaidouline use it in their works.

### Composition

Thomas Bloch's compositions are played all around the world in his name or in one of his pen names. He composed for



the Bulgaria National Ballet and for all kinds of shows (theater plays, open air shows...), as well as songs, movie music, experimental music for various instruments (including his own ondes Martenot, glass harmonica and cristal Baschet) and ensembles (musical theater, chamber music, orchestra, solo instruments, electro-acoustic, voice...).

He was a composer in residence at La Napoule Art Foundation - France where he composed his Missa Cantate for soprano and symphony orchestra and obtained several awards (Sacem, the French-German foundation, T.I.M., four successive awards at the Antibes Underwater Film World Festival...) at La Napoule Art Foundation - France where he composed his Missa Cantate for soprano and symphony orchestra and obtained several awards (Sacem, the French-German foundation, T.I.M., four successive awards at the Antibes Underwater Film World Festival...).

Some of his works have been on various labels: Sony classical, Columbia, K.617, Erol Records, Editions du Seuil Jeunesse, Coca/Columbia, TGB, Naxos...

### Crystal Voice and Glass Instruments

Thomas has collaborated very successfully with Patrick Husson, the renowned soprano. Patrick trained with church choirs in Colmar and was known for his angelic quality voice. It was said that his voice never broke. He was known as the gardener soprano referring to his main profession. Patrick and Thomas gave numerous performances together and can be heard and sometimes seen on many recordings and YouTube selections, including *Christ Hall* originally premiered and recorded by K.617 label during the GMI Festival in Sarrebourg, France in 1990. He has also played from time to time with other male sopranos: Fabrice di Falco (*Sancta Maria* on his Music for Glassharmonica CD on Naxos) and Joerg Waschinski (*Missa Cantata* to come on Naxos in 2011).



**Thomas and Soprano Patrick Husson**

### Magic Lantern (Fantasmagoria)

The Magic Lantern (Fantasmagoria) is the only pre-cinema performance in Europe which by means of a scenario including all the major themes of Phantasmagoria shows how magic lantern was practiced in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century and in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The magic lantern (the one used by Pierre Albanese in this show was made in 1880) and moving hand-painted glass plates (from the late 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries) give life to evil beings which start disturbing the life of a charming little village. Ghosts, witches, devils, the Apocalypse horsemen and the famous blood-covered nun carry us away into the kingdom of darkness and fear. The projections of such films were usually accompanied by the glass harmonica, the nail violin (also called nail harmonica, an ancestor of the waterphone) and various instruments used for sound illustration. According

to Jefferson, “the melodious sounds of Franklin’s Harmonica contribute powerfully to the effects of phantasmagoria by preparing not only the minds but all the senses as well for strange impressions.”

### Thomas’ Website

The information contained in this article thus far has mainly come from Thomas’ website, <http://www.thomasbloch.net>. In addition, the website provides listings of his discography (classical music; contemporary music; songs, pop...; film music, DVD...; musicals, various...), audio - video, performances, his press kit, an extensive gallery, links, and a section on his recording studio. The section on performances has been recently updated and provides details on recital; orchestra; chamber music; recording sessions; theater music; film music; advertising; pop music; creations; improvisation; songs; ballet music; jazz; rock; world music; concert/lectures in schools, universities, and music academies; masterclasses; artistic direction of festivals; and Erik Satie’s *Vexations*.

### Thomas and GMI

Thomas has been an active and valued member of Glass Music International’s executive committee since his early days in the organization, serving as its Member-at-Large.

He was first introduced to members of GMI in the January 1, 1990 issue of GMW. The introductory article pointed out that he discovered glass music by accident thanks to the Baschet brothers and then became fascinated with the Armonica and bought a forty-glass instrument from Gerhard Finkenbeiner. It also stated that he was involved with musicological research and worked as a journalist and airplane pilot.

Some significant insight into Thomas’ character and beliefs appears in the following paragraph. “People have said to Bloch, ‘Why try to make the instrument better known? The fewer people who play it, the more you can play. Aren’t you afraid of the competition?’ To this he replies that if there is no competition, there is no rivalry or progress in interpretation. It is necessary to spread an awareness of it and not keep one’s research for oneself. His idea is that new compositions stimulate new performers, which in turn stimulate new compositions, which engender new performers, and so on.”

Thomas played a major role in the very successful Glass Music Festival held in Sonnebourg, France in 1990. The highlight of the Festival was the performance of his contemporary work entitled, *Christ Hall*, which was performed by six glass musicians under the direction of India Dennis. The glass musicians were Gerhard Finkenbeiner, Dennis James, and Vera Meyer - armonicists, Norm Rehme and Carol Rehme - seraphims, and Sascha Reckert - Verillon. Also included were Thomas on synthesizer and Patrick Husson - male soprano. A CD of the performance was produced by K617 (Alain Pacquier and Lionel Lissot, the Festival organizers). The recording which blended together a number of unusual sounds, paid homage to Marc Chagall, recognized Gerhard Finkenbeiner for his development and manufacture of glass harmonicas, and was dedicated to the promotion of glass music. The title, *Christ Hall* is a play on words since when pronounced with a French accent it sounds like the English word “crystal”.

The GMW issues of July 1992 and January 1993 included Thomas’ article *The Renaissance of the Glass Armonica*, which was originally published in the French publication, *Crescendo*, and was translated into English by David Robbins. The excellent article was considered “so outstanding both in content and in translation that GMI members probably will make it a part of their library”. The length was such that it was carried over two issues of GMW.

Thomas’ concert at the Philadelphia Museum of Art to close

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## Dr. Richard J. Weiss, Active GMI Member and Contributor, Died in December 2008

Richard Weiss of Avon, Massachusetts died on December 13, 2008. Richard was an active member of GMI who played an important role in the Glass Music Festival of 1997 in Boston when he hosted the Sunday morning gathering and the cutting of the GMI 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Cake at Blanchard's Museum Tavern in Avon. He was a physicist, writer and an authority on Benjamin Franklin and wrote the article on Gerhard Finkenbeiner, *The Research Scene - Glasmeister Solves Optical Problems*, which appeared in OE Report in August 1995, and later was the feature article for the Fall 1999 issue of Glass Music World.

His obituary and an article on him which appeared in the *Journal of Applied Crystallography* (ISSN 0021-8898) follow. The latter was written by a colleague, Malcolm John Cooper of the Department of Physics, University of Warwick, UK.

### Obituary, Richard J. Weiss Ph.D.

WEISS, Richard J., Ph.D. 1923–2008, OF Avon, MA, formerly of New York City, December 13, 2008. Beloved husband of Daphne Pat Weiss (Watson) of Avon. Father of Catharine Weiss-Habig of Easton, MA, Christopher Weiss of Ashburn, VA, and the late Randi-Lyn Gordon of Atlanta, GA. Brother of Sanford Weiss, of Dana Sol, CA. Grandfather of Alex and Olivia Habig of Easton, MA. Also survived by many nieces and nephews. Noted physicist researcher, author, and tavern keeper, Dr. Weiss grew up in New York City during the Great Depression. He received a B.S. from City College of New York during W.W.II, was commissioned by the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis into the U.S. Navy, where he served as a Lieutenant on the USS Bouganville, an escort carrier that ferried airplanes and supplies between Pearl Harbor and the front lines of the Pacific. After the war, Richard received an M.A. in Physics from the University of California, at Berkeley, and his Ph.D. from New York University and Brookhaven National Laboratory where he studied under Oppenheimer. Richard joined the staff of the U.S. Army Materials Technology Laboratory in Watertown, MA, in 1950 and retired in 1980, after a distinguished career as a world-renowned physicist. He was recognized with the Rockefeller Public Service Award in 1956 and as a Secretary of the Army Fellow in 1962. He reached the civilian rank of Colonel. During his career, Richard authored more than one hundred publications and many books on solid state physics, X-ray measurements, as well as books for a broader audience in science. He is also the holder of multiple patents, and served as an editor or contributing editor on multiple international scientific publications, including the World Scientific Series in Popular Science. Dr. Weiss held appointments in physics at Brookhaven National Laboratory, Materials Research Laboratory, Kings College London (UK), Cavendish Laboratories at Cambridge, Imperial College (UK), the University of Surrey (UK), the British Atomic Energy Establishment at Harwell (UK), the University of Munich, and the University of Helsinki in Finland. He was named one of the 2,000 Outstanding Scientists of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century by the International Biographical Centre, Cambridge (UK). Dr. Weiss also wrote numerous stage plays, screenplays, and radio plays, which were performed by the BBC London. After retiring, he directed the operation of Blanchard's Tavern, a colonial tav-

ern of the Revolutionary War, located in Avon, MA. He also created, with his brother, Sanford Weiss and Walter McCrone (Turin Shroud), the Organization for the detection of Fakeness in Art. There he worked with McCrone and his brother on expanding the use of carbon dating as a method of true historical dating of artistic masterpieces. A Celebration of Dr. Weiss' life and accomplishments will be held on Saturday, January 17<sup>th</sup> at 11 AM at the Avon Baptist Church (98 North Main St., Avon, MA 02322). In lieu of flowers, kindly donate to the City College 21<sup>st</sup> Century Foundation and write "For FVE in memory of Richard J. Weiss" in the memo line. FVE is the Fund for Veterans' Education, which provides scholarships to Veterans who served in Iraq and Afghanistan since September 11, 2001. Donations can be mailed to: The City College of New York Office of Development and Institutional Advancement, 60 Convent Avenue, Shepard 154 New York, NY 10031.



### Richard J. Weiss (1923–2008)

Richard Weiss was the prime mover for the establishment of the IUCr's Commission on Charge Spin and Momentum Densities. He was also largely responsible for the renaissance of Compton scattering in the 1960s as a probe of electron (momentum)-density distributions and saw it take its place alongside X-ray and neutron diffraction, positron annihilation and electron scattering. Under the auspices of the IUCr, the Sagamore conference series, his brainchild, continues to flourish, with its 16th triennial meeting in Santa Fe in 2009.

Dick Weiss, as he was usually known, was born in 1923 and grew up in New York before joining the US Navy. After the war ended he gained his PhD, studying under Oppenheimer, and worked at the Brookhaven National Laboratory. He then joined the Army Materials Research Center at Watertown. Perhaps Dick's greatest contribution to X-ray science was to persuade the US Army that electron-density studies were vital to military development. There was great interest in understanding the behaviour of 3d electrons in Fe, Co, Ni and Cu and their alloys. In *Physics Today*, in 1965, Dick prophesied that, 100 years hence, the US Army would specify tanks on the basis of knowledge of the wavefunctions of materials. Tongue in-cheek or not, he was successful in obtaining continued funding for basic X-ray research and the Sagamore conferences, the first two of which were held at Sagamore, a hunting lodge, near Lake Raquette. It was to Dick's credit that not only did the meetings attract the 'big names' in neutron and X-ray physics but also the American Army bankrolled the operation even when they left the original venue and went first to Aussois (France 1970) and then to Minsk (1973) which was then still firmly in the USSR.

Dick Weiss's scientific reputation did dip due to an extinction-plagued interpretation of an X-ray study of paired reflections from Fe: he got the eg and t<sub>2g</sub> attributions wrong. However, he rehabilitated himself by championing X-ray Compton scattering as an alternative method of studying electron density. In 1965, together with John Leake and myself, he co-authored the first paper on experimental Compton scattering to appear for more than two decades and, despite the limited data quality, it did correct earlier misleading results and kick-start the development of the technique to probe electron density.

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Dick contrasted the information forthcoming from diffraction and Compton scattering in the book *X-ray Determination of Electron Density Distributions* (North Holland 1966) and in a 1969 paper in *Acta Cryst.* (A25, 248–257), which was an interesting themed issue, whose author list is a roll call of famous crystallographers from that era. Together with Erwin Bertaut, who chaired the 1970 Sagamore meeting in Aussois, and myself, Dick Weiss made overtures to the IUCr to bring the Sagamore community under the wing of the IUCr. The Commission was established ad interim in 1975 at the Amsterdam Congress and then permanently in 1978 with a mission to do more than just run conferences. Projects to standardize analysis techniques for charge-density studies (the oxalic acid project) and Compton

scattering (the water project) were early examples.

After his retirement, Dick devoted more time to writing, with a number of plays and books, mostly on non scientific subjects. He also indulged his theatrical interests by reopening an old coaching inn, Blanchard's Tavern, in his home town of Avon, Massachusetts. In this tavern he often performed the role of Benjamin Franklin, who just might have been a visitor. Dick Weiss made a lasting impact on our community: he pioneered the establishment of Compton scattering as a probe of charge density, was responsible for the creation of the Sagamore conference series and our IUCr Commission.

Dick died on 13 December 2008 aged 85, leaving a wife, Daphne, and daughter, Catharine.

### **BLOCH** from page 5

out the Glass Music Festival in Philadelphia was especially noteworthy. He presented a program of classical and contemporary music which included a piece where he stood between two glass armonicas playing them simultaneously, a humorous piece in which he made use of a variety of props, and a wonderful finale performance of his own composition, *Sancta Maria*, played as a tribute to Gerhard.

The Spring 2001 issue of GMW included the announcement of the establishment of a GMI library in one of the two houses Thomas owns in Paris. The house is dedicated to music and contains a collection of a large number of documents and other materials on the subject. The rules for the library were proposed by Thomas and reviewed and approved by the GMI officers. The aim of the library was stated as to increase our musical activity, to have a place where we are sure to find the documents we need and to help our GMI association.

Also, in the same issue, was the announcement that one of the major classical labels, Naxos, would publish Thomas' CD, *Glassharmonica Recital*, in all CD stores in 40 countries. This was very significant for GMI in that it was the result of a project undertaken by Thomas with Gerhard Finkenbeiner in 1997.

The Fall 2001 issue of GMW contained the announcement that the famous movie, *Amadeus*, was being re-released in a longer version that would include all of the parts cutout of the original. It would include a recording of *Adagio K.617* played by

Thomas on glass armonica with a quintet.

In the Spring 2006 issue, it was reported that Thomas played the glass harmonica and the ondes Martenot in the French movie, *La Marche de L'Empereur (The March of the Penguins)* which won an Oscar for best documentary. 16 million people around the world had seen the movie at that time. However, due to American unions, an American composer was asked to rewrite the music for the documentary's release in the U. S. Therefore, the original movie with Thomas' music could be seen and heard everywhere in the world, except in the U.S.

Thomas' most noteworthy contribution to GMI was his planning, organization, and direction of the Glass Music Festival held in Paris in 2005. The Festival was held at the Cite' de la Musique and the adjacent Paris Music Museum with a visit to Francois Baschet's workshop in downtown Paris and a very successful last day at Bernard Baschet's home and factory outside Paris. Everyone involved had nothing but praise for the Festival. Everyone involved had nothing but praise for the Festival. Many of us had the opportunity to see and hear many unusual instruments that were new to us as well as fascinating ensembles featuring these instruments. There were also opportunities for GMI members and those from the general public to try out some of the glass instruments. The appreciation of others and warmth shared by all performers, lecturers, and listeners did much toward making the Festival an exceptional one.

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