

Low Notes – All About Low Flutes



Highlights from Low Flute Sessions at NFA Summer Series

The National Flute Association (NFA) Summer Series 2020 had a track featuring sessions focused on low flutes. Here are highlights from two of these sessions.

Low Down and Locked Down – An Interactive Session for Low Flute Players

- **Growing Online Playing and Learning Opportunity:** This session, and plenty of other sessions from the NFA Summer Series, was a nice playing and learning opportunity, including playing along with some of the best low flute players in the country. While online technology doesn't yet easily or readily allow for large groups to play music together, this session was still an opportunity to at least play in part with others when, as of late, there is very limited opportunity to do so in any way. So, in this respect, it was worth it, and it begs the question as to how we as a flute society can create more opportunities for any amount and type, limited though it may be, to play together and to listen to each other play.

What ideas do you have for creating virtual playing, teaching and learning opportunities? What would you like to see happen simply for the benefit of your own musical life or for the benefit of elementary, middle, high school, college or amateur players? Please send your ideas to board@qpfs.org.

- **Alternate Fingerings:** This session was unpredictably, but helpfully, riddled with tips for playing low flutes as well as insight on [resources for low flutes](#). Some time was spent on the importance of knowing and using alternate fingerings. For example, Christine Potter noted d3, the third higher d, is often a problem that can be managed by removing the e-flat key or overblowing a lower d or g. She also called attention to her alto and bass method book having an extensive alternate fingering chart. She reminded participants that every player and flute is different therefore making it important to try options for oneself to see what works best.

- **Columbia Flute Choir Videos:** Sharyn Byer, another professional flutist and low flute player to know about, mentioned videos of low flute choir on the [Columbia Flute Choir](#) website. These are worth listening to and, particularly noteworthy, is "Alleluia", by Eric Whitacre, arranged by our very own GPFS and board member [Phyllis Avidan Louke](#) and performed by Columbia Flute Choir at the 26th Annual Columbia Flute Choir Festival on November 9, 2019, in Falls Church, VA

Resources and Tips from the NFA Low Flutes Committee

- **NFA Low Flutes Committee:** The [NFA low flutes page](#) has alto and bass repertoire lists, a low flutes user guide, and list of low flute makers.
- **Chris Potter:** An enduring and “no fail” source of expertise on low flutes, Chris Potter - <https://chrispotterflute.com/alto-bass/>. On a more personal note, Chris mentioned she is currently in love with the piece “Theme and Variations on Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child.” Here she is performing it on bass flute - [Chris Potter Playing Motherless Child by Stan Persky](#).
- **Phyllis Advin Louke:** At Phyllis’ website, flutists can find an article about [getting started with playing low flutes](#) along with more general articles also written by Phyllis about tone, intonation and other topics which are applicable to the low flutes as well - [Other Resources](#).
- **International Low Flute Festival:** Learn more at lowflutesfestival.org. There is also a YouTube Channel featuring artists from the Festival - [International Low Flutes Festival YouTube](#).
- **One Outstanding Performer:** Look for low flute performances by [Carla Rees](#), a British low flutes performer, teacher, composer, collaborator. She can also be found on the above YouTube channel.
- **Low Flutes Group on Facebook:** At this [Facebook Page](#), questions are asked and answered by an expert in low flutes.
- **Contemporary Composers:** Some contemporary composers writing for low flutes - [Jonathan Cohen](#), [David Bennett Thomas](#), [Dan Kessoner](#), [Phyllis Avidan Louke](#) and [Nicole Chamberlain](#).
- **For Composers and Performers:** The webpages altoflute.co.uk and bassflute.co.uk – “This multimedia resource provides a detailed insight into the Kingma System bass/alto flute. The information given is intended to be primarily of use to composers and performers, and has been compiled from practical experience of the composer-performer relationship....”
- **Know that Repertoire for C flute is an Option:** “Stay low, but go high.” In other words, be willing to consider music written for traditional C flute to play on the low flutes such as the Telemann flute duets. Another participant noted she had just performed Katherine Hoover’s *Greet the Sun* on bass flute and thought it work very well. They encourage low flutists to consider modern music, indicating that, in some ways, extended techniques work better on the lower flute.
- **Headjoints:** Christine Potter’s website has a list of options for headjoints for alto flutes. Currently, several of the participants are fond of David Chu’s and Chris Abel’s alto headjoints, among others.

Index of Commercial Members

See these listings on this GPFS webpage – <https://gpfs.org/Commercial-Membership>



B Brannen Brothers
Flutemakers, Inc.



Altus
HANDMADE FLUTES
www.altusflutes.com

LORNA MCGHEE
ALTUS SINCE 2012



Quality.
Reliability.
Performance.
Excellence.

Call today for your trial.

Burkart Flutes and Piccolos
2 Shaker Road, #D107 • Shirley, MA 01464
978-425-4500 • www.burkart.com



Canter Music Shop
Flute Repair Specialists

Darren Cook & Molly Duggan
Straubinger Certified

971-266-4096 cantermusicshop.com



Carolyn Nussbaum
MUSIC COMPANY

(972) 985 2662
info@flute4u.com
www.flute4u.com

**FLUTE
CENTER**
of
NEW YORK

The World's Most Exclusive
Marketplace for Flutes
www.flutes4sale.com



THE FLUTE PAD
MARC GRAFE
REPAIRS ~ ADJUSTMENTS
OVERHAULS

CERTIFIED STRAUBINGER TECHNICIAN

503.351.5176
MARC@GRAFEWORKS.COM

Flute Works SEATTLE



Text or Phone
781-526-3677

The largest flute selection in the Pacific Northwest.
fluteworks@gmail.com

FluteWorld

All things
flute.

WWW.FLUTEWORLD.COM

248.855.0410

FLUTES@FLUTEWORLD.COM

MIYAZAWA

www.miyazawa.com
800.967.6733
info@miyazawa.com



LYRIC

www.lyricflutes.com

Philipp
HAMMIG

www.hammig.com



POWELL FLUTES
BOSTON



www.powellflutes.com

Sherry Lee

Dealer of Fine Flutes



970-242-9364
970-773-6656

flutes@aol.com
www.flutes.com

Straubinger Certified

615 Darlene Ct.
Grand Junction, CO 81504

TED BROWN MUSIC

Washington's Premiere Music Store

tedbrownmusic.com

(800) 562-8938



WINDSMITH MUSIC

Professional Band & Orchestra

Repair, Sales, and Lessons

Straubinger
Certified

Katie Rasmussen

Flute & Double Reed Specialist

1305 Main Street
Philomath, OR 97370

541-609-1672

info@windsmithmusic.com

windsmithmusic.com