



HARPSICHORD NEWS BRIEF

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Published as an aid to the development of public awareness of fine early keyboard instruments and their music.

CAREY BEEBE HARPSICHORDS

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Sole Australian Agent for D. Jacques Way & Zuckermann Harpsichords, Inc.

AROUND THE WORLD IN 90 DAYS

Philleas Fogg used balloons, steamships, and other nineteenth century modes of transport to do the same thing in only 80 days, but even Jules Verne might have had difficulty imagining the ability of modern man to hop around the world in just a few hours by jumbo. So many people have wondered what I have done and where I have been during my recent three months away, that I decided the News Brief is the right place for me to condense the story to quickly and conveniently bore everyone at once.

Unfortunately the month I spent in bed with the glandular fever I caught somehow at the Melbourne Organ + Harpsichord Festival in May postponed all my plans, and forced me to miss the Boston Early Music Festival + Exhibition. A quick recovery, though, enabled me to fly out on July 1, direct to LA, then NY, then the tiny little plane to New London (Connecticut), less than half an hour by car from the tiny seaside village of Stonington where the Zuckermann Headquarters is. I had a few days seeing what had happened in the two years since my last visit, before I had to drive a Fortepiano for half a day to Cornell University in upstate NY for Malcolm Bilson's annual Fortepiano Workshop. Accomplished Fortepianists from all over the States and from Japan were kept busy with a schedule of private lessons, masterclasses and concerts for two weeks. Malcolm had asked me some months previous to tend the 8 Fortepianos and keep them in peak condition for the duration of the course.

The next six weeks were spent at Stonington working on a number of projects with David Way including our New Fretted Clavichord, and adding finishing touches to several instruments. Many have seen the Flemish instrument I built at Stonington last time (that's right--the one from the Philips commercial), but this visit I diversified and was working on all kinds of instruments. During this time, I was also able to revisit the main collections of historic keyboard instruments; Yale University (where the curator Richard Rephann "doubles" as the local Zuckermann agent), NY Metropolitan Museum of Art (showing a special exhibit titled "200 Years of Piano History"), Smithsonian Institution, and Boston Museum of Fine Arts. All contain playable instruments. Of all the East Coast builders I met, probably one of the nicest is Willard Martin, who works and lives in an old Russian Orthodox church, icons intact. I spent that night on a mattress on top of his basement spray-booth.

On September 1 it was time to fly to London, where I stayed with Malcolm Greenhalgh who runs the Early Music Shop. Malcolm moves at least one instrument a day for concerts or maintenance. Early one morning we picked up Trevor Pinnock's instrument (a dark blue D Jacques Way French Double) for tweaking before a concert tour. The Victoria + Albert Museum has a fine collection of instruments, sadly behind glass like an aquarium, but the Royal College of Music and Fenton House contain collections where it was possible to get much closer and play the instruments. A train ride to Edinburgh to see the famous Russell Collection proved worthwhile. And the night I spent with the past curator and agent for Scotland, John Barnes, was unusual. His graceful home is full of old pianos, spinets and harpsichords. It was the next morning after I had been shaken awake by someone from the spirit world and let out a small scream that John explained one of his past guests had departed the world from the same bed. Peacefully, for which I was thankful.

Every hotel in Paris was full, and my first night there I had to spend on a park bench because Marc Ducornet, who runs our Paris workshop, was not due back from the Utrecht Early Music Festival until the next day. I couldn't imagine a safer place to doze than outside the President's home with the gendarmerie on guard all night. Our Paris shop has 1000m² of space spread over four floors, and employs over a dozen specialist artisans. I spent a morning in private at the Conservatoire collection where there are six old French Doubles (most of them playing) that didn't get burned in the cold winter of 1815.

September 12 and the strict itinerary began. I had 15 days to visit all the major keyboard collections of Europe by Eurail Pass. Travelling in a clockwise circle, I saw instruments in Bruxelles, Antwerp, The Hague, Amsterdam, Nuremburg, and Munich. Mozart's piano was in Salzburg, then impulse took me to Vienna. I had to catch the night train to Venice (the only place where there were no instruments to my knowledge) then Milan, Zurich, and Basel (where unfortunately the collection was closed for building alterations). In Geneva I found a little-known collection where the dangerously old Mr Ernst tri-lingually demonstrates the instruments in two tiny rooms. And then a breathtaking ride on the TGV back to Paris--at 260km/h the world's fastest train--arriving in Paris with 15 minutes of time left before my ticket became invalid. Phew! (I've had itchy feet for the last twenty years--since my parents used to pin my name on my jumper every school holidays and bundle me on the plane to my cousins in Canberra.)

Two days in Paris, then another two in London, then the flight back to Australia gave me a week in Perth before returning home on October 9. According to the notebook, in three months I had taken over 1000 detailed photos of the 249 historic instruments I examined, including 86 of Italian origin, 48 Flemish, 18 German, 23 French, and 29 clavichords. A small selection of these slides will be shown at the Open Weekend. A detailed article on photographing harpsichords in museum collections will be published in a forthcoming Journal of Australian Association of Musical Instrument Makers.

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HARPSICHORD RECORDINGS

I have no ambition to open a record shop, but am often asked to recommend some exceptional recordings of Harpsichords. And so, I list below the following recent releases. If you can't find them in your local record store, write to me and I will send you either LP properly packed by Certified Mail for only \$4.01 extra. Both the following are digital recordings, and are available on cassette and compact disc as well as LP. Both the featured keyboard instruments, owned by the musicians playing them, were built in the Stonington workshop of Zuckermann Harpsichords Inc.

- The Harmonious Blacksmith (Favourite Harpsichord Pieces) -- Trevor Pinnock
[New French Double Harpsichord by D Jacques Way 1982] Digital Archiv 413 591-1 \$13.99
- Mozart Fortepiano Concertos K415 + K450 -- Malcolm Bilson + The English Baroque Soloists/John Elliot Gardiner
[Fortepiano after Walter by Philip Belt 1977] Digital Archiv 413 464-1 \$13.99

Jean-Pierre Rampal has also just recorded the complete Bach Flute Sonatas accompanied (hardly the correct word for this music) by Trevor Pinnock on his D Jacques Way French Double. Also, Trevor Pinnock has just recorded the complete Partitas, but Clive Lansdale, Classical Manager at POLYGRAM, tells me only the compact disc will shortly be released in Australia.

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THE INSTRUMENT LIST -- Early Keyboard Instruments currently for sale around Australia

The instrument relocation service for Australian Early Keyboard Enthusiasts. Ask for details of these instruments:

- Hubbard French Double 1969 8';8'4"peau de buffle, buff red with gold color bands good condition #07 NSW \$8500
- Zuckermann Triple-Fretted Clavichord Honduras mahogany c1980 carefully built, lightweight knockdown stand #08 WA \$1000
- Zuckermann Italian Virginal IV light green #09 VIC \$2000
- Storrs Spinnet 8' walnut finish with stand and heavy-duty carry case #10 NSW \$1200
- Fleig (Basel) Virginal, copy of Ruckers decorated lid + soundboard green outside #11 NSW \$5000
- Zuckermann slantside parts, the original "kit", walnut veneer, some items damaged or missing suit hobbyist #12 NSW \$200
- Muselar copy of 1604 Ruckers by Nobel (Melb) trad. Flemish dec; marbled ext. papered lid, painted soundboard #13 NSW \$4900
- Zuckermann Flemish Single Harpsichord IV 8'4" green #14 NSW \$4000
- Zuckermann slantside, the original "kit" harpsichord, rosewood finish, 8', buff, delrin plectra, good condition #15 TAS \$1500
- Hugh Craig single manual harpsichord 54 notes C-f''' 2x8' 1x4' buff dark wood finish action needs work #16 TAS \$3000
- Zuckermann Clavichord III 1974 58 notes GG-e''' double strung, recently maintained, dark finish, stand + manual #17 NSW \$2500

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For those several interested technical minds who have enquired about the small print of past issues, here is how it is done: The HARPSICHORD NEWS BRIEF is wordprocessed with Applewriter software on an Apple IIe computer, then printed on an interfaced Adler 8008 daisywheel typewriter with the 12 pitch Tile typeface. 67% Reduction is accomplished on a Canon PC-25 copier, so the whole can be offset printed on two sided foolscap bond. Sorry, get out the full-page magnifier again!

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COMING EVENTS Mark these dates in your diary, then magnetise this to your fridge or pass to a friend!

Sydney Saturday November 23, Sunday 24 10am - 5pm Hurstville 4th ANNUAL OPEN WEEKEND
It's on again! Probably the premier harpsichord event of the southern hemisphere. More harpsichords brought together under one roof in Australia than ever before. Country + interstate visitors especially welcome--but please make a note of the date, this is your final notice. 'Hands-on' experience of a wide range of fine early keyboard instruments, and a chance to see instruments in the making. Selected pre-loved instruments. Music, books, records. Tea + coffee served all day.
Admission FREE Further Information - Carey Beebe (02) 570 8541

Sydney Saturday November 23 8pm sharp Hurstville TERCENTENARY TRIBUTE
Carey Beebe, New French Double Harpsichord -- music by Scarlatti, Handel and JS Bach (in that order)
For some reason, poor Domenico Scarlatti has come third in the Tercentary Trots. This brief recital, organised as part of the Open Weekend, attempts to correct this gross injustice.
* * * * and including by special request * * * *
AROUND THE WORLD IN 90 DAYS
Have a glass of some incredible fruit punch, and enjoy an interesting selection of some of the 1500 slides taken by Carey Beebe of historic keyboard instruments around the world, as well as a few sights interspersed with amusing anecdotes and strange facts. Visit 10 countries in less than an hour, and see Marie Antoinette's Spinet, Mozart's Fortepiano, a Lovely Lady with something to hide in her drawers, and the most precious musical instrument probably ever built.
Admission - \$ 8 including supper Advance Reservation Essential - (02) 570 8541

Canberra Saturday December 7 8:15pm Canberra School of Music ALL MOZART PROGRAMME
Cynthia O'Brien, Baroque Violin and Geoffrey Lancaster, Fortepiano
An opportunity to hear two of Australia's finest musicians play an all Mozart programme including three violin sonatas and one solo keyboard sonata. Fortepiano by D Jacques Way 1983, supplied and prepared by Carey Beebe.

Canberra January 10 to 19 Canberra CAE EARLY MUSIC SUMMER SCHOOL
Teachers include John O'Donnell (hc), Hans-Dieter Michatz (recdr), Miriam Morris (gmba) and Cynthia O'Brien (bqvln).
Further Information - Rodney Hall (0649) 3 4571 or John Stinson (03) 347 0039

Canberra Thursday January 30 8pm St John's, Reid CLAVECIN BY CANDLELIGHT III
Carey Beebe, New French Double Harpsichord - Music by Couperin le Grand, Duphly + Balbastre
Real clavecin by real candlelight. Escape into pre-revolution France and hear probably the finest late French Double Harpsichord in Australia sounding its rarely heard, but intended, repertoire in one of Australia's finest church acoustics.
Admission - \$ 8 Further Information - Richard Milner (062) 30 2312

Canberra Saturday February 1, Sunday 2 Canberra School of Music
AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION of MUSICAL INSTRUMENT MAKERS
Exhibition of all types of complete and incomplete instruments from makers around the country, as well as literature, tools, varnishes, music, books etc. Recitals on Australian instruments throughout the exhibition, a big evening concert on Saturday, and a workshop on Monday 3 with Adelaide harpsichord builder Richard Schaumlöffel. See you there!
Admission - \$ 1 Further Information - Graham Caldersmith (062) 54 9414

Melbourne May 9 to 16 SIXTEENTH MELBOURNE INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL of ORGAN & HARPSICHORD
Highlights include a visit by leading Dutch Harpsichordist Bob van Asperen and his wife, virtuoso recorder player Marijke Miessen; and a Fortepiano recital by Geoffrey Lancaster.
Further Information - Else Christensen (03) 329 8810 or write to MIFOH PO Box 92 PARKVILLE VIC 3052

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IN BRIEF - - - News, Views + Gossip from the World of Harpsichords

Congratulations to Sydney Harpsichordist Peter Watchorn, who was recently awarded the Erwin Bodky Prize in the Bach Competition at the Boston Early Music Festival in May. Peter was selected from twelve other semi-finalists comprising five harpsichordists, three organists, voice, recorder, traverso and baroque violin. There were separate Handel and Scarlatti competitions with different participants. As well as the substantial prestige associated with the event, the winner of each competition received an honorarium of US\$2000, and a recital performance. And Peter's award shows that Australian musicians can rank with the world's finest.

Other Australian Harpsichordists abroad? Priscilla Alderton (Perth) gave entertaining and dazzling impromptu performances at the Boston Festival after gaining a scholarship to assist her attendance. Denise Patton (Sydney Con class of '82) was espied in an accompanying role at a concert in St Martin-in-the-Fields, London. Nicholas Parle (Sydney) has taken up residence in London and is reported by Trevor Pinnock to be a helpful assistant. Margaret Simms (Melbourne) recently completed her MMus under Tony Jennings at the University of Auckland. Kay Medcalf (Perth) will be studying in England next year. Richard Schaumlöffel (Adelaide Harpsichord builder) was looking at instruments around the world recently, with particular emphasis on the Fortepiano.

Young Sydney Harpsichordist Ray Harvey is gaining exposure in concerts lately. Ray scored the highest possible marks in Music for his Higher School Certificate and is now in his third year of the BMus course at the NSW Conservatorium of Music studying with David Kinsela. His instrument, a Zuckermann Flemish Double Harpsichord built by Carey Beebe in 1982, will be on show at the Open Weekend.

"Yes! We Have no Bananas". And our Zuckermann harpsichords have no plywood, threaded tuning pins, heavy jacks with copious adjustment screws, hard steel piano wire, iron frames, pedals, felt bushed plastic covered keyboards. Rather, we have led the world revival with plankwood lids + bottoms; steamed bentsides; the old-style tapered tuning pins which never wear out the wreslplank; jacks tapered in two dimensions and the same mass as the historic wooden ones; latest rediscoveries of the old wire technology with soft iron, yellow + red brass wire; properly balanced, authentically covered scored and arched keyboards. Why are our instruments so much in demand? With profound respect for the old instruments, continual research among the surviving antiques, and constant improvement in our own technology, we have sought to make our instruments the finest early keyboard instruments available today. I hope you will be able to hear our instruments soon.

And now we add Beethoven to the long list of musicians playing Zuckermann instruments. Last April, the Fortepiano was shot in a TV commercial for the Marshall Cavendish "Great Composers" series of books and records. Beethoven's left arm in brocaded sleeve will be shortly be seen nationwide, fingering the famous first notes of the you-know-which-number symphony, followed by suitably frantic scribbles on facsimile manuscript. And Australia's most travelled Harpsichord continues to make appearances on the Philips commercial after eighteen months. The Fortepiano will be featured in concert in Canberra shortly, and will make its second trip to Melbourne next May. Both these instruments, of course, will be at the Open Weekend.

Some important changes have happened to our music + parts orders lately. Please take careful note of the following. In line with modern business practice, a receipt will not be issued for music and parts orders--if a receipt is required, please return your invoice with a SSAE. Postage + packing charges are not included on the various price lists, and prices are subject to change without notice. Most parts items are despatched ex stock same day by Surface Mail, unless Airmail or Priority Paid are specifically requested. All orders under \$50 value are sent Certified Mail--over \$50 value, goods are insured. Certain bulky items are sent fully insured express road freight by our special discount arrangement with COMET. Your itemised invoice is strictly NETT 7 DAYS. Telephone orders welcome. Personal callers welcome, by appointment only please. We must now reserve the right of refusing supply of some items of action parts to scratch builders.

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< > Please rush me details of how I can build my own fine early keyboard instrument from Zuckermann materials. [*] PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY [*]