Crawford to Continue 2 + 2 + 2 Series

Penelope Crawford, adjunct associate professor of fortepiano and harpsichord at the University of Michigan School of Music, will be The Stearns Collection's speaker for the January lecture in the 2 + 2 + 2 Lecture/Concert series. The lecture, entitled "The eighteenth-century Viennese fortepiano: its mechanics and its music," will focus on the early development of the fortepiano, particularly the developments which led to the construction of the Joseph Worel instrument owned by The Stearns.

Professor Crawford, who has received degrees from the Eastman School of Music and the University of Michigan, has also studied at the Mozarteum in Salzburg and the Accademia di Santa Cecilia in Rome. Her teachers have included Cecile Genhart, Rosina Lhevinne, Guido Agosti, Kurt Neumiller, and Gyorgy Sandor. As keyboardist with the Ars Musica Baroque Orchestra from 1974 to 1985, Crawford appeared in concerts throughout the eastern United States and Canada as featured soloist on both harpsichord and fortepiano. She began teaching part-time on the School of Music faculty in 1980.

Interestingly enough, although she has always been interested in music of the Baroque and early Classical eras, all of Crawford's early training was as a modern pianist.

"Even when I lived in Salzburg, I never played a fortepiano. After I started my master's work at Michigan, I became interested in playing the earlier instruments. I had to begin by building a kit harpsichord, because there were no good harpsichords in the area at the time," she states. "Now that I am playing the fortepiano more frequently, after many years of playing just harpsichord, it is a little bit like coming home again."

Joseph Worel built The Stearns' instrument in Vienna in 1825, and it is a good example of a typical instrument of the era, according to Crawford. It utilizes many of the 'gadgets' common to early nineteenth-century keyboard instruments, including a rather interesting array of five pedals. In addition to the damper and una corda pedals found on modern pianos, one may use a 'moderator' pedal, a 'bassoon stop' pedal, or a 'janissary' pedal that actually adds a rhythm section of drums and bells to the possible range of sounds. Crawford plans to explain and demonstrate such unique aspects of the instrument in her lecture.

"Much of the piano literature was written to be performed on an instrument similar to the Worel," Crawford asserts. There are many differences between the key action and sound of a nineteenth-century fortepiano and today's modern piano. For instance, the thick bass texture heard in many Beethoven piano sonatas today would have been much cleaner on the instrument of his own era. Also, according to Crawford, Mozart piano concerti were basically 'symphonies with a piano', and the modern instrument is too overbearing in relation to the orchestra.

In fact, the instruments themselves often caused a composer to write in a certain way. One important example of this is the use of double escapement on the piano. The development of double escapement in the mid-nineteenth century enabled players to repeat a note without lifting their fingers entirely off the key, allowing a legato that would have been impossible to produce in an earlier age on an earlier instrument.

The renewal of popular interest in original instruments began in the late nineteenth century, according to Crawford, and can basically be traced to a few individuals. Arnold Dolmetsch, a British builder and collector of the instruments, performed many concerts and wrote the first comprehensive book on performance practices of early music to be written since the end of the era. Another well-known early proponent of original instruments was August Wenzinger, who almost single-handedly brought about the revival of the viola da gamba, and who still teaches each summer at the Oberlin Baroque Performance Institute.

Prof. Crawford will perform on January 11 at 2 p.m.

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2 + 2 + 2

February Concert

Former Director Warner to be Memorialized

The February presentation of the 2 + 2 + 2 lecture/concert series will take place on Sunday, February 8th, at 2:00 p.m. in the McIntosh Vocal Arts Center at the School of Music. The lecture will be presented by Myron Rosenblum, the president of the Viola d'amore Society of America, and will be in anticipation of the purchase of a viola d'amore by The Stearns in memory of Professor Robert A. Warner, the former director of The Stearns. As always, admission is free. Please pay attention to area newspapers and radio stations for more information about this fitting memorial to former director Warner.
The Watchmaker's Dream
Loomis' saxophone is true musical treasure

It has at least 25% more mechanism than a modern saxophone and is over four pounds heavier. All of its silver parts are made of solid sterling, and the inside has been burnished until it is as smooth as glass.

In both complicated gadgetry and basic intonation, it is years ahead of its time. Yet its designer graduated from MIT with a degree in naval architecture, and it is speculated that he never played an instrument in his life.

How does one react to such an instrument?

"I wish I had one of my own," says Jean Pendell, a doctoral candidate in saxophone performance at the School of Music. "It's really a remarkable horn."

This "remarkable horn" is the Loomis E♭ alto saxophone "double resonance" model, affectionately known as "The Watchmaker's Dream" by technicians due to its complex mechanism, which was designed and manufactured by The Stearns in the early 1950's. It is one of only three known Loomis saxophones in existence at this time, and is truly a tribute to the ingenuity of its maker.

"The story of Allen Loomis and his contributions to the designing of musical instruments has remained, to this day, largely unknown," states Tim Holmes, a Lincoln Park, Michigan, instrument designer and Loomis expert. "We're trying to discover as much information as possible about him so he can be recognized for his work."

What exactly were Loomis' contributions to the modern saxophone, and who was he? Using information gathered from discussions with Holmes and Jean Pendell, this article attempts to address those fascinating questions.

Born in Jackson, Michigan on November 10, 1877, Allen Loomis was the son of a semi-wealthy banker, a fact which allowed him the time he needed to design later in his life. Loomis was obviously an extremely brilliant man. His engineering expertise extended beyond the world of musical instruments. Without ever taking an automotive class, Loomis received his first patent in 1899 for an automobile transmission. In fact, he was working for Packard Motor Co. in Toledo at the time when he was designing the saxophone, and therefore had access to the car manufacturer's state-of-the-art metals and tools. It is speculated that all of his instruments (which also included flute, piccolo, and double reeds) were built by hand at the factory, certainly an unusual environment for musical innovation. A building still stands at the address stamped on the saxophone (3101 Monroe Street, Toledo), and it is reportedly a former auto plant.

In the 1920's, the saxophone underwent what may have been the most drastic evolution period in the history of instruments. Much as the piano had been in the nineteenth century. It was the saltar instrument of choice. Over one million saxophones were manufactured in the ten-year period; countless pieces were written for the amateur as well as the professional player. The somewhat haphazard design of many saxophones of the early twentieth century probably prompted Loomis to search for improvements. Intonation was not always accurate, and he could use his knowledge of engineering to change the mechanism behind many awkward fingerings and tonal imbalances. With an earlier saxophone built by Theobald Boehm as a guide, he could challenge his engineering capabilities and help to improve the quality of the instrument at the same time.

The major emphasis of many of Loomis' revisions to the saxophone was the concept of "double resonance". An explanation of this theory was sent to The Stearns by Joy Loomis Greenleaf, Allen's sister. In a letter sent soon after acquisition of the instrument.

"[The saxophone's] name, Double Resonance, was derived from the fact that the mechanism was contrived to maintain the opening of at least the next two tone holes below the one from which a tone was issuing. This actually provided a more uniform response throughout the instrument than is possible when some of the sound is dampened by soft pads covering a tone hole close to the one opened for a particular tone."

Two examples of this are the movement of the D and E tone holes from under their keys to the other side of the instrument, and a mechanical adjustment that allowed two holes to be open for the playing of an A on the horn.

The Loomis also marks the first use of three individually controlled octave vents on the mouthpiece of the saxophone instead of the two vents common today. The purpose of this was to more accurately approximate the position of the node of soundwaves created when playing in the upper register of the horn.

Although actual usage of it has never been discovered on a horn, Loomis was working on a six-vent mechanism that would have included the nodal points of the altissimo range of the saxophone (an extreme upper register that involves the playing of harmonics above the normal capacity of the horn).

Loomis lengthened the bell of his saxophone and added an extra tone hole, creating a low A mechanism and thereby increasing the range of the normal alto saxophone. He also created entirely new mechanisms and/or alternate keys for many awkward fingerings, most involving the fifth finger of either hand. These included the early use of rollers instead of keys for some of the lower notes on the horn, an early articulated G* mechanism, and alternate keys for C* and D* trills, among other advancements.

In 1926, Loomis moved to Detroit to try to sell his saxophone design to instrument makers there. The saxophone patent itself, issued on April 6, 1920, did not interest makers because of the difficulty of manufacturing such a complex horn in a time when...
Zuckerman
Continued from page 2
others had first heard it in many different situations. Winzenz explained that she had heard the Indian master Ravi Shankar play with the Beatles, while freshman violinist Chuck Bingham had heard Shankar play at the Monterey Jazz Festival.

The appearance of the trio gave the students a new appreciation of this unique style of music. Most said that they would, if the opportunity arose, attend a recital of Indian music in the future. However, Winzenz, who came to the university in September after spending some time in the work force, truly had the most ringing approval.

She stated, “Even my husband said he’d come along when I told him about it. I really learned a lot.”

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Ensure the growth and maintenance of the University’s internationally recognized and respected musical instrument collection.

Enjoy your commitment to the cultural community. With your help, additional instruments may be restored, played, displayed and appreciated by the musical public.

Be becoming a Friend, you will receive News from the Stearns, invitations to the new 2+2+2 lecture series and announcements of upcoming exhibits and performances. Your contribution will help support all activities of the Stearns Collection.

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How Do I Get to The Stearns?

The Stearns Collection of Musical Instruments is located in the new Margaret Dow Towsley wing at the south end of the Earl V. Moore School of Music on Bats Dr. in the University of Michigan North campus area. Enter through the doors nearest to the parking lot. The Macintosh Vocal Arts Center is just across the hall and to the right of the entrance, and The Stearns galleries are down the stairs at the end of the hall to the right.

Admission: Free at all times.

Exhibit Hours: Wednesday-Saturday 4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m., Sunday 2:00-6:00 p.m.

Group Visits and Tours: To arrange for group visits or guided tours by members of The Stearns collection staff, please call (313) 763-4389.

Parking: Metered parking is available south of the entrance doors.

Special January Lecture Scheduled

A lecture/demonstration by Julian Kyas-ty on the Ukrainian bandura will be held on Wednesday, January 14 at 8:00 p.m. in the Rackham Amphitheater, located in the Rackham Building, 915 E. Washington St., on the University of Michigan's central campus. The presentation is jointly sponsored by The Stearns and the Ukrainian Student Association. There will be no admission charge.

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