



Joffe Woodwinds

Dedicated to the History and Performance Practice of Woodwind Doubling

HOME ABOUT CALENDAR ARTICLES PRESENTATIONS PUBLICATIONS

INTERVIEWS BLOG CONTACT

Remembering Joseph Allard



REMEMBERING JOSEPH ALLARD

(12/31/10—5/3/91)

By Dr. Edward Joffe

The following document on the life and teaching philosophies of clarinet/saxophone legend Joseph Allard was handed out at the International Clarinet Association Conference in Los Angeles on August 6, 2012. The panel discussion that I chaired included Eddie Daniels, Joe Soldo, Gary Bovyer and John Cipolla. Audio and video examples shown below from Mr. Allard's playing and teaching career were presented.

Audio and Video Examples

CD

1. Spring, 1978 at Juilliard. Saxophone quartet coaching session.
Ed Joffe, Lawrence Feldman, Ken Hitchcock, and Al Hunt
2. 1964 at Lebanon Valley College, Lancaster, PA.
Masterclass with Frank Stachow and students
3. 2/4/52: "Light Cavalry Overture" by Franz von Suppé
Cities Service Band of America—Paul LaValle, conductor

4. Early 1950s: “L’Arlesienne Suite No.1” by Georges Bizet
with John Wummer (fl); Bob Bloom (ob); Robert McGinness (cl)

DVD

5. 2/3/61: “Rhapsody in Blue” by George Gershwin
The Bell Telephone Hour Orchestra
Jorge Bolet, piano; Paul Whiteman, conductor
6. 5/16/64: “Violin Concerto in D+,” 3rd mvt. by Tchaikovsky
The Bell Telephone Hour Orchestra
Ruggiero Ricci, violin; Donald Voorhees, conductor

Art has to have variety. Unless a tone has variety of color and variety in volume, unless vibrato has variety in pulse, you don't have art. —Joseph Allard

When the effort is lost in the result, the latter is said to be artistic. —Joseph Allard

STUDIES

- Gaston Hamelin (Clarinet, Boston Symphony)
- Edmondo Allegra (Clarinet, Boston Symphony)
- Augustin Duques (Clarinet, NBC Symphony)
- Daniel Bonade (Clarinet, Philadelphia/Cleveland/NY Philharmonic)
- Ralph McLane (Clarinet, Philadelphia Orchestra)
- Lyle Bowen (Lead Saxophone Dorsey Brothers Bands)
- Rudy Weidoeft (Saxophone Soloist/Recording Artist)
- Chester Hazlett (Lead Saxophone, Paul Whiteman Orchestra)

WORK

- Red Nichols (1931)
- DuPont Cavalcade of America (1935-1957)
- Red Norvo Orchestra (1936-1939)
- Bell Telephone Hour (1940-1965)
- WOR Radio Orchestra
- Cities Service Band of America (1947-1957)
- NBC Symphony Orchestra (1949-1954)
- Voice of Firestone (1949-1956)
- Symphony of the Air (1954-1963)

TEACHING

- The Juilliard School (1956-1984)
- Manhattan School of Music (1970-1987)
- New England Conservatory of Music (1970-1987)
- Mannes School of Music (1971-1976)

Notable Students

- Ray Beckenstein
- Bob Berg
- Virgil Blackwell
- Dan Block
- Gary Bovyer
- Michael Brecker
- Carmine Campione
- Lester Cantor
- Harry Carney
- John Cipolla
- Eddie Daniels
- Eric Dolphy
- Marty Ehrlich
- Lawrence Feldman
- Dominick Ferra
- Stan Getz
- Roger Greenberg
- Steve Grossman
- Tom Haber
- Ken Hitchcock
- Brian Hysong
- Ed Joffe
- Billy Kerr
- Lee Konitz
- Burl Lane
- Walt Levinsky
- Dave Liebman
- Teo Macero
- James Meyer
- Victor Morosco
- John Moses
- Ron Odrich

- Don Oehler
- Harvey Pittel
- Bob Porcelli
- Seldon Powell
- Raoul Querze
- Ken Radnofsky
- Roger Rosenberg
- Charles Russo
- Willie Schwartz
- Les Scott
- David Smeyers
- Dennis Smylie
- Jack Snavelly
- Joe Soldo
- Bob Steen
- Dave Tofani
- Jonathan Tunick
- Paul Winter
- John Bruce Yeh
- Pete Yellin

Joe Allard's Concepts

Tone

Joe Allard believed that a tone should have the maximum resonance and with a variety of colors at any dynamic level. He sought a strong and equal balance of overtones in the tone. His teaching emphasized that the throat and mouth cavities should be free of any stress so that one's ability to play any tone, at any dynamic level, at anytime would not be compromised. He favored mouthpieces that had small/medium tip openings, long facings along with medium-hard/hard reeds.

Breathing

Much of what Mr. Allard taught with relation to breathing was strongly connected to the principles expressed in yoga. He described the breathing process as a 3-step function: during inhalation, the ribs, thoracic cavity (lungs), and finally the lower abdominal muscles (in which the diaphragm is located) expand. The reverse occurs during exhalation. He designed certain exercises to encourage the student's awareness of the motions of these parts of the body. Virtually all that he said regarding the breathing process corroborated the teachings of Arnold Jacobs, the renowned brass performer/instructor from the Chicago Symphony.

Embouchure

His concept of embouchure was gleaned from his work with Gaston Hamlin (principal clarinet, Boston Symphony), Ralph McLane (principal clarinet, Philadelphia Orchestra) and Robert Bloom (renowned oboist). He believed that a single lip embouchure could afford all of the benefits of a double lip embouchure plus offer greater flexibility. Joe Allard wanted the lower lip to be positioned in such a way that it covered the entire circumference of the lower teeth so that one could feel the lower lip in between upper and lower teeth when chewing. The lower lip would be lightly stretched and not rigid, thereby allowing the lower teeth to “feel the reed” when playing. The zygomatic major muscle would be stretched lightly upwards from the corners of the mouth to the cheekbones. (This is the muscle that is activated when one smiles.) The upper lip would rest gently on top of the mouthpiece while moving towards the upper teeth and would not create any downward pressure. This would insure the least amount of pressure against the sides of the reed (allowing the reed to vibrate it’s entire length) and free the larynx to be responsive to the dictates of one’s musical imagination.

Tongue Position

Mr. Allard advocated that the tongue be positioned high and wide whether playing a legato or articulated passage. He suggested the use of the word “Dis-ney” in order to help achieve this position. (William Kincaid, the great former principal flute of the Philadelphia Orchestra, also made use of this “Disney” effect.) The syllable “Dis” would allow the tongue to lightly touch the molars on each side of the upper teeth and keep the tongue from falling too far back in the throat. The syllable “Ney” would position the front of the tongue behind the upper teeth at the point where the gumline meets it, insuring a forward tongue placement that he called “forward (French) coning.” This high, wide tongue position would reshape the mouth cavity by creating a more compact space for the air to move and result in greater compression of the air as it would leave the mouth to enter the mouthpiece.