



# Clarinet & Saxophone

Spring 2020 Volume 45, No 1

## CARLOS FERREIRA

New Philharmonia principal

*Destination  
Dinant*

ADOLPHE SAX'S HOME TOWN

*Beethoven  
transformed*

UNEARTHED WIND  
ARRANGEMENTS

*Best of British*

REDISCOVERED  
WORKS FOR CLARINET

*Ligatures  
ranked*

WHICH CAME TOP?

**PLUS:** WEST COAST JAZZ SAX: PART 2 | PROFILING F GERARD ERRANTE | COLIN COWLES AT 80 | NEWS, REVIEWS AND DIARY | SINGLE REED DOCTOR

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PHOTO: ANNE-LAURE LECHAT

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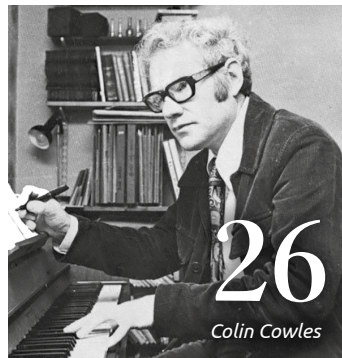
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## Daniel Davis wins CASSGB Young Saxophone Soloist Competition

Daniel Davis, 16, has won the 2020 CASSGB Young Saxophone Soloist Competition, held in memory of the saxophonist Hannah Marcinowicz. Six players were invited to perform a 15-minute recital of own-choice repertoire at Craxton Studios in London, judged by a panel comprising Richard Ingham, Sarah Watts and Naomi Sullivan.

Daniel Davis, 16, from Cwmbran, won £1,500 plus a performance slot at the 2020 CASSGB Single Reed Day. Second prize went to Alfie Ward, 15, from Manchester (£1,000). In third place was Rania van den Ouweland, 19, from Brighton (£500). The other finalists were Olivia Robinson (18, York), Lucia Breslin (17, Harpenden) and Charlotte Arthur (17, Jersey).

Richard Ingham commented: 'All three judges were very impressed to hear such confident and musical performances from all six of our finalists. Those in the audience were privileged to hear some of the best players of a new generation of saxophonists – the future is secure!'



*Pictured from left to right: Rania van den Ouweland, Charlotte Arthur, Olivia Robinson, Alfie Ward, Daniel Davis, Richard Ingham, Naomi Sullivan, Sarah Watts. (Finalist Lucia Breslin not in picture.)*

Daniel Davis said: 'I'm absolutely delighted to be named the winner of the CASSGB Young Saxophone Soloist Competition. I had a great day travelling with my family and accompanist from South Wales to London and enjoyed meeting other young musicians from across the UK. It was a thoroughly exciting experience and I'd like to thank CASSGB for putting on the event and providing a platform for young musicians to perform.'

The next CASSGB competition will be for young clarinetists, to be announced in due course.

## CASSGB 2020 Single Reed Day: 11 October

CASSGB is hosting a new event for 2020: a single reed 'Play Day Plus' on 11 October at Richard Huish College in Taunton, in partnership with Centre for Young Musicians Taunton. If you are a clarinet and/or sax player, please save the date and join us!

For this event we are tilting the focus firmly towards playing, for everyone to join in. There will be massed ensembles throughout the day, ending with a special final performance, all led by the inimitable James Rae. Alongside this there will be guest recitals, pop-up performances and a trade exhibition with instruments and gear to try out and sheet music to browse. We hope also to have an instrument repairer on site.

We are excited to be running this event in partnership with Centre for Young Musicians Taunton, which will allow young and older musicians to play together. Through both organisations' networks, we hope to draw a good number of attendees on the day for a powerful ensemble!

Please keep an eye on our website ([www.cassgb.org](http://www.cassgb.org)) and on our monthly e-newsletter and social media feeds for details as they are announced. Prices and booking information will be published in the next issue and before that online.

**Clarinet & Saxophone**  
SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN

## Rob Burton wins Sussex Prize for Woodwind at Royal Over-Seas League

The saxophonist Rob Burton has won the Sussex Prize for Woodwind at the 68th Royal Over-Seas League Annual Music Competition. The award was made at the Wind, Brass and Percussion Section Final, which Burton did not win; the Sussex Prize is given to a runner up. The other competitors were Emma Halnan (flute), Katherine Jones (oboe), Mark Taylor (flute) and Sirius Chau (flute). Chau took first place and will proceed to the Gold Medal Final on 1 June.

On Instagram, Burton commented: 'I honestly entered the competition not expecting to even get to the semi-final, so getting to the Final and being a prize winner was more than I could have asked for!'

[www.rosl.org.uk/amc](http://www.rosl.org.uk/amc)



*Rob Burton*



*Timothy Orpen*

## Timothy Orpen appointed as principal clarinet with RSNO

Timothy Orpen will join the Royal Scottish National Orchestra as principal clarinet in August. His appointment follows a lengthy search after the retirement of John Cushing in 2014; Cushing held the post for 36 years. Orpen moves to the RSNO from the orchestra of the Royal Opera House, where he has been principal for the past four years.

Orpen is a founder member and principal of the Aurora Orchestra. He has performed and broadcast concertos with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Bournemouth Symphony and Royal Northern Sinfonia, where he was principal for three years. He has also performed as guest principal with the LSO, LPO, Philharmonia and London Sinfonietta.

He said: 'The Royal Scottish National Orchestra is an incredibly talented team of musicians at the heart of the musical life of Scotland and I am very excited to join as principal clarinet. The RSNO is incredibly versatile and places established masterpieces alongside cutting-edge contemporary music.'

'I'm looking forward to bringing great music to people all over Scotland and hopefully to inspire the next generation of music lovers. I also can't wait to get into the hills and bag some more Munros!'

[www.rsno.org.uk](http://www.rsno.org.uk)

# BELGIUM BOUND

*Just as the winter issue of Clarinet & Saxophone was going to press, the International Adolphe Sax Competition was taking place in Dinant, Belgium. Stephanie Reeve dropped in for the semi-finals, and to see Adolphe Sax's home town*

Dinant is nestled either side of the River Meuse in the Wallonia region of Belgium. The town makes the most of its most famous son: a giant saxophone in various shades of green was placed just outside the station entrance, and more saxophones came into view as I headed into town. An avenue of saxophones, representing various nationalities, lined the Charles de Gaulle bridge, which crosses the Meuse and leads to the main centre. The nationalities were not just for each saxophone, but also for those present for the Concours International Adolphe Sax: competitors, jury, tourists, enthusiasts and reporters just passing through, as I was, to get a taste of the competition.

Thanks to efficient and speedy travel by Eurostar and a single change in Brussels for a local train, I arrived three hours after leaving London. I was in good time for the competition's afternoon rounds, so I headed there via a couple of sights of interest.

On a side street away from the bridge is the Adolphe Sax Museum. This is a small space on the ground floor of the house that Sax was born in. Exhibits include early keywork, tubes and bodies, as well as complete instruments. Famous saxophone solos from orchestral, chamber, solo and jazz works can be heard, and panels and video detailing Sax's life and work can be read and viewed. The famous statue of Adolphe on the bench with a saxophone is directly outside, and several visitors were having their photos taken. Along the street is a series of cut-outs of the different saxophone sizes.

Other attractions include the Maison de la Pataphonie, a fascinating museum space that explores sound through musical instrument inventions, drawing on the spirit of Adolphe Sax; and the Citadel, a



Taking place roughly every four years since, the Concours International Adolphe Sax is the Olympics of the saxophone world and attracts players of the highest standard

fortress at the top of the rocky outcrop, reached by a funicular (or a very long staircase). The high cliffs either side of the river make Dinant a long town but, as I discovered when walking from the train station at one end to the hotel at the other, it is difficult to get lost. Remembering I was here for the music, I went to collect my programme and hear some saxophone players from the next generation.

The International Adolphe Sax Association (L'AIAS) was set up in 1990 and aims, among other things, to promote the saxophone, to reach out to all musicians who play the instrument, and to encourage the composition of contemporary works. L'AIAS also works to promote the town of Dinant. The latest unveiling was the Tour Adolphe Sax, a new bandstand just up the hill behind the Cultural Centre, to be used

for performances. L'AIAS also looks after the Adolphe Sax trail, which includes the works of art featuring the saxophone that I'd kept coming across on my trek through town.

## The competition

By far the biggest event run by L'AIAS is the international competition, which first took place in 1994, when the French player Vincent David was crowned winner. Taking place roughly every four years since, the Concours International Adolphe Sax is the Olympics of the saxophone world and attracts players of the highest standard. This year over 500 entries were received, and 92 players were selected to participate in the public rounds.

Set in the Cultural Centre, the first round and semi-finals had been taking place since October. I settled into the concert hall balcony with other spectators to hear two sessions of semi-finals. Eighteen players had been selected, and the standard was, as expected, very high indeed. All played *Eglogue et Danse Pastorale* by René Corniot, followed by an accompanied piece from a selection including *L'Incandescence De La Bruine* by Bruno Mantovani and *Holy Roller* by Libby Larsen. These difficult works were made to sound effortless with some astonishing technical leaps, sudden contrasts and

# WEST COAST JAZZ SAXOPHONY: PART TWO

Following on from his article in the winter 2019 issue, **Kenneth Morris** completes his two-part exploration of the American west coast 'cool' jazz sax sound

This article continues on from an earlier instalment (winter 2019 issue), in which I covered the development of west coast 'cool' jazz saxophony during the period 1944-55. Here, I consider the same topic from 1955 to the present day. To begin, let's look at some seminal material from some of our previously identified 'foundationists' of the cool sax style, this time focusing on what they got up to after 1955.

As we move through the 60s to the millennium and on to the present day, musicians who dedicate their career to west coast stylistics are in the minority

## Art Pepper

We'll start with Art, who kept his distinctive style through to 1982. Three of his important 50s albums for Contemporary Records rate five stars (in the *All Music Guide to Jazz*, fourth edition): *The Way It Was* (1956-60), *The Artistry of Pepper* (1956-57) and *Meets the Rhythm Section* (1957). All three and a great deal more were available to purchase (from Amazon) or stream (from Spotify) at the time of writing.

Especially rewarding are collections of six, eight or even 12 (old Pepper LP) albums now in CD reissue sets. Over the last five or six years, several CD publishers, for example Real Gone Jazz and Avid Jazz, have taken advantage of original jazz recordings coming out of copyright, which has permitted them to make available box-sets featuring scores of top jazz saxophonists at extremely low prices.

Art, despite unfortunate interruptions to his playing career on account of incarceration and substance misuse, managed to produce volumes of five-star quality records, some a little 'warmer' than the seminal three above, including *Goin' Home* (1982, on alto and clarinet with pianist George Cables) just a month before he died. Like Stan Getz – and I'm quoting Scott Yanow of *All Music* – 'virtually every recording Art made is worth getting.'

# Latest ligatures

Following his article on clarinet and saxophone ligatures in this magazine five years ago, the Canadian clarinetist and saxophonist **Chuck Currie** revisits the topic to discuss various new models introduced since then, and to give his ultimate ligature ranking



*The Jody Jazz  
Power Ring  
ligature*

This follow-up to the previous article 'Ligature Choices for Clarinet and Saxophone' (published in *Clarinet & Saxophone* in 2015) was requested by reader Steve Wilson via the letters page a few issues back. I found the ligature of my dreams just after the previous article was published, so those ligatures are included in this update, along with other ligatures brought out in the four years since.

Some players maintain that ligatures make little difference to one's tone and articulation, but blind testing, both in person and with recordings, has yielded opinions from many players that contradict the nay-sayers. Differences can be discerned that are frequently far from subtle, and listeners are often largely agreed about their preferences. I note that many users of single-reed forums and bulletin boards mock differences in ligatures and other equipment without ever having tried them.

I've kept many ligatures that I've found excellent, and I regularly use many of them. There are obvious differences of sound between even these terrific products, let alone in comparison with poorer ligatures. They are ranked at the end of the article.

In the previous article, I established that ligatures with two vertical rails contacting the stock of the reed, with the least material of any kind contacting the mouthpiece, will seat the reed well while allowing both reed and mouthpiece to vibrate as much as possible. Yes, our imagination of our own sound is the most powerful element that influences our tone and articulation and musicality, but the design and quality of the mouthpiece, reed and ligature is next in importance. All this is more important than our instrument, as long as it is a decent horn with reasonable intonation and pads that seal!

## Silverstein

I was an early adopter of Silverstein ligatures, and they are now well known and popular. I purchased 14 of them for all sizes of saxophone and clarinet in 2015, and Silverstein gave me an extra two for bass clarinet with silver-plated and gold-plated bars to test against the standard titanium. I found titanium darkest and most resistant, silver brightest with greatest ease of articulation, and the gold bars had the most burnished shimmering ring. I set up my jazz mouthpieces with the titanium version and my classical mouthpieces with the gold one. I also found that having two 'fine tuner' bars on each side (you can buy and add as many of these as you want) delivers a denser core sound.



Silverstein is the only non-two-rail ligature that has ever given me good results. I believe that this is because the cord on this ligature is so high-tech, firm and dense that it will not 'flatten' and maintains minimal surface contact with the reed. The 'fine tuner' bars on either side of the reed can be moved from right beside the reed to any point around the circumference.

The legendary British clarinetist Leslie Craven has worked with acoustic scientist Dr Robert Watson, using a high-end digital oscilloscope, to chart frequency response with the Silverstein ligature for all partials from 256 hertz to 12,536 hertz, capturing all possible harmonics of the fundamental tone. This scientific testing against four other highly respected ligatures backed up the subjective opinions of many single-reed players: that the Silverstein ligature provides an incredibly rich sound with great ease of articulation. The spectrum analysis proved that adjustment of the 'fine tuner' bars alters the focus of the sound, generally providing more high partials when closer to the reed, enhancing projection; and fewer high partials when moved towards the sides, giving a warmer sound.

I used these ligatures exclusively until I purchased some newer high-end ligatures for this article. ➡