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Investigating Twenty-five Volumes of The Flutist Quarterly: A Content Analysis

Ву

Maile Delores Mills

Thesis Approved:

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Date June 16, 2017

Investigating Twenty-five Volumes of *The Flutist Quarterly*: A Content Analysis Study

Ву

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Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of
Eastern Kentucky University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Master of Music
August, 2017

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# DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my parents

Debra and Keo Mills

for their unwavering support.

### **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

I would like to thank my advisor and mentor for this thesis, Dr. Christine Carucci, for her patience and guidance throughout my writing and research. I would also like to thank the other committee members, Dr. Kristen Kean, Dr. Bernardo Scarambone, and Dr. Thomas Couvillon, for their comments and assistance with my thesis. I would like to express my thanks to my family for their unwavering support and love throughout my experience in graduate school. Finally, I would like to most sincerely thank Kristina Lipscomb for being such a supportive colleague.

#### **ABSTRACT**

This study examines scholarly articles in twenty-five volumes of *The Flutist Quarterly*, which is published by the National Flute Association. Articles were specifically examined for emerging categories, and frequency and percentages of each was noted. In addition, major trends that have occurred within the periodical over the past twenty-four years were examined. Using a content analysis, N = 391 articles were coded to fit into ten prominent categories: artist profile, career-related, composition, health, historical, instrument, interview, pedagogy, performance practice, and other. Results indicated that "Artist Profile" (21.99%, n = 86), "Interview" (18.93%, n = 74), and "Historical" (16.11%, n = 63) categories were the most prominent. In addition, trends over the past twenty-five volumes have shown an emphasis on performers throughout the articles, as well as a tendency toward performance-based topics such as popular compositions and performance practices. The least popular areas of publication included pedagogy (5.11%, n = 20), health (4.09%, n = 16), career-related (3.32%, n = 13), and instrument (3.07%, n = 12) categories. Additional trends are noted to inform and advance the flutist community.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHA	PTER	PAGE
I.	INTRODUCTION	1
	Statement of the Problem	3
	Significance of the Problem	3
II.	LITERATURE REVIEW	5
	Background of the National Flute Association	5
	Background of The Flutist Quarterly	7
	Content Analysis Background	8
	Purpose of the Research	9
	Summary	9
III.	METHODOLOGY	11
	Procedure	11
IV.	RESULTS	16
V.	DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION	22
LIST	OF REFERENCES	24
Арр	endices	26
	A. List of Journal Articles by Year and Volume	26

# LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	P	PAGE	
1.	Categories and subcategories of topics	12	

# LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE		
1.	Frequency of articles by category over the last twenty-five volumes	
	in The Flutist Quarterly	16
2.	Frequency of artist profile article subcategories	18
3.	Frequency of historical article subcategories	18
4.	Frequency of instrument article subcategories	19
5.	Frequency of interview article subcategories	20

#### **CHAPTER 1**

#### INTRODUCTION

Known for its vast array of resources, including opportunities for professional, amateur, and blossoming young flutists, the National Flute Association provides flute enthusiasts a beneficial, informational network for flute pedagogy, methodology, research, and education. Founded in 1972 by Mark Thomas, The National Flute Association, also known as the NFA, is the largest flute organization in the world. In the NFA, approximately five thousand members from around the world, from more than fifty countries, join together both in person and online to support the organization's mission of "Inspiring Flutists, Enriching Lives" (National Flute Association, 2017). Members of the NFA include leading soloists, orchestral players, jazz and world music performers, teachers, adult amateurs, and students of all ages. The vision of the NFA is to be known as a premier resource worldwide, valued by its members, and relevant to all interested in music and the flute. Through the pursuit of their goals to encourage a higher standard of artistic excellence for the flute, its performers, and its literature, some key milestones that the NFA has achieved to date include being a liaison with more than two hundred United States flute clubs and extensive music commissioning activities. Annual commissions include promoting new works for the Young Artist and High School Soloist competitions and biennially for the Piccolo Artist competition. In addition, cultural outreach scholarships are offered in fifteen cities (National Flute Association, 2017). Through the NFA Music Library, the largest lending library of flute

music in the world, NFA members have access to a collection of more than fifteen thousand works.

The National Flute Association also holds annual flute conventions for members to gather and share their love of music and the flute. At the annual conventions, flutists can audition for master classes, perform with professional flute ensembles and flute choirs, compete with other flutists worldwide in various performance categories, and see the latest trends in flute music, flute accessories, flute instruments, and more from a wide variety of exhibitors.

As a "premier organization for the flute," the NFA has several core values that drive their efforts as a resource for their members:

The NFA honors, values, and respects the contributions of all members equally; promotes collegiality and embodies integrity; draws strength from our diversity and provides meaningful experiences to all members; promotes flute performance, pedagogy, and development by providing a forum for the exchange of ideas; enriches the repertoire for the flute through commissioning, special publications, and related activities; inspires and cultivates personal, professional, and artistic excellence (National Flute Association, 2017).

These core values of the NFA permeate throughout all the activities and publications that the NFA presents to the world of flutists. The most prominent publication that represents these core values of the NFA is *The Flutist Quarterly*, a publication that has been in existence since 1975. *The Flutist Quarterly* is a journal that provides valuable information to the members of the NFA. Published topics include flute pedagogy, as well as related topics in the areas of composition, history, and flute artistry. The

publication also offers interesting information on famous flute-makers, performers, composers of flute music, and flute related compositions.

# Statement of the Problem

Throughout the forty-five years that the NFA has existed, there have been many opportunities presented for flutists to advance and share the knowledge and studies in our field through the annual NFA convention, the Graduate Research Competition, and also the leading publication of the NFA, *The Flutist Quarterly*. There is little information documenting the history and publication trends related to *The Flutist Quarterly*, which is important due to its ability to reach flutists on a national and international level.

The purpose of this study was to examine and catalog the published content of The Flutist Quarterly for trends over the last twenty-five volumes (1992-2016). Specific research questions were as follows:

- 1. What were the most prominent topics found within *The Flutist Quarterly* from 1992-2016?
- 2. Have any specific publication trends occurred in *The Flutist Quarterly* over the past twenty-five volumes?

## Significance of the Problem

As the vision of the National Flute Association is "to be known as a premier resource worldwide, valued by its members, and relevant to all interested in music and the flute," (National Flute Association, 2017) it is essential that *The Flutist Quarterly* 

represents a beneficial, relevant resource for not only the members of the NFA, but also to music educators throughout the world. Investigating the development of this journal will allow for greater insight into what kind of information the periodical is producing and, if any, what trends have occurred in the last twenty-four years of its publication. Determining how *The Flutist Quarterly* has been published in the past will provide information on how future publications of the journal can impact the sharing of flute knowledge with the world. If there are obvious trends in the information presented throughout the past twenty-five volumes of *The Flutist Quarterly*, bringing these to light will also allow for a more relatable publication to be created and shared with the flute community.

#### CHAPTER 2

#### LITERATURE REVIEW

Background of the National Flute Association

Mark Thomas, flutist and music educator, is a graduate of the Peabody Music Conservatory in Baltimore, Maryland (Thomas, 2017). In 1972, he founded the *National Flute Association*, which began as an organization for flutists to share their love of music and the flute with each other. With the exception of local flute festivals and competitions hosted by the local flute clubs, there was not any large gathering of flutists or even flute conventions anywhere in the world at that time. The NFA was the first organization that offered a large-scale, international forum for flutists of all ages and backgrounds. This phenomenon eventually grew to include annual flute conventions presented by the NFA, which are the most well-known events hosted by the NFA. Mark Thomas received the *National Flute Association's* "Distinguished Service Award" in 2005 for his work in founding and developing the international organization and currently remains the Honorary Life President of the organization.

At the annual NFA flute conventions, which are hosted in a different major continental United States city every year, flutists from around the world gather to celebrate the accomplishments and progress of flutes and flute music. Throughout the conventions, many different workshops and sessions are offered, all covering various topics. Some of workshops from the past have included topics related to musician's health, performance, auditions, career advice, modern composition techniques,

performance practice, and much more. Additionally, the annual NFA conventions also host a variety of professional and amateur performance competitions for flutists, including solo categories in Baroque Flute Artist, Convention Performers, High School Soloist, Jazz Artist, Piccolo Artist, and Young Artist. There are also masterclass categories in Baroque Flute, Jazz Flute, Masterclass Performers, Orchestral Audition, and Piccolo Orchestral Audition, as well as performing opportunities for flute choir categories in Collegiate, High School, Jazz Flute Big Band, and Professional. Finally, there are non-performance categories in Arts Venture, Flute Choir Composition, Graduate Research, and Newly Published Music.

In an effort to innovate and draw in community support, the biennial *Arts*Venture Competition is "designed to reward new thinking and viable, innovative ideas"

by offering a grant to encourage "projects that approach performance and education in a new way (often through collaboration with communities or other genres or media)"

(The National Flute Association, 2017). This unique competition in the NFA supports the expansion and development of the music community by encouraging outreach and community support, and to draw new interest in the NFA and its mission.

In addition to performance events, masterclass opportunities, and commission projects, each NFA convention also hosts the notorious NFA Gala Dinner and concert, which honors Lifetime Achievement Award recipients, respects deceased accomplished flutists, and often presents premieres of the newest flute compositions. The annual NFA conventions are not only excellent educational events for flutists of all levels, but are also helpful for networking and establishing a presence within the flute community.

As an organization, the NFA publishes various beneficial resources, including *The Flutist Quarterly* magazine, *The Flutist's Handbook: A Pedagogy Anthology* by Michael Stoune, *Kincaidiana: A Flute Player's Notebook* by John C. Krell, two guidebooks of selected flute repertoire ("A Graded Guide for Teachers" and "A Graded Guide of Etudes, Daily Studies, and Method Books"), and five CDs in the NFA's Historical Series (William Kincaid, Joseph Mariano, Robert Willoughby, Maurice Sharp, and Frances Blaisdell). (National Flute Association, 2017)

# Background of The Flutist Quarterly

In 1975, three years after the creation of the NFA, the leading publication of the National Flute Association was founded (The National Flute Association, 2017).

Previously titled *The Newsletter of the National Flute Association, The Flutist Quarterly* is recognized throughout the international flute community for its quality and visual appeal (The National Flute Association, 2017). According to the NFA web site:

The magazine features articles written by leading flute performers, scholars, and teachers and news about developments and accomplishments in the NFA membership and flute community at large. Article topics range from breaking discoveries and new insights in research and methodologies to in-depth analyses of new works. Profiles of the world's leading flutists and pedagogues, significant activities in communities from Boston to China and all points in-between, performance health insights, and developments in flute repair and manufacture are among topics explored in the magazine's feature articles. Regular departments include reports on flute club activities, Annual NFA Convention news and updates, obituaries, international news, news from and about the NFA, announcements of new products, and reviews of new CDs, music, and books pertaining to flute (The National Flute Association, 2017).

Throughout the forty-two different volumes of *The Flutist Quarterly*, this publication provides "information and articles about the performance, study, history, manufacture, and enjoyment of flutes, flutists, and flute music" (The National Flute Association, 2017).

## Content Analysis Background

Content analysis was used as the primary framework for examining *The Flutist Quarterly* journals. Content analysis can be defined as "the systematic, objective, quantitative analysis of message characteristics" (Neuendorf, 2017, p. 1). It can include both human-coded analyses and computer-aided text analysis (CATA), and it can be used in many different ways to analyze the world around us.

As a growing method in the field of research, content analysis and its techniques have been rapidly increasing in range and usage. It is useful in fields of research where identifying and labeling trends in data allows for a better understanding of historical research patterns. Many fields have used content analysis for their research, with a long history of use in communication, journalism, sociology, psychology, and business. However, content analysis has expanded as an acceptable method of research in other fields, such as library and information science, in medical fields such as nursing, psychiatry, and pediatrics, as well as in many other fields (Neuendorf, 2017).

The field of music education has employed content analysis as a method of research and study for several important academic journals. This has allowed music researchers an opportunity to "reflect on our past accomplishments in order to gain perspective and to establish goals for the future" (Yarbrough, 1984, p. 213). As can be

seen in the works of Yarbrough and others (Diaz and Silveira, 2014; Goldenberg, 2006; Johnson and Miksza, 2012; Kantorski and Stegman, 2006; McCarthy, 1999), content analyses can allow for improvement and further development in the field of music.

Content analyses can be used to focus on the development and trends within prominent music journals, and how these different informational trends could be used to advance their related fields.

# Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this study was to examine and catalog the published content of *The Flutist Quarterly* for trends over the last twenty-five volumes (1992-2016). Specific research questions were as follows:

- 1. What were the most prominent topics found within *The Flutist Quarterly* from 1992-2016?
- 2. Have any specific publication trends occurred in *The Flutist Quarterly* over the past twenty-five volumes?

## **Summary**

Founded in 1975, *The Flutist Quarterly* is recognized throughout the international flute community for its quality and visual appeal and is known as a premier resource related to flutes and flutists throughout the world. To date, no studies have examined the content of the publications found within *The Flutist Quarterly*. The purpose of this study was to examine and catalog the published content of *The Flutist* 

*Quarterly* for trends over the last twenty-four years (1992-2016). To best answer the research statement, a content analysis was used, based on existing work in the field of music (Diaz & Silviera, 2014; Goldenberg, 2004; Johnson & Miksza, 2012; Kantorski & Stegman, 2006; McCarthy, 1999; and Yarborough, 1984).

#### CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

# Procedure

For this study, articles (*N*= 391) from twenty-five volumes of journals spanning 1992-2016 were surveyed. For inclusion in this study, articles were determined based on their appearance within the "Features" section of *The Flutist Quarterly*, or were those which met the criteria of being scholarly and informative. Articles that were not reviewed include obituaries, reminisces, and pictorial memories; reflections or reports on events, including NFA convention or NFA committee news or reports; reviews of music, recordings, or products; letters to the editor/president; short stories, poems, or comics; ongoing columns; job postings; or other articles that did not fit the criteria of being scholarly and informative. Once appropriate articles were identified, the volume, edition year, and page number from each article were recorded. Reprints and sources of reprints were also noted. Each article was categorized by subject and subcategory, as deemed appropriate (see Table 1).

Table 1. Categories and subcategories of topics.

Category	Subcategories
Artist Profile	Composer, Performer, Professional
Career-Related	
Composition	
Health	
Historical	Composer, Composition, General, Instrument, Performer
Instrument	Care, Mechanics, Purchase
Interview	Composer, Conductor, Performer
Other	
Pedagogy	
Performance Practice	Extended Techniques/Modern Practices

Classifications of categories and subcategories were determined before beginning the database research. Category and subcategory classifications were created based on topics of interest often discussed and researched both in the journal itself and popular topics of interest discussed, researched, and presented at the National Flute Association annual conferences. Using existing research as a guide (Diaz & Silviera, 2014; Goldenberg, 2004; Johnson & Miksza, 2012; Kantorski & Stegman, 2006; McCarthy, 1999; and Yarborough, 1984), categories were determined based on topic words or key phrases found within the articles or titles. Categories were defined as follows:

**Artist Profile**: Articles related to giving a description of a composer, performer or professional in the flute field. The subcategory field defines and lists the description of the artist profile as either composer, performer, professional, or other. If the profile

featured someone other than a composer, performer, or professional in the flute field, that was noted in the subcategory and notes sections of the database.

Career-Related: Articles related to acquiring a job or making a career as a musician.

**Composition**: Articles related to an original piece of music, either a song or an instrumental music piece, the structure of a musical piece, or the process of creating or writing a new song or piece of music; can sometimes be referred to as works of music.

**Health**: Articles related to a musician's wellness, occupational health, and injury prevention as well as techniques in modern health practices and education for musicians, such as body mapping and the Alexander Technique.

*Historical*: Articles related to music history, also known as historical musicology, which is the highly divers subfield of the broader discipline of musicology that studies music from a historical viewpoint. Subcategories included articles related to a specific composer, composition, general historical perspective, instrument, or performer.

*Instrument*: Articles related to instruments (particularly in the flute family), instrument fingering and techniques, instrument mechanics, instrument care, and instrument purchase. Subcategories included articles related to the care of the instrument, the mechanics of the instrument, or the purchase of the instrument.

Interview: Articles that contain an interview with composers, conductors, artists, and/or professionals. Subcategories included articles related to a specific composer conductor, or performer

**Other**: Articles that could not be categorized into another category but still met all of the criteria of an article for this study. Potential categories of these articles were placed in the "subcategory" section of the database.

**Pedagogy**: Articles related to the study of the methods and principles of music instruction.

Performance Practice: Articles related to musical techniques employed in specific musical genres during specific musical eras and is, quite often, referring to techniques that are implied, and not written or notated; also related to practice techniques that allow for further development and improvement in the playing of an instrument. A subcategory of this performance practice category was extended techniques/modern practices, which included articles related to unconventional, unorthodox, or non-traditional methods of singing or of playing musical instruments employed to obtain unusual sounds or timbres; these are also referred to as 20th or 21st century techniques and music.

To ensure reliability of the analysis procedures, a random selection of articles (20%, n = 78) were coded using similar procedures by a secondary researcher. Interrater reliability was calculated at 93%, demonstrating a strong consistency in the analysis and cataloguing process.

One influential limitation that significantly affected this research was an error in the National Flute Association's cataloguing of the journal set and volume numbers. At the start of the cataloguing process, many of the older journals (1992-2000) were not available in the NFA online library. Because of this, physical copies from several different libraries were used to complete the database. The National Flute Association began to create electronic copies of the older *The Flutist Quarterly* journals during this time and added them to the online library of their publications. During this addition to the online NFA library, it was noted that several of the older journals had been misprinted with incorrect catalogue journal set and volume numbers. This required a careful reexamination of the cataloging process used throughout this study.

## **RESULTS**

After cataloguing all the articles (N=391) into the database outlines above, results were determined by examining trends in the data as they pertained to the initial research questions. Of the emerging article categories, the largest category was the artist profile category (n=86). The next largest categories were the interview category (n=74) and the historical category (n=63), as seen in Figure 1 below.

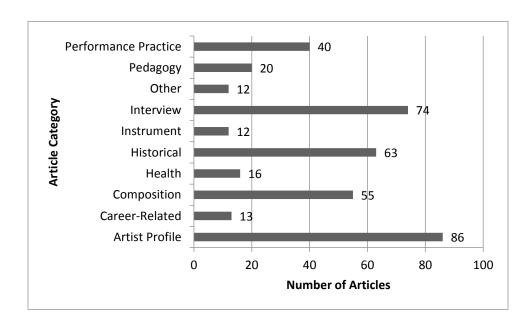


Figure 1. Frequency of articles by category over the last twenty-five volumes of *The Flutist Quarterly*.

The top three categories in *The Flutist Quarterly* over the past twenty-five volumes include, artist profile, interview and historical categories, which represent 57.03% (n=223) of all the articles researched. Subsequent categories were the composition category (14.07%, n=55), the performance practice category (10.23%, n=40), and the pedagogy category (5.12%, n=20). The least popular article categories included health (4.09%, n=16), career related (3.32%, n=13), instrument (3.07%, n=12), and other (3.07%, n=12) categories.

Larger categories were broken into subcategories, which provided a more informative analysis of *The Flutist Quarterly*. As seen in Figure 2, an overwhelming 88.37% (*n*=76) of the artist profile articles discussed performers, while the remaining 11.63% (*n*=10) of the artist profiles were about composers and professionals. Given that *The Flutist Quarterly* is geared towards being a "premier resource worldwide" for flutists, it is not surprising that much of the content is related to sharing information about the top flute performers.

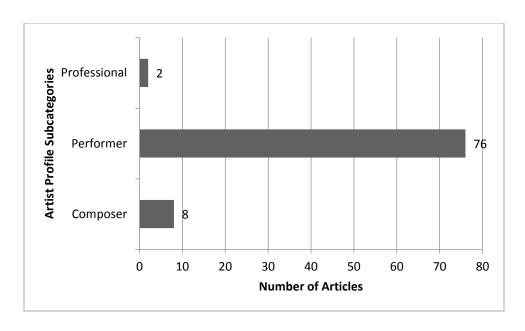


Figure 2. Frequency of artist profile article subcategories.

Throughout the historical article category, the articles were more evenly distributed throughout the subcategories (see Figure 3). The majority of the historical articles discussed general topics (30.16%, n=19) or composers (28.57%, n=18).

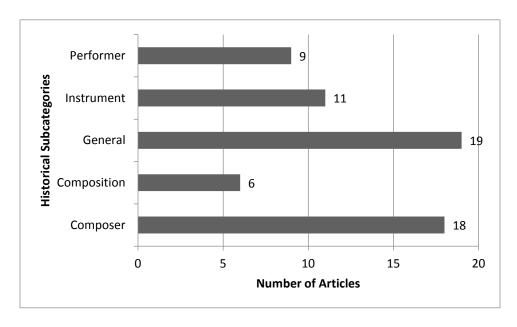


Figure 3. Frequency of historical article subcategories.

In the instrument category, a majority of the articles discussed the mechanics of the flute (n=10), which represents 83.33% of all the instrument-related articles (see Figure 4).

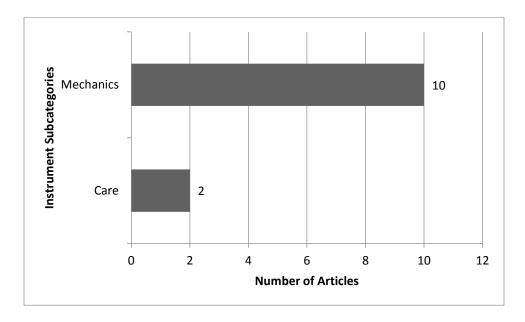


Figure 4. Frequency of instrument article subcategories.

Finally, in the interview article category, the majority of the articles represented the performer subcategory (n=62), with only a few denoting the composer (12.16%, n=9) or other (4.05%, n=3) subcategories. As seen in Figure 5, the majority of interviews involved performers, which accounted for 83.78% of the interview articles.

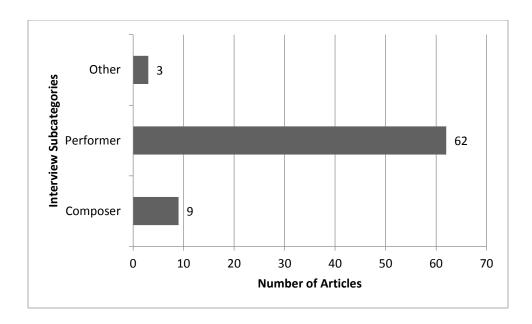


Figure 5. Frequency of interview article subcategories.

Over the past twenty-five volumes, *The Flutist Quarterly* has had a tendency to focus on artist profile, interview, and historical articles. Of those top three categories, which accounted for 57.03% (*n*=223) of the articles, there was an emphasis on performers. In the artist profile and interview categories, performers represented 86.25% (*n*=160) of the articles. An additional trend of *The Flutist Quarterly* over the past twenty-five volumes included an emphasis on flute-performance based topics, such as composition (14.07%, *n*=55) and performance practice (10.23%, *n*=40). Surprisingly, the least popular topics for articles included the pedagogy, health, career-related, instrument and other categories. Despite the publication's focus on flute performance and flute professionals, several artist profiles and interviews throughout the years featured other prominent artists and field professionals, including sculpture artists, pianists, clarinetists, trumpeters, historians and more. Over the twenty-five volumes,

the categories of article topics have become more defined and organized in the presentation of information, especially in the artist profile and interview articles.

Compared to the 1992 journals, artist profile and interview articles twenty-four years later have an organized, crafted layout that the authors follow in sharing their information, which allows for more attractive presentation and more effective communication. Over time, the artist profile and interview categories have grown significantly. In many of the past journals, these articles often discussed important performers and musicians that had a great influence in the flute community throughout their lifetime. However, in today's publications, authors discuss not only the great inspirations of the past, but also the most popular young artists and flute prodigies of the world.

#### CHAPTER 5

### **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

After examining the published content of *The Flutist Quarterly* over the past twenty-five volumes, it was revealed that the artist profile category is the most popular topic for content. Specifically, artist profiles of performers tend to be featured. The next most popular categories included the interview and historical categories, with the performer interviews and general historical categories being the most prominent subcategories. The most significant information revealed by this content analysis is that articles related to pedagogy, health, careers, and instruments were published with the least frequency. While all of these topics are educational and essential to enriching the lives of flutists, the lack of articles in the smaller categories (pedagogy, health, career related, and instrument) has shown that this publication heavily leans toward performance related topics.

Sharing ideas in this published forum is a great way to promote artistic excellence and music education, especially for flutists, and publishing a greater variety of topics throughout the journals will allow for all flutists and flute enthusiasts to learn even more through this public forum and exchange of ideas. Embracing the need for more career-related and health related topics would expand the audience for the publication, as well as provide important information that is relevant to many in today's flute circles.

After reviewing these findings, it is clear that *The Flutist Quarterly* has a focus and emphasis on artist profiles and flute-performance related material. However, the prominence of this information throughout the publication does not relate very strongly to the goals and description of *The Flutist Quarterly*. According to the NFA website,

The magazine features articles written by leading flute performers, scholars, and teachers and news about developments and accomplishments in the NFA membership and flute community at large. Article topics range from breaking discoveries and new insights in research and methodologies to in-depth analyses of new works. Profiles of the world's leading flutists and pedagogues, significant activities in communities from Boston to China and all points in-between, performance health insights, and developments in flute repair and manufacture are among topics explored in the magazine's feature articles (The National Flute Association, 2017).

While many of these topics are thoroughly explored, such as the "profiles of the world's leading flutists and pedagogues" and "news about developments and accomplishments in the NFA membership and flute community at large," many of these subjects are not discussed very much at all. Even in the analyses of compositions throughout the years of 1992 to 2016, authors mainly discussed well-known flute repertoire and standard works rather than "new works." Future contributors of *The Flutist Quarterly* should focus on creating works in the less popular categories of pedagogy, health, career, and instrument topics in order to create a more well-rounded, informative resource for flutists and musicians.

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# APPENDIX A:

List of Journal Articles by Year and Volume

## Volume 17, Number 2

Harper, Patricia. "A Fresh Look at Francis Poulenc's Sonata for Flute and Piano" Chrisholm, Rose Marie. "The Poulenc Sonata 'Cantilena': A Vocal Connection" Taffanel, Paul (translated by John Ranck). "Great Virtuosi of the Flute" Weller, Janis. "Becoming a Modern Day Prince Esterhazy: The Joys and the Pitfalls of Commissioning New Music"

Wyton, Richard (compiled by). "The Copland-Solum Correspondence, 1967-1975: *The Duo for Flute and Piano* Commission"

## Volume 17, Number 3

Loewy, Andrea Kapell. "Musical Performance: Use and Misuse of Stress" Spencer, Patricia. "How *Kathinka's Chant* as *Lucifer's Requiem* by Karlheinz Stockhausen Redefines the Nature of Performance"

Stout, Glennis (compiled by). "Women and the Flute: Three Early Twentieth Century Flutists"

Togashi, Karen. "Twentieth Century Flute and Harpsichord Chamber Music Literature"

## Volume 17, Number 4

Boire, Paula. "An Introduction to Romanian Flute-Voice Ensemble Works"

Derby-McDermott, Dennette. "Jindřich Feld's *Introduzione, Toccata E Fuga*"

Phelps, Susan Van Buren. "Edgard Varèse: The Organization and Exploration of Sound"

Toff, Nancy. "The Many Careers of Nicolas Slonimsky"

# Volume 18, Number 1

Goodfellow, Susan S. "Appreciating William Kincaid"
Schoenbach, Sol. "Remembrances of William Kincaid"
Scott, Kenneth (compiled by). "The Unknown Musical Life of William Kincaid"
Taub, Paul (transcribed by). "Nicholas to the Max"
Toff, Nancy. "Doctoral Dissertations on the Flute"

## 1993

## Volume 18, Number 2

Discepolo, Gerardo. "Norwegian Music" Dourado, Oscar. "The Brazilian Chôros of Pixinguinha" Petrucci, Gian-Luca. "Gian-Luca Petrucci Talks with Severino Gazzelloni"

# Volume 18, Number 3

Mather, Betty Bang. "Hara, Chi, Tao and Zen: Eastern Wisdom for Western Flutists"

Fischer, Penny. "Quiet Crisis in the Arts"

## Volume 18, Number 4

Goodfellow, Susan. "Interview with John Corigiliano and Carlton Vickers" Panitz, Murray. "A Musical Approach to the Flute"

## Volume 19, Number 1

Coltman, John. "Acoustical Losses in the Boehm Flute"

Krell, John; Hosmer, James. "Flutist or Flautist?"

Schwoebel, Sandra (compiled by). "A Tribute to Lewis J. Deveau"

Schwoebel, Sandy. "First Flutist in Space! An interview with Ellen Ochoa"

#### 1994

## Volume 19, Number 2

Harper, Patricia. "A Further Look at Francis Poulenc's *Sonata* for Flute and Piano"

Lüchauer, May S. "An Interview with Dominique Etiévant"

## Volume 19, Number 3

Kujala, Sherry. "Donald Peck"

Sheldon, Robert E. "A Quantz Flute in the Library of Congress"

### Volume 19, Number 4

Böhm, Ludwig. "A Short Biography of Theobald Böhm"

Böhm, Ludwig. "On the Trail of my Great-Great-Grandfather"

Garrison, Leonard. "Elliott Carter's *Scrivo In Vento* - Part I: Historical and Analytical Notes"

Lawrence, Eleanor. "An Interview with Bernard Z. Goldberg: His perspectives on Marcel Moyse and Georges Barrère"

Stout, Glennis. "Thobald Böhm's 200th Birthday: Celebration in Munich"

### Volume 20, Number 1

Ephross, Arthur. "Reflections on 65 Years of Flute Playing"

Garrison, Leonard. "Elliott Carter's *Scrivo In Vento* - Part II: Performance Notes" Toff, Nancy. "Spotlight on: Georges Barrère - Georges Barrère: Monarch of the Flute"

Walter, David. "Spotlight on: Georges Barrère - Barrère's Bassist: A Reminiscence"

#### 1995

## Volume 20, Number 2

Blaisdell, Frances. "Spotlight on: Georges Barrère - Georges Barrère - The Master - Remembered"

Lüchauer, George A. "Why the Flute?"

Nelson, Susan. "The Recordings of Georges Barrère"

Wollstein, R. H. "What About the Flute?"

## Volume 20, Number 3

Rawlins, Robert. "Musical Memory Skills"

Tanner, Joanne D. "Marcel Moyse: Recollections of a Teenage Pupil"

Whitman, Ernestine. "Struggling with Focal Dystonia"

# Volume 20, Number 4

Berge, Anne La. "The Oston-Brannen Kingma System Flute" Waln, Ronald L. "Frank Martin's Voice and Flute Compositions"

## Volume 21, Number 1

Dzapo, Kyle. "The Life and Musical Contributions of Joachim Andersen"

Mather, Betty Band; Pereksta, Linda Helen. "The Builder's Approach: Prokofiev's

Bird Song as Example"

### 1996

## Volume 21, Number 2

Folio, Cynthia. "Luciano Berio's Revision of *Sequenza* for Flute: A New Look and a New Sound?"

Harper, Patricia L. "Sidney Lanier: Composer and Performer"

Koenig, Laura. "Debussy's Syrinx: An Annotated Bibliography"

Lüchauer, May. "Pop Goes the Weasel: An Intimate Portrait of Carol Wincenc"

NFA Pedagogy Committee. "Annotated Intermediate Solo Repertoire List"

Wye, Trevor. "Syrinx or La Flûte de Pan"

# Volume 21, Number 3

Byrne, Mary C.J. "Between Handel and Chaminade: 'Creative' Repertoire Choices for the Intermediate Student"

Gustafson, Christine. "An Introduction to Gustav Scheck"

Priore, Ima. "Griffes' Poem: Considerations about Performance Practice Issues"

# Volume 21, Number 4

Lawrence, Eleanor. "The Flute Compositions of Ernst von Dohnányi" Norris, Richard N. "Clinical Observations on the Results of the 1991 NFA Survey"

## Volume 22, Number 1

Alicot, Christine. "Remembering René Le Roy: A Student's Viewpoint" Barton, Karl. "Flute Attack! An Overview of Articulation" Lüchauer, George. "By George: One Member's Experience" Saenger, Katherine L. "An Experiment in Flute Headjoint Acoustics"

## 1997

## Volume 22, Number 2

Dobbs, Wendell. "Roussel: The Flute and Extramusical Reference Reveals the Literary Side of Roussel's Flute Music"

Kujala, Walfrid. "Mostly Meliorated Mozart: Comparative Reviews of What's Available in the CD Market Today"

Mains, Ronda. "Slurs in Four Primary Sources of Bach's *B Minor Sonata*: How We Can Discover What Baroque Performers May Have Done"

Mather, Betty Bang; Gavin, Gail. "Let's Sing, Dance and Play Noels! A Step-By-Step Guide"

Roberts, Eleanor Mitchel. "The Tooter's Tutor: A New Column With Ideas for Those Who Teach"

Wyatt, Charles. "Bach Suite: Excerpted from His Book"

## Volume 22, Number 3

Adams, Patti. "James Galway on Tour"

De Lorenzo, Leonardo (reprinted from *My Complete Story of the Flute*). "Flute Players Never Popular as Neighbors: But Who Could Dislike the Flute?"

Gerry, David. "The Tooter's Tutor: Teaching the Very Young Student"

Hamilton, Amy. "An Introduction to Canadian Flute Repertoire: Pearls of the New Masters"

Randalls, Jeremy S. "Andersen's Expression Marks: The 24 Etudes, op. 15"

### Volume 22, Number 4

Adams, Patti. "Flutespeak: Ian Anderson"

Arai, Asako. "Transcending Traditional Cultural Concepts: *In Voice* for Solo Flute by Toru Takemitsu"

DeLaney, Charlie. "Tooter's Tutor: The Dramatic Changes in Flute Recordings" Marianiello, Linda. "Our Profession's Changing Face"

Schwoebel, Sandy; Blaisdell, Frances. "A Flutist's Tune-Up Guide: How Out of Shape Are You?"

## Volume 23, Number 1

Fellows, Robin. "Maurice Sharp: Flutist Remembered"

Granados, Marco. "Venezuela's Vibrant Flute Music: Pick Up Your Flute and Play!"

Lüchauer, May. "Flutespeak: Paula Robison"

Melilli, Jean. "Extreme Flutes of the ASYO"

Miller, Sarah Bryan (reprinted from The Wall Street Journal). "Winds Gather in Windy City"

Waller, Sue. "Tooter's Tutor: Divide and Conquer!"

#### 1998

## Volume 23, Number 2

Christensen, James. "The Bach Air: Our Traditional Closing Performance"
Goll-Wilson, Kathleen (contributions by Prestia, Ross). "FIC: Combining Art with
Business - A History of the Flute Industry Council"

Kujala, Walfrid. "Music, Growth and Change: The Beginnings of the NFA" Schwoebel, Sandy. "A Work in Progress: The Development of *The Flutist Quarterly*"

Smith, Christine Michelle. "A Labor of Love"

Syring, Natalie. "Everything You Always Wanted to Know About the NFA - But Were Afraid to Ask!"

## Volume 23, Number 3

Grosklos, Hollie Jo. "Carpal Tunnel Syndrome: A Musician's Understanding" Malamut, Myra Lewinter. "Flutespeak: Composer Ricky Lombardo" Potter, Chris. "Tooter's Tutor"

## Volume 23, Number 4

Barton, Karl. "Flutespeak: R. Carlos Nakai"

Dawson (MD), William J. "Performance-Related Orthopaedic Problems"

Solum, John. "Meyer Kupferman: Composer Extraordinaire"

Waller, Sue. "Tooter's Tutor"

Wye, Trevor. "The Intonation of the Modern Flute: Influence by Cooper and Others"

### Volume 24, Number 1

Coltman, John W. "Flute Intonation in Performance"

Floyd, Angeleita. "Tooter's Tutor: Moving To the Next Level"

Horowitz, Marc David. "Flute and Piccolo Citations"

Palmer, Andrew. "Flutists Remembered: William Alwyn"

Perlove, Nina. "Flutespeak: Sophie Cherrier"

#### 1999

## Volume 24, Number 2

Buyse, Leone. "Auditioning For a Symphony Orchestra: Advice for Students Seeking an Orchestral Career"

Floyd, Angeleita. "Tooter's Tutor"

Garner, Lisa. "Flutespeak: Composer Lowell Liebermann"

Glaser, Susan. "French Music and the French Language"

Stout, Glennis; Folkman, Benjamin. "Avedis: Alexandra Hawley's Good News for Flute Lovers"

## Volume 24, Number 3

Dick, Robert. "Tooter's Tutor"

Garrison, Leonard. "The Art of Faking (With Apologies to Gershwin, Prokofiev, Respighi, Tchaikowsky, and Vivaldi)"

Haslam, Ken. "Fixing Your Own Flute A Novice Flutist Experiences Total Immersion"

Solum, John (compiled by). "A Heritage Remembered...Tributes to John Krell" Solum, John. "A Heritage Remembered...Verne Q. Powell"

## Volume 24, Number 4

Chugg, Karen (edited by); Brown, Robert (compiled by). "View of the Past: Linda Vogt"

Goodberg, Robert. "Flutespeak: Donald Peck"

## Volume 25, Number 1

Fruehwald, Robert. "Flutespeak: Linda Wetherill"

## 2000

### Volume 25, Number 2

Arnold, Helene; Gray, Paul; Lagerquist, John; Schmidt, Rie. "Wummer Remembrances"

Pope, George. "A Flutist's Journey A Conversation with Carol Wincenc"

Nelson, Sue. "Wummer Recordings"

Toff, Nancy. "Twentieth-Century Flutist: John Wummer"

## Volume 25, Number 3

Ranck, John. "A Beautiful Living Sound: A Tribute to James Pappoutsakis" Sprinkle, James. "Remembering Marjorie: Marjorie Yates-Lockwood" Thomas, Judith. "Myofunctional Disabilities and the Flute"

## Volume 25, Number 4

Levine, John. "A Conversation with Jacques Zoon" Montgomery, William. "A Memorial Ceremony for William Kincaid" Smith, Fenwick. "Which to Play? Metal or Wood?"

## Volume 26, Number 1

Demsey, Karen. "The Solo Flute Music of Alec Wilder"
Lawrence, Eleanor. "Approaching the Low Register"
Powell, Ardal. "Bach and the Flute"
Toff, Nancy. "One Man's Flute An Interview with Jim Walker"
"Tributes"

#### 2001

## Volume 26, Number 2

Fair, Demetra Baferos. "The Flutists' Family Tree"
Garrison, Leonard. "Happy Birthday, Bob: A Tribute to Robert Willoughby"
Harper, Patricia. "Julius Baker's Remarkable Career in Flute-Playing"
Melilli, Jean. "Vignette The Extraordinary Life of Amy Thomas (So Far)"
Pritchard, Jan Spell. "Ross Prestia - NFA National Service Award Recipient: A
Biography and an Appreciation"

## Volume 26, Number 3

Andrews, Nancy; Beardslee, Bethany; Bennett, William; Jones, Harold; Schepps, Linda; Schultz, Peter; Toff, Nancy. "Remembering Elanor...Tributes to Elanor Lawrence"

Dzapo, Kyle. "Compositions from the Back of the Bar: Images of Joachim Anderson"

Stevens, Margaret E. "A Bird's Life The Flutist's Legacy of Bird Calls" Stevens, Melissa. "Marcel Tabuteau: An Interview with John Krell"

## Volume 26, Number 4

Andrews, Christina. "Jean-Pierre Rampal Looking Back a Year After His Death" Faulhaber, Roberta; Andrews, Christina. "Remembering Jean-Pierre An Interview with Françoise Rampal"

First, Marilyn. "To Thwart a Thief"

Lopez, Kitty. "Flutes in the Mexican Mariachi Ensemble"

Lüchauer, May S. "Art of the Accompanist An Intimate Portrait of Linda Mark"

### Volume 27, Number 1

Frick, Sally Saltsman. "Flutist, Interrupted A Breast Cancer Journey" Harper, Patricia. "Bach's Chamber Music For Flute: An Expressive Breakthrough"

Stevens, Cynthia. "Inside Pedagogy Contemporary Committee Processes Or What You Can Accomplish With E-Mail!"

Young, Alison. "The Flute Music of David Diamond"

### 2002

## Volume 27, Number 2

Blumenthal, Amy Rice-Young. "Flute Choirs and the National Flute Association Coming of Age"

Flowers, Jackie. "Perspective The Spy Flute"

Jadunath, David. "An Interview with Hubert Laws"

Kendall, G. Yvonne. "Playing with History Baroque Music: Ornaments Aren't Everything"

Wilson, Ransom. "Kobe: A View from the Jury Box"

## Volume 27, Number 3

Armstrong, Joe. "Carl Petkoff and His Expressive Use of Vibrato"
Bruderhans, Zdenek. "Perspective Words of Music"
Garrison, Leonard. "Robert Willoughby's Technique of Simplification"
Monroe, Ervin. "An Interview with Alexander Zonjic"

# Volume 27, Number 4

Baxtresser, Jeanne. "A Student's Guide Auditioning for Music School" Brumfield, Tammi. "Vignette Jim Walker's Oscar Experience" Byer, Sharyn. "A World Premiere A World Away" Noe, Carol Kniebusch. "Playing a Recital On President Madison's Flute" Spielman, Helen. "It's Not About the Flute: Mark Thomas Revealed" Wion, John. "Molique's Flute Concerto"

# Volume 28, Number 1

Brahms, Jonathan. "A Flutist's World Trade Center"

Hester, Karlton. "21st-Century Flute Improvisation: A Holistic Approach to Spontaneous Composition"

Pope, George; Soule, Richard. "Tributes"
Santa, Lisa Garner. "An Interview with Louis Moyse"

#### 2003

### Volume 28, Number 2

Cochran, Kerrie Mills. "A Helping Hand"
Hester, Karlton. "21st-Century Flute Improvisation A Holistic Approach to
Spontaneous Composition (Part Two)"

Mann, Rochelle. "James Pellerite Take Two: His Vision for the Native American Flute"

Moore, Tom. "Circus Brasilis: The Flute Music of Sergio Roberto de Oliveira" Soho, G&H; Varisco, Tom. "Behind the Scenes"

## Volume 28, Number 3

Kahn, Sue Ann. "The Whale at the Conservatory"

Mehne, Wendy Herbener. "An Interview: The Two Worlds of Nancy Toff" Siebert, Renée. "Principal 2nd Flute Concept"

Westbrook, Peter. "The Bansuri and Pulangoil, Bamboo Flutes of India" Wilson, Ransom. "Perspective Discovering a Lost Manuscript"

### Volume 28, Number 4

Frucht, Steven (MD); Epstein, Glen. "Focal Dystonia: A Disorder Affecting Musicians"

Nourse, Nancy. "Flute Choirs Claim the Bottom Line: Big Flutes Now Join American Flute Ensembles"

Petroski, Marty. "A Sunny Place An Interview with Paul Fried"

Spielman, Helen. "Happiness is More Important: The Story of Katherine Kemler" Tucker, Carl. "Perspective"

## Volume 29, Number 1

Clandy, Mary Karen. "Interview with Jacob Berg"

Harper, Patricia; Soule, Richard; Graf, Erich; Baxtresser, Jeanne. "Julius Baker Tribute"

Harper Patricia. "Prokofiev's Sonata for Flute and Piano in D Major Opus 94: From Manuscript to Performing Editions - An Entangled Evolution"

#### 2004

### Volume 29, Number 2

Armstrong, Joe. "Oboe Master Fernand Gillet's Legacy to Flutists: His Methods for Developing Superior Technique and Expressive Control"

Larson, Rhonda. "Perspective Remembering Julius Baker"

Risinger, Kimberly McCoul. "Performance Notes to the Sonata for Flute and Piano (1993) by Samuel Zyman"

Spielman, Helen. "Göran Marcusson: Dropping Into a Dream"

### Volume 29, Number 3

Cecil-Sterman, Ann. "Julius Baker, Remembered"

Galway, James. "James Galway Remembers A Flute Legend"

Siebert, Renée. "Julius Baker (1915-2003) A Tribute"

Whiteside, David (compiled by). "Julius Baker - Discography of Currently Available CDs"

## Volume 29, Number 4

Brahms, Jonathan. "Michael Parloff Performs Nielsen's Flute Concerto at Carnegie Hall with James Levine and the Met Orchestra"

Cole, Robert. "Samuel Saulus and the Powell Flute"

Harrow, Anne. "A Celebration of Joseph Mariano at Eastman"

Potter, Christine. "Intonation Solutions for the Alto Flute"

Stevens, Cynthia. "Pedagogy The Art, Science or Profession of Teaching"

## Volume 30, Number 1

Rosinski, Jessi. "An Interview with John Wion"

Spielman, Helen. "The Balance is Heaven: At Abbey Road Studios with Sir James Galway"

Colgin-Abeln, Melissa (DMA). "The Solo Flute Sonata of C.P.E. Bach: A Fresh Look at an Old Masterpiece"

Stevens, Cynthia. "Today's Pedagogy Will Produce NFA Leaders"

## 2005

# Volume 30, Number 2

Berdahl, Susan. "Central American Flute Encounter (Il Encuentro de Flauta Traversa Centro Americana)"

Brahms, Jonathan. "Jonathan's Story"

Dzapo, Kyle. "Beginning to Study The Andersen Etudes"

Spielman, Helen. "Rick Soule: Nice Through and Through"

## Volume 30, Number 3

Ford, Ronda Benson. "Ten Years Touring: The International Flute Orchestra in Eastern Europe"

Herszbaum, Nestor. "A Primer In Practical Alternative Fingerings"

Likar, Amy. "A First Rate Group"

Santa, Lisa Garner. "Mixing It Up: An Interview with Category-Confounding Composer Mike Mower"

# Volume 30, Number 4

Austen, Jill. "Behind the Mother"

Baver, Kristin. "I'm Just a Flutist in a Rock and Roll Band"

Jones, Katherine Borst. "Exploring the Early Flute: An Interview with Nancy Hadden"

Martin, Andrée. "Simple Solutions: Using 'Baronisms' to Enhance Your Teaching"

## Volume 31, Number 1

Coelho, Tadeu; Koidin, Julie. "The Brazilian *Choro*: Historical Perspectives and Performance Practices"

Toff, Nancy. "'I think we concert givers must not always play sure shots': Georges Barrère, Champion of New Music"

White, Joanna Cowan. "Walfrid Kujala, Orchestral 'Untangler'"

Williams, Barbara Highton. "Frances Blaisdell: Living Link to Georges Barrère"

### 2006

# Volume 31, Number 2

Herbine, Lois Bliss. "William Kincaid and Marcel Tabuteau: A Legendary Collaboration"

McBirnie, Bil. "Playing Flute in Non-Classical Environments"

Procopio, Mary. "When East Meets West: Takemitsu's Itinerant for Flute Solo"

# Volume 31, Number 3

Andrew, Nancy. "Musical Manipulations: An Interview with Matthias Ziegler" de Wetter-Smith, Brooks and Faust, Michael; Bailey, John (edited and translated by). "Remembering Karlheinz Zöller"

Halpin, Jessica. "Career Advice From the Orchestral Flute Section"

## Volume 31, Number 4

Dreese, Mia. "A Tribute to Frans Vester: Musician, Scholar, Author"
Goodfellow, Susan. "Robert Langevin: A Career of Coincidences"
Kendall, Yvonne. "Playing with History: A New Look at Old Favorites - The
Mozart Flute Concerti"

## Volume 32, Number 1

Kahn, Sue Ann. "Reflections on the Mozart Flute Quartets"

Procopio, Mary. "Crossing Borders: Solo and Chamber Music for Flute by Haitian Composers"

Spell, Eldred (interview by); Guitry, Amara (editing and transcription by).
"Stephen Preston: A Complete and Utter Novelty"

#### 2007

## Volume 32, Number 2

Beard, Christine Erlander. "Career Advice from Flute Professors in Higher Education"

Levin, Sharon. "Ecuadoran Mestizo Music for Flute and Piano" Meador, Rebecca. "An Interview with Nestor Herszbaum"

Welsbacher, Anne. "Remembering Martha" Winton, Sharon. "André Jolivet's Cinq Incantations and Ascèses"

## Volume 32, Number 3

Fink, Katherine. "Samuel Baron: Artist, Teacher, Mensch"
Lyden, Megan. "Felix Skrowronek: On Stage with the Soni Ventorum Wind
Quintet"

## Volume 32, Number 4

Ayers, Lydia. "Dizi Selection and Performance"

Buyse, Leone; Smith, Fenwick. "Remembering Joseph Mariano"

Ford, Ronda Benson. "Commissioned Works from the High School Soloist Competition: Jennifer Higdon's 'Song'"

Spielman, Helen. "Tim Carey: The Tim Philharmonic"

Stevens, Cynthia. "One Stone, Many Ripples: Paula Robison Teaches the Teachers"

## Volume 33, Number 1

Ford, Ronda Benson. "Commissioned Works from the High School Soloist Competition: John Heiss' Fantasia Appassionata, Episode IV"

Pope, George. "Onward and Upward: The Ever-Evolving Career of Joshua Smith"

Spielman, Helen. "The Musical Road Less Traveled"

Stillman, Mimi. "Debussy, Painter of Sound and Image"

Westbrook, Peter. "Frank Wess: Quintessential Jazz Flutist"

#### 2008

## Volume 33, Number 2

Barcellona, John; Kevra, Karen. "Renaissance Man: Louis Moyse (1912-2007)" Ford, Ronda Benson. "Commissioned Works from the High School Soloist Competition: Elizabeth Brown's *Trillium*"

Likar, Amy (DMA); Machester, Ralph (MD); Weinstein, Michael (MD). "To Your Health"

Onovwerosuoke, Wendy Hymes. "New Horizons: The World of African Art Music for Flute"

#### Volume 33, Number 3

Stoune, Michael C. "An Ulster Experience: Flute Bands in Northern Ireland" Watanabe, Mihoko. "The Essence of Mei"

Westbrook, Peter. "Valerie Coleman: Revitalizing the Woodwind Quintet"

## Volume 33, Number 4

Bigio, Robert. "Why Good Enough Beats Best: Or, if they were so clever, why weren't they rich?"

Chako, Rachel. "Gareth Farr's Kembang Suling"

Spencer, Patricia. "Regarding Scrivo in Vento: A Conversation with Elliott Carter"

## Volume 34, Number 1

Dobbs, Wendell. "An Early American Family of Flutists"

Price, Kirsten Jan. "Debussy's *Syrinx*: Mystery, Myth, and a Manuscript"

Rees, Carla. "Microtones and Big Flutes: An Interview with Composer Daniel Kessner"

#### 2009

## Volume 34, Number 2

Cervenka, Mark; Kendall, G. Yvonne. "Brian Ransom's Interdisciplinary Art" Mitchell, Stephen A (MD). "Maturing Flutists: Problems & Solutions" Shimada, Akiko. "Cross-Cultural Music: Japanese Flutes and their Influence on Western Flute Music"

## Volume 34, Number 3

Adams, Patti. "Sir James Galway: Living Legend"

Ballard, Glen. "The English Rachmaninoff: Edwin York Bowen"

Likar, Amy (compiled by); Raeburn, Susan (introduction by). "Performance Anxiety: A Resource Guide"

Robson, Andrew. "York Bowen's Sonata for Two Flutes, op. 103: The Discovery of the Original 'Rough and Sketchy Score'"

## Volume 34, Number 4

Cella, Lisa. "Cassandra's Dream Song"

Montgomery, William. "Seeking François Devienne"

Westbrook, Peter. "The Flute In Jazz: Window on World Music"

#### Volume 35, Number 1

González, Ana Laura. "The Flute in Argentina: Beyond Piazzolla and Ginastera" Hobbs, Julie. "Vox Crumb"

Lorenzino, Lisa. "Quality Resources for Jazz"

Montgomery, William. "Seeking François Devienne, Part Two"

#### 2010

# Volume 35, Number 2

Bacchus, Peter. "Music From Within: An Interview with Robert Dick"

Barth, Molly. "Running a Chamber Ensemble" Toff, Nancy. "Remembering Frances Blaisdell" Zahirovic, Ivana. "NFA Spotlight: My View"

## Volume 35, Number 3

Adams, Patti. "A Career of Collaboration"

Garrison, Leonard; Keeble, Jonathan. "The Multifaceted Fenwick Smith and the Elegant Leone Buyse"

Johnson, Rebecca. "Thea Musgrave's Piccolo Play: A Performer's Analysis and Guide"

## Volume 35, Number 4

Adams, Patti. "Optimistic Realist: 36 Years and Counting with the Indefatigable Gwen Powell"

Bigio, Robert. "Rudall, Rose & Carte: The art of the flute in Britain" Garrison, Leonard. "Wilhelm Friedemann Bach's Six Flute Duets: A Tercentennial Appreciation"

Sklar, Pamela. "Claude Bolling: A Living Legend Turns 80"

# Volume 36, Number 1

Brown, Rachel. "Private Passion"
Pritchard, Jerry. "A Different Path: An Interview with Jennifer Cluff"
Valette, Rebecca M. "The French School: What Is so French about It?"

#### 2011

### Volume 36, Number 2

Ford, Ronda Benson. "A Primer: How to Record a Compact Disc" Lauwers, Anke. "The Road (Almost) Not Taken" Roëlandt, Philippe. "Gaubert's Flute"

Westbrook, Peter. "Omar Faruk Tekbilek: Turkish Master of the Ney"

## Volume 36, Number 3

Candler, Beth; Keeble, Jonathan; Garrison, Leonard. "Trevor Wye, Carol Wincenc, and Katherine Borst Jones: Luck, Love, Joy"

Folio, Cynthia. "Joseph Schwantner's Looking Back"

Hankin, Chris. "An Englishwoman, a Scotswoman, and an Irishwoman: Three Composers, No Joke"

Raposo, Jessica. "The Second Golden Age"

# Volume 36, Number 4

Dzapo, Kyle. "Two Weeks, Two Winning Performances"

Pešek, Ursula; Marshall, Traute (translated by). "The Sonatas of Eugène Walckiers"

Spiro, Ezra. "Anaheim 2010: A Student's Perspective"

Woolley, Andrew. "The Case of the Lost Flute Concerto"

Wye, Trevor and Friends. "The Enormous Scale of Albert Cooper"

### Volume 37, Number 1

Stillman, Mimi. "The Dynamic Voice of Shulamit Ran"

Pešek, Ursula; Marshall, Traute (translated by). "The Life and Work of Eugène Walckiers"

Rees, Carla. "The Kingma & Brannen Alto Flute: A Collaborative Model"

Bailey, John. "Dieter Flury: The Busy Life of a European Flutist"

Martin, Andrée. "Focal Dystonia: My Journey Inward"

#### 2012

# Volume 37, Number 2

Aitken, Dianne; Barth, Molly; Bulow, Harry; DeMars, James; Dick, Robert; Fonville, John; Garrison, Leonard; Goodman, Kimberlee; Jutt, Stephanie; Maurer, Laurel Ann; Rosenfeld, Jayn; Schneller, Oliver; Spencer, Patricia; Stokes, Sheridan; Taub, Paul. "Living History: The National Flute Association Commissioning Program"

Garrison, Leonard. "The 2012 Lifetime Achievement and National Service Awards, Part One Informed Performer: Betty Bang Mather" Welsbacher, Anne. "Silver to Rubies: The First 25 Years"

### Volume 37, Number 3

Councell-Vargas Martha. "Michel Debost: Teaching Artistry"

Garrison, Leonard. "Developing an Online Presence to Enhance a Flute Career" Johnson, Rebecca. "When We Were Very Young: A Conversation with Emma Resmini and Zachary Kellogg"

Keeble, Jonathan. "The Elusive Goal of Simplicity: Bonita Boyd"

Spell, Eldred. "Scales: An Incomplete Look at What Every Flutist Should Know"

## Volume 37, Number 4

Arnone, Francesca. "Remembering William Alwyn"

Dorough, Aralee. "The Next Decade: Robert Willoughby"

Chandler, Beth. "A Passion of Historic Proportions: Nancy Toff"

Johnson, Ellen C. "Drive and Inspiration: An Interview with Jihoon Shin"

# Volume 38, Number 1

Bailey, John. "The Remarkable Career of Walfrid Kujala"

Ford, Ronda Benson. "Three Beats For Beatbox Flute: A Chat with Greg Pattillo"

Oleskiewicz, Mary. "The Flutist of Sanssouci: King Frederick 'the Great' as Performer and Composer"

#### 2013

## Volume 38, Number 2

Councell-Vargas, Martha. "Toward a Cuban Flutistry: An Exploration of the Charanga Flute Tradition"

Dearing, Gail Powell. "Second Wind: The Powell Spoon Flute at 102"

Kaufman, Laura. "The Confidence Factor"

Spielman, Helen. "'Now We Can Go On': The Flute Festival in Honduras"

Taub, Paul. "Marya Martin: New (Flute) Music Midwife"

## Volume 38, Number 3

Barrett, Amanda. "Discovered in North Carolina: The Charles F. Kurth Manuscript Collection"

Bigio, Robert. "Alexander Murray: Curiosity and Encouragement"

Chandler, Beth. "Labors of Love: Angeleita Floyd"

Taub, Paul. "Claire Chase: The Pulse of the Possible"

# Volume 38, Number 4

Amsler, Eva. "Aurèle Nicolet: A Master in Our Midst"

Bigio, Robert. "Parallel Lives: Gareth Morris & Richard Adeney"

Dombourian-Eby, Zart. "Decoding Barthold Kuijken"

Solum, John. "Milhaud's Sonatine for Flute and Piano: A Masterwork from the Jazz Age"

### Volume 39, Number 1

BastaniNezhad, Arya (Ali). "Find Your Center: The Center of Gravity in Flute Pedagogy and Performance"

Toff, Nancy. "Louis Fleury and the Early Life of *Pierrot lunaire*"

#### 2014

#### Volume 39, Number 2

Lemmon, Kate. "One Artist, Two Arts"

Mosley, Ellen Johnson. "Communicating Beauty: An Interview with Emi Ferguson"

Ramirez, Catherine. "The Value of Optimal Musical Communication"

Reedy, Deena. "Commissioning New Repertoire"

## Volume 39, Number 3

Chandler, Beth. "Heart, Mind, and Body: Robert Dick"

Harper, Patricia. "Eugène Bozza's Quatorze Etudes-Arabesques pour Flûte Examined"

Price, Cecilia. "Lars Nilsson: A Swedish Flutist in Argentina"

Spencer, Patricia. "Ge Ganru's Fairy Lady Meng Jiang: the Chinese Premiere"

## Volume 39, Number 4

Dombourian-Eby, Zart. "Patti Adams and her Coats of Many Colors" Oleskiewiczr, Mary. "Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach and the Flute"

## Volume 40, Number 1

Kageyama, Noa. "Practicing Self-Compassion"
Keeble, Jonathan. "Maxence Larrieu: Quantity and Quality"
Waller, Susan. "The Artistry of Emmanuel Pahud"

#### 2015

# Volume 40, Number 2

Arnone, Francesca. "Music in Exile: Arthur Willner and Ary van Leeuwen"
Hagen, Timothy. "For Better or Worse: The Virtuosic Flute"
Keeble, Jonathan; Dombourian-Eby, Zart; Johnson, Craig. "Ninety Years: Walfrid Kujala, Lois Schaefer, and Bernard Goldberg"

## Volume 40, Number 3

Dzapo, Kyle. "Penelope Fischer: 'Star from the Start and Great Team Player" Johnson, Rebecca. "American Avalanche" Morris, Seth Allyn. "Making It Together" Pineda, Kim. "Real-time Composition in the 18th Century"

## Volume 40, Number 4

Brown, Jennie Oh. "Collaborative Play: Flutist-Composer Commissions"

Dombourian-Eby, Zart. "The Wide World of Alexander Murray"

Dzapo, Kyle. "Quality of Life: Harvey Sollberger"

Hopkins, Barbara. "Connecticut Connections of the Dayton C. Miller Collection"

Mather, Betty Bang; Karns, Dean M. "Bach's Badinerie: A Spoof on his Rondeau"

Toff, Nancy. "The Library of Congress: Flute Central"

#### Volume 41, Number 1

Borja, Jonathan. "Mythology and Humor: The Flute Works of Thorkell Sigurbjörnsson"

Kujala, Walfrid. "I Got Hungarian Rhythm!"

White, Joanna. "Borrowed Melodies for Tone and Interpretation Practice"

### 2016

## Volume 41, Number 2

Gaines, Taylor. "Taylor Gaines Passes It Forward"

Molumby, Nicole. "Ana Batinica: Contemporary Classics From An Ancient Coast" Stillman, Mimi. "Into the Light: Mieczyslaw Weinberg's *Five Pieces for Flute and Piano*"

Taub, Paul. "Small But Mighty: Flute Music Composers of the Baltic States"

## Volume 41, Number 3

Arnone, Francesca. "A Sampling of Compelling Flute-Centered Composers" Barth, Molly. "Étude Effusions"

Dombourian-Eby, Zart. "James Pellerite: The Right Place at the Right Time" Dzapo, Kyle. "Katherine Hoover: An Artist's Journey"

White, William; Lee, Crystal; Parks, William. "The Virtuosic Fife: Not Just a Simple Signal Instrument"

## Volume 41, Number 4

Amsler, Eva. "In Memoriam: Aurèle Nicolet"

Kingma, Eva. "Collaborative Artist: Bickford Brannen"

Kumaran, Ramakrishnan. "The Inner Flute: Finding the Searcher's Manifesto" Lynn, Michael. "The Development of the Flute in 19th-Century France"

## Volume 42, Number 1

Blakeman, Edward. "Wibb: A Flute for Life"

Heaton, Shannon. "Playing By Heart: An Irish Traditional Approach"

Farrell, Natalie. "Facing the Fermata: Recreating the Classical Cadenza in Modern Performances of Mozart's Flute Concerti"

Walker, John L. "Folklore, Serialism, and Clicking Keys: Literature for Unaccompanied Flute from Latin America"