

In Praise of Carol Wincenc

Judy Park
First Vice President, NSAL

Last May, NSAL held its first competition in woodwind instruments. It was not only a very interesting competition but also a very educational one. Those of you who were fortunate enough to be present at the Master Class saw all four of the judges participating in the event in one way or another. I was particularly interested in the manner in which Carol Wincenc worked with the flutists. Since she was the recipient of our 2014 NSAL Gold Medal for Lifetime Achievement, I expected that her work with the contestants would be exemplary, and I was not disappointed.

Through a quirk of fate, I had the great good fortune to co-host and shadow Carol for the better part of four days while she was in Chicago attending the National Flute Association's annual meeting at the beginning of August. Not only did I get to hear copious amounts of beautiful music, but I also witnessed several more examples of Carol's expertise as an incomparable musician and teacher extraordinaire.

Carol participated in two Master Classes. The Marcel Moyse Society sponsored the first one. Carol and the other flutist who led the class had both studied with Moyse. The four students who participated in the class were chosen based on an essay that each had written about the benefits of using Moyse's *Twenty Four Little Melodic Etudes* in their studies. Perhaps it was yet another quirk of fate, but one of the two flutists that Carol worked with was NSAL's Honorable Mention Winner Hannah Hammel, who, in addition to being selected to participate in the Master Class, also won the NFA Orchestral Master Class Competition—quite an achievement for someone as young as she, as it is highly competitive.* The photo that Dorothy has included in the Newsletter I took in Chicago, but it could just as easily have been one that I took in Charleston, where Carol also coached Hannah in our Master Class.

The highlight of the week for me was a gala concert at the Conrad Hilton, in which Carol, who has been described as "a muse of many of today's most prominent composers," closed the concert with a spectacular performance of Yuko Uebayashi's *Misericordia*, a breathtakingly beautiful composition for flute and string quartet, commissioned by Carol in 2013. Almost as exciting as being at the concert was the opportunity to sit in on the rehearsal at which Uebayashi was present to coach Carol and the Spektral Quartet, who accompanied her. Needless to say, the concert ended with resounding applause and a standing ovation, proving once again a statement made about Carol in the *Newark Star Ledger*, "Virtuosity on this order of magnitude is remarkable."

In Charleston we voted that woodwinds would be the instruments for the music competition again in 2018. One of the reasons for doing this was to try to maintain the connections that we have made with our artists/judges and also with our contestants. During the few days in Chicago, Carol and I spoke of the competition on several occasions. She expressed her willingness to judge again in 2018 and to help in the organization of the competition if she

can. I, for one, would like to see us take advantage of this offer and bring Carol back for a repeat performance. I hope that the committee in charge of the competition agrees with me.

*Hannah told me that many flutists recorded some required excerpts and sent in the CD. From those CDs, three finalists were chosen to compete live. They each played a list of about 15 excerpts and were ranked. Hannah was ranked número uno!!!