

RECORDER ORCHESTRA OF THE MIDWEST CELEBRATES 10 YEARS

I will never forget that afternoon in 2008, when I was at the supermarket parking lot and received a call from Louise "Weezie" Smith. She wanted to invite me to be the music director of a new recorder orchestra that she, Marilyn Flowers and Sue Meyer were forming, beginning that fall.

The idea was to recruit recorder players from the Midwest and rehearse six times per year in Bloomington, IN. I knew that anything that Weezie was a part of would be great. Before then, I had taught at the now-defunct Recorder Academy at Indiana University in Bloomington, where she was the director, and it was always a wonderful experience.

I was very surprised and honored to be invited, and humbly accepted the invitation. Soon after, I started planning the vision for this new project, and researching repertory for the Recorder Orchestra of the Midwest (ROMW).

Recorder orchestras have become the wave of the future. Inspired by a long history in Europe, recorder orchestras are popping up all over North America—where it is popular for players of all skill levels to come together in order to form a large recorder ensemble or a recorder orchestra.

ROMW members travel from all over the Midwest six times a year for an entire day of rehearsal. We present about two concerts per year. ROMW currently has 23 members and represents seven states. Not only do the recorder players have a great time learning, rehearsing and performing the chosen repertory, but they are also involved in building a spirit of community. It is wonderful to see that many friendships have formed during these years.

Several composers and arrangers have dedicated their time and creative energy to compose new pieces or to arrange well-known music for the recorder orchestra. In the last few years, three arrangements have been dedicated to ROMW: *Libertango*, originally by Astor Piazzolla and arranged by Peter Aristein; *Shadow of Your Smile*, originally by Johnny Mandel and arranged by Paul Leenhouts; *Downhill*, originally by Jake Smith and arranged by Matthias Maute.

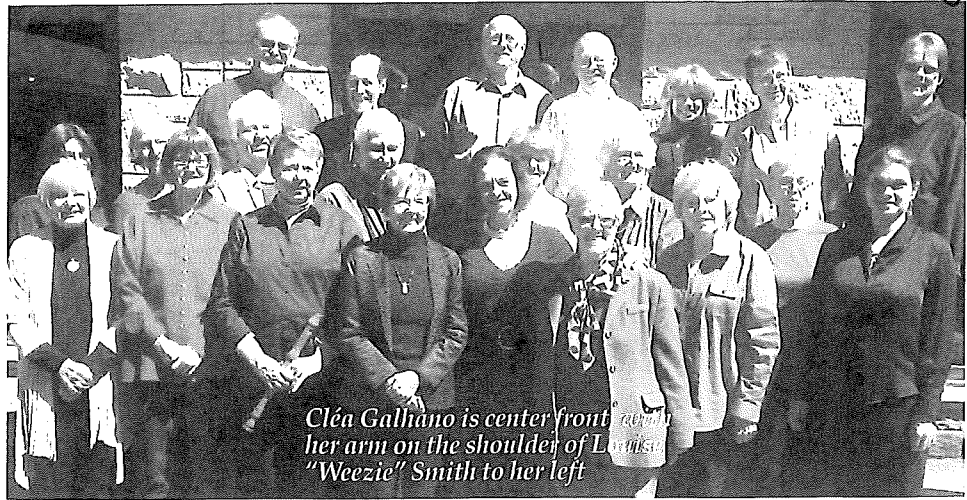
In 2011, ROMW was part of the First American Recorder Orchestra Conference in Denver, CO, alongside the Colorado Recorder Orchestra, which is directed by Rose Marie Terada. We have also participated in two music series in Carmel, IN.

To celebrate the orchestra's 10th season, repertory has been chosen from previous programs. The exception is *Downhill*, which was written especially for this season by Weezie Smith's son, Jake Smith, and arranged by Maute in honor of Weezie.

Here are the programs that ROMW has presented in the past 10 years:

- Season One: 2008/09 – A Musical Journey for Recorder Orchestra
- Season Two: 2009/10 – Roots and Routes: A Musical Journey from Its Sources
- Season Three: 2010/11 – Multicultural Melodies
- Season Four: 2011/12 – Sacred and Profane
- Season Five: 2012/13 – L'Arte de Suonare et Cantare (The Art of Singing & Playing)
- Season Six: 2013/14 – A Musical Mosaic through Time
- Season Seven: 2014/15 - Ostinato for All Time
- Season Eight: 2015/16 – All That Jazz and More
- Season Nine: 2016/17 – Glimpses of Sacred Sounds
- Season Ten: The Best of ... for Weezie

It is such a pleasure to be a part of this project and to help bring beautiful recorder music to the musicians and the community. I look forward to the



Cléa Galhano is center front with her arm on the shoulder of Louise "Weezie" Smith to her left

next 10 years of music-making with this orchestra.

Cléa Galhano, galhano@aol.com

Thoughts from ROMW Players

We ... work very hard at our rehearsals, but Cléa, our director, always knows how to give us a break and make us laugh with her entertaining stories. Here is an example from our most recent rehearsal: she and a friend were riding on the London subway where they were going to perform at Wigmore Hall, a couple of weeks after London police shot and killed a Brazilian national, whom they had mistaken for a suicide bombing suspect. Being Brazilian herself, the unfortunate incident was very much on her mind.

All of a sudden her suitcase started to tick loudly. It was not a bomb, but her metronome. She immediately threw open the suitcase and started frantically looking for the source of the ominous ticking. Thank goodness, she quickly found and silenced the metronome, so she and the friend were able to leave the Tube without being arrested on suspicion of plotting a terrorist attack.

When told with hindsight, a story like this is hilarious. Needless to say, we were all in stitches.

