

The Boston Clavichord Society Newsletter

Number 8, Spring, 2000

The BCS at NEPTA

The Boston Clavichord Society presented a program for the New England Piano Teachers Association (NEPTA) on January 24, 2000. The BCS was represented by keyboardists Peter Sykes and Paulette Grunden, who stood in for her husband Richard Troeger, who was ill with the flu. Some of Troeger's comments, as presented by Grunden, follow.

The relationship of clavichord playing to piano playing

How can clavichord technique assist in playing the modern piano? First and foremost, it can teach the art of proportion in musical utterance. Whether your instrument is intrinsically loud or soft is not important. A good clavichordist will prefer the instrument that affords the widest range of dynamics and effects to that which merely has a louder top level of volume.

The clavichord's requirements of economical motion, smooth changes of position and relaxed weight in the touch are especially apt in relation to study of the modern piano, helping to procure a relaxed attack and big tone on the piano. Obviously the clavichord is no substitute for the piano in the study of pianistic effects such as brilliant octaves, heavy chordal textures, etc. However, it inculcates an approach to the keyboard that allows great fluency in such passages. A really fine clavichord allows a tremendous degree of clarity in polyphonic writing and is, in this sense as in others, a school for all other keyboard instruments.

The clavichord's action draws attention to differences of strength, fluency and

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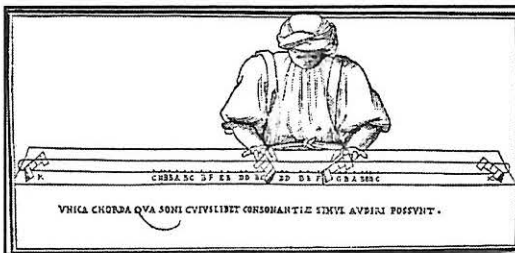
In Review

Six Partitas, J.S. Bach, performed by Richard Troeger. Lyricord Discs, LEMS 8038.

In choosing the six Partitas to initiate his recording on the clavichord of Bach's keyboard music (save only the Goldberg Variations, Italian Concerto and French Overture which will be recorded on the requisite double harpsichord) Richard Troeger has shown his confidence in the smaller instrument's capacity to deal with these greatest of all keyboard

suites. Less venturesome musicians, if they even conceived of such a project, would likely have chosen the Inventions, Little Preludes or

perhaps the French Suites to begin their traversal of what might be termed the ultimate clavichord repertoire. These two compact discs demonstrate that the more complex textures of the Partitas, including the heavy-weight movements like the Sinfonia of the C minor and Overture of the D major, benefit greatly from the transparency afforded by a technically assured and sensitive interpretation on the clavichord. This clarity is nowhere more in evidence than in the Gigue of the G major Partita, with passages, especially in the second half of its binary form, that often defy the listener to make complete sense of the various florid melodic strands. Con-



versely, as every clavichordist knows, the simplest bare-bones two-part writing, as, say, in the Menuet of the B flat Partita or even the opening Fantasia of the A minor, sounds richer on the clavichord than on other stringed keyboard instruments.

It is certainly beyond cavil that the clavichord was the ubiquitous keyboard instrument of Bach's own time and place. Harpsichords, not to mention the relatively rare experimental early pianos of the period, were beyond the financial means of most

musicians. The Partitas, like the harpsichord works in parts II and IV of the Clavierübung, were in any case anything but easy keyboard fodder for amateurs.

Who indeed may have been capable of performing the music of Bach's Clavierübung volumes when they were published makes a fascinating subject of speculation. The name Partitas, perhaps an echo of Kuhnau's set of seven suites so labeled, appears on the first page of the set. This first part of the series of "Keyboard Lessons," modestly labeled Opus 1 by the 46-year old composer, differs from the other parts of the series in using the generic term Clavir (!) to designate the intended medium of performance. This in itself would establish the historical legitimacy of playing these Partitas on the clavichord. Over and beyond propriety, as these recordings

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Clavichord Weekend in May at Brandeis

The BCS will sponsor a Clavichord Weekend at Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts, May 12-13, 2000. On Friday May 12 at 7:30 PM Richard Troeger will present a clavichord recital with music of J.S., W.F. and C.P.E. Bach. The "Clavichord Day" will begin at noon on Saturday May 13, and will include a talk by Howard Schott on the clavichord revival, a talk by Richard Troeger on the aesthetics of the clavichord, a panel discussion on the topic "How to get started with the clavichord," a presentation on the pros and cons of the clavichord, and a clavichord exhibition and demonstration. For further information, please call 781-891-0814 or visit the BCS website at www.mtholyoke.edu/~adurfee/bcs.

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sensitivity among the fingers. Whether one follows Czerny in striving to make all fingers equally serviceable, or takes Chopin's line of thought about using each digit to its best advantage, the pianist and clavichordist are both concerned with achieving full tone from all the fingers. The clavichord's merciless exposure of all inequalities is highly salutary for any keyboardist, but especially for pianists, since the two instruments are dynamically touch-sensitive. As Horowitz was known to remark, merely concentrating on the motion of the weaker fingers helps them to better tone production. The clavichord teaches such concentration almost automatically, because poor tone on that instrument is even more glaringly off-the-mark than it is on the piano.

A good clavichord possesses a wide dynamic range, but the limited top level of sound requires careful planning of the dynamic scheme. This has obvious value for piano study, promoting focus on relative dynamic levels, both locally and in the overall scheme of a composition and in voicing of textures.

The pianist can be inspired to new kinds of coloration by the many possibilities available on the clavichord. Its combination of tonal clarity with variation of both pitch and dynamics allows a wide range of tone colors and articulation that can be emulated, if not always directly imitated, by the pianist.

In addition, the clavichord can train a pianist to: (1) avoid the use of the damper, and (2) find the means by which timing and articulation can mask percussiveness on certain accented notes and chords.

The fact the clavichordist must deal with minutiae "from the wrong end of the telescope" makes the player all the more sensitive to interpretive choices and technical requirements. Parallel use of the clavichord with the harpsichord, with early or modern piano, or with the organ, involves learning to hit the nail on the head from different angles, in ways that are both technically and musically enriching.

(Portions of this text appeared in Richard Troeger, "The Clavichord and Keyboard Technique," *The American Organist*, Vol. 30, No. 3, March 1996, 58-63.)

Sykes Demonstrates Clavichords

Barbara Jones, the Recording Secretary of NEPTA, described Sykes' playing as follows:

Mr. Sykes began by playing Bach's first prelude from the Well-Tempered Clavier, Book 1, then the Chromatic Fantasy on a recently built clavichord patterned after one from the 1730's, such as Bach might have had. He observed that the clavichord creates its own world. It is incredibly soft. We live in a noisy world with many distractions and must work to listen to the bright, clear, singing tone of this instrument. It has a sur-

...the translation of the words "Plus fait douceur que violence," found on many Dolmetsch clavichords, says it all: "More is accomplished through sweetness than force."

prising amount of resonance, once you scale down your expectations. On a triple fretted instrument Mr. Sykes then played a beautiful Fantasia by William Byrd from 1591. Next he went to an instrument made by Arnold Dolmetsch, who built instruments based on earlier models for Chickering between 1905-1910. This instrument is a faithful copy of a 1784 instrument Dolmetsch owned. It has 5 octaves and can accommodate every keyboard piece Mozart ever wrote. Mr. Sykes performed the middle movement of Haydn's Sonata in E-flat (Hob. XVI:34). Before concluding by playing the beautiful Adagio from Mozart's Sonata in E-flat (K. 282), Mr. Sykes noted that scrupulousness is required in playing the clavichord, which is at the top of the scale of persnickiness. But the translation of the words "Plus fait douceur que violence," found on many Dolmetsch clavichords, says it all: "More is accomplished through sweetness than force."

In thanking Sykes for his performance, Carol Chaffee, the program chair of NEPTA, wrote: "You kept us at rapt attention with the delicate and intimate sounds of this magical instrument, making converts out of many of us."

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On the World Wide Web: <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/~adurfee/bcs>

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Submissions: This Newsletter is a forum for its members. We welcome articles, letters, questions and other contributions. Copy can be submitted by mail, e-mail or diskette to the Editor. Please contact him about preferred format before making a submission. The copy deadlines are February 15 and September 1.

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demonstrate, these works can be very convincingly interpreted on this Clavier.

But what sort of clavichord would this have been in 1731 when the six Partitas were finally issued as a set, after having come out, one by one, over several years? The compass requirement is clear enough: GG to d". By this time and possessed of sufficient range, a German clavichord would certainly have been unfretted. Unlike Iberian fretted clavichords of extended compass, German instruments of such tonal dimensions, to judge from the survivors, seem invariably to have been fret-free. It is on just such a clavichord that Troeger has recorded the Partitas, a 1979 five-octave instrument by Ron Haas modeled on those of Johann Heinrich Silbermann. The recording indicates that it is dynamically well-balanced, with ample treble tone as well as rich tenor and bass registers. A remarkable variety of colors is displayed in the various movements of the Partitas. One does not miss the registration possibilities afforded by performance on the harpsichord. Rather, the listener is grateful for so much that the clavichord reveals in the music, aspects of it that were previously dimly perceived or even totally concealed by the sheer density of sound. Ornaments impress as expressive rather than mere applied decoration. There is no need to indulge in the sort of timing tricks that harpsichordists must employ to disguise their instrument's lack of dynamic nuance. Like Beethoven and other of the great composers, Bach was not always concerned with writing gratefully for instruments any more than he was when composing for the human voice. The musical ideal controls regardless of their limitations. Such movements as the Capriccio of the C minor Partita with its part-sharing, alternating from hand to hand, with its treacherous leaps of a tenth back and forth, attest to this. Troeger negotiates all the awkward places with such aplomb that they seem unstrained and graceful.

Troeger has already recorded the seven Toccatas (just released), and the Art of Fugue, the next CD to be issued. The entire series of 15 or so compact discs is expected to be completed by the end of the year 2000. The ears of sophisticated listeners have long been accustomed to hearing Bach's keyboard works played by preference on the harpsichord rather than the modern piano. A few early recordings, beginning with Arnold Dolmetsch's 1929 waxings of some of the "48"

and the Chromatic Fantasy, led to Thurston Dart's 1961 LP of the French Suites (recently reissued on compact disc) and Ralph Kirkpatrick's of the Well Tempered Clavier, Inventions and other pieces, all on "revival" clavichords. During the 1960s Igor Kipnis and others began to record on reproduction clavichords closer to those of Bach's time. Soon recordings of his music on historical instruments began to appear. All these deserve credit for breaking a path for Richard Troeger. By undertaking in these recordings to present the entire corpus of Bach's music for stringed keyboards on the clavichord (save only for Clavierübung II & IV), he will have confirmed and strengthened the case for its role not only as an historically appropriate but often musically more effective means of realizing the music's full expressive potential.

Howard Schott



The BCS at NEC

On the evening of December 7, 1999, BCS President Richard Troeger and Vice President Peter Sykes made a special presentation introducing the clavichord to a group of New England Conservatory students. The event, arranged by BCS Treasurer Beverly Woodward, was held in the Carr Organ Room at NEC and was hosted by NEC Music History Professor Gregory Smith. Troeger and Sykes lectured on the aesthetics of the clavichord and played a wide variety of music on two different clavichords- a Peter Fisk Hubert model and a Dolmetsch-Chickering. Although the presentation had to compete for the audience's attention with saxophones in nearby practice rooms, the attendees were able to get a good picture of the clavichord's musical and historical importance. Many guests attended the presentation, including NEC faculty members and members of the BCS Artistic Advisory Board.

Peter Sykes

News

The BCS is publishing five pamphlets on various topics related to the clavichord. The pamphlets are free and may be ordered by writing the BCS at P.O. Box 515, Waltham, MA 02454. The titles are: 1. *What is a Clavichord?* 2. *Selecting a Clavichord* 3. *What Repertory is Suited to the Clavichord?* 4. *Types of Historical Clavichords* 5. *Directory of North American Clavichord Builders.*

Frances Burmeister, the owner of "Erythea Antiques and Historical Keyboards" in Chagrin Falls, Ohio, writes "We host recitals every Tuesday evening. If anyone is planning to be in the Cleveland area and would like to perform (unfortunately gratis), please contact me at 888-742-1960."



Upcoming events

The International Center for Clavichord Studies announces that the third **Clavichord Performers' Workshop** will be held in Magnano, a small village in the Piedmont region of Italy, 6-9 September 2000, with tutors Colin Tilney, Bernard Brauchli and Derek Adlam. These seminars provide an opportunity for advanced players with only limited experience of the clavichord to acquire a clavichord technique, insight into the musical potential of the instrument and an understanding of the instrument's history and evolution. Daily tuition, group sessions and lectures on topics ranging from iconography to examining different types of historical clavichords will be included. For more information, contact Musica Antica Magnano, Via Roma 43, I-13887 Magnano (BI), Italy, Tel/Fax 39-15-67-92-60, email bbrauchl@worldcom.ch, or Beverly Woodward at 781-891-0814.

The International Center for Clavichord Studies also announces that the thirteenth **Corsi di Musica Antica a Magnano** will be held 17-27 August, 2000. The topics will be sixteenth to eighteenth century keyboard music (organ, harpsichord, clavichord, fortepiano), organology, organ building, and choir. For more information, contact the Center at the above address.

The concert by **Howard Schott**, originally scheduled for April 16 at Harvard University, has been postponed until the fall.

The BCS will sponsor a concert by **Steve Barrell** in the fall of 2000.

Maintenance Report, Part II

This article has four sections:

1. *Understanding relative humidity, and seasonal changes inside your house.*
2. *Understanding a little about wood, and how it changes with relative humidity.*
3. *Measuring and controlling the air in your music room.*
4. *Things you can do to keep your instrument happy year round.*

Sections one and two appeared in Newsletter number 6 (Summer 1999); Sections three and four appear here.

3-Measuring and controlling the air in your music room

If my previous description sounded frightening for the well-being of your instrument (and it should), you should now be motivated to take a serious look at the situation you are providing for your instrument(s). Even if you assume that all is well because of the region or type of building you live in, I urge you to take a little time and spend a few dollars to verify your assumptions. Whether you have several instruments in a separate room of your house or just one instrument you keep next to your bed, the effort will be well worthwhile when balanced against frequent tunings and the cost of regulations or major repairs. You need to know the atmospheric conditions you want to achieve and the tools you need to accomplish this.

About conditions: As I said at the beginning, unless you live in a museum or climate controlled house, there are going to be seasonal changes in the atmosphere. Museums keep their musical instruments and other precious artifacts in airtight cases or rooms maintained at a constant 70 degrees and 45% relative humidity (RH) year round, and monitor the conditions with expensive hygrothermographs. These are ideal conditions. You would expect nothing less from a museum. The rest of us, though, are faced with balancing the needs of our instruments with the other needs of our lives. For the average owner, the aim should be to keep an instrument's environment between 35% and 65% RH at a temperature of 70 degrees. Most of the emphasis up to this point has been about relative humidity, but the constancy of temperature directly affects the tuning stability of your

instrument. Changes in humidity can only affect regulation and tuning over longer periods—days or weeks—but changes in temperature have an immediate effect on tuning. A good rule of thumb is that it takes an open instrument about an hour to adapt to every two or three degree change in temperature. In other words, if you take your harpsichord from home where it is at 70 degrees to a hall where it is 75, it should be allowed about two and a half hours to get used to the new room. With strong overhead lighting, even more time should be allowed.

About tools: Monitoring the atmosphere in your home and around your instruments may sound like a fetish, but in the long run it makes such good financial sense—and adds so much to your musical enjoyment—that a few moments time each month will seem a small price to pay. The two tools you should have are a thermometer and a hygrometer. It is best to have several of each.

A hardware store thermometer with the red liquid in it is fine, and cheap enough that you can have several on hand.

Hygrometers come in several forms, but the kind you absolutely do not want is the little kind you can get for under \$10 at the hardware store. There are several types commonly available from various specialty stores and I would suggest having at least two for the purpose of checking their accuracy. In all cases, avoid cheap hygrometers. A good one will cost upwards of \$35. The following is a list of the various types.

The “wet-dry bulb” is the most reliable type of hygrometer. It is available in two models, the wall-mounted type which you have to stand near and fan in order to get a reading (about \$20), and the sling psychrometer (about \$60) which takes about two minutes of swinging to get a very accurate reading. With both of these you must use distilled water to moisten the wet bulb. I strongly recommend you have the latter of these—if you think you have the patience—and use it several times a year to check on your humidifier and other hygrometers, as well as to check the atmosphere when you move your instrument away from home.

The hair hygrometer (from about \$50) is easily available, and uses the minute tension on a hair as a sensor to produce read-out on a dial. They are reasonably accurate and nice to look at, but require a (simple)

calibration process biannually.

Digital hygrometers usually come with a digital thermometer and are often called thermohygrometers (from about \$30). These higher tech hygrometers have a sensor to measure the capacity of the surrounding air to hold an electrostatic charge. Like most digital gadgets, they need batteries and can give you lots of information, but cannot be calibrated or adjusted. They either work well, or not at all. The quality of these can vary; usually the better ones cost more.

The wood spline is not really a hygrometer. It is something I use in my workshop and have occasionally sold to a client. It is infallible and needs only a little calibration, but it does take a little imagination to visualize. The principle is this: if you had an uninstalled harpsichord soundboard lying around in your music room, and had an accurate way of measuring its width as the weather changed, you could then see the changes in humidity as the width of the board changed. The wood spline is a piece of soundboard wood (a spline) whose length is roughly the width of a harpsichord soundboard, but whose width is only two inches. The spline is held in a shallow groove down the length of a slightly longer strip of a stable wood, and attached at one end. By keeping track and calibrating the spline's overall length (relative to the lengthwise piece holding it) at known humidity levels, you can see exactly what is happening to the wood in your instrument. These are not sold anywhere, but your friendly instrument maker can make one for you easily. I highly recommend having one of these.

Never put a hygrometer near a window; instead always keep it right next to the instrument. A rule of thumb amid all this gadgetry may also be helpful. If in a humidified room in an average older building you notice drops of condensation forming and running down the pane of an uninsulated window, then you may have too much moisture in the air. This phenomenon depends on the difference between inside and outside temperatures and some other variables. It is a good indication that you should check up on just what is happening in your music room.

About the appliances: The way humidifiers work has changed very little in the electronic age. The majority of the best

room-size models readily available on the market use evaporators, and of these there are two types. One type has a belt of fabric that moves slowly through a bath of water and then past a fan. The second type has a fan that blows air through a honeycomb-kind of wick material that is partially immersed in a bath of water. This type must have the wick replaced at monthly or shorter intervals to work well. Either model, if it is large enough for the average room, will cost from \$100 to perhaps \$300. There is really no economy of labor in filling or maintaining a small unit that will only serve one small room. A larger ten gallon machine is a good idea, and it is generally true that larger machines are quieter, a substantial consideration. Both types work well, and must have antibacterial agents added to the water. All humidifiers have hygrometer control switches that supposedly monitor the relative humidity, but the accuracy of these controls can vary greatly. Never put a humidifier near a thermostat. In front of a radiator is a better place.

The other side of the humidity control equation is a little more difficult to deal with for the average home owner. As a practical matter putting water into the air is a little easier than getting it out.

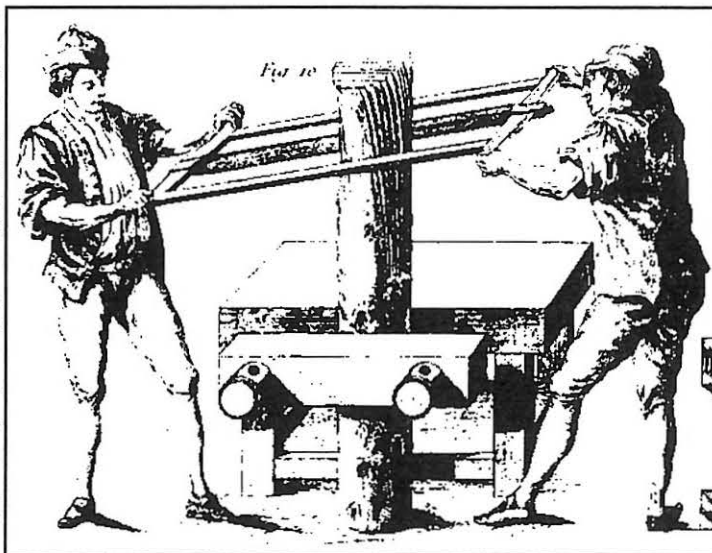
Air conditioners are more common and better understood appliances than humidifiers, and over the last few decades have become much quieter and efficient than in the past. Regardless of a unit's age though, its ability to cool and dehumidify the air depends largely on the machine being clean, well charged, and properly installed. The savings in energy and comfort are well worth the time and cost of taking a room unit to be blown clean and checked every few years. Dehumidifiers are only useful for basements and have the unfortunate attributes of being both loud and heat-producing.

Another dehumidifying device is the damp-chaser. These are simply low wattage heaters in the form of an aluminum tube that can be placed inside a harpsichord or fortepiano between the bottom and soundboard. The very low heat is just enough to cause the local area of wood to lose moisture by evaporation. These can be useful in some instances where one area of

a soundboard develops a problem in very humid conditions, but in general, these do not help solve the larger problem. They can do nothing to reduce the humidity in a room.

4-Things you can do to keep your instrument happy year round

As I said at the outset, we need to live with our instruments, not for them. Creating a stable environment for an instrument, tempered with your own need for aesthetics and livability, is the ultimate goal. Given all the variables of dwellings and lifestyles, it is impossible to provide one formula for a music room that will work well for every situation. For better or worse, there is no



building code ordaining that one room in a house have no outside walls or windows, though for a while in the nineteenth century many architects did just that. This resulted in the grand piano alcove—a fad found particularly in eastern cities—which still serves well for a small instrument. With the exception of that brief period, incorporating space for a large keyboard instrument is unheard of in housing design, leaving the choice of which room to put the instrument in a matter of compromise. So, if you have a choice about where to put an instrument, where would be best? Is where you have it now OK? What can you reasonably do to make things better? To answer these and other questions, I would like to suggest some general considerations in choosing a place for your instrument, describe some simple ways to evaluate the situation you now have, and offer some ideas to help you manage your instrument both at home and when you move it.

In planning a music room, or simply a place to store your instruments, the goal is to keep both temperature and relative humidity at as consistent a level as possible. From a purely pragmatic standpoint, the first choice would be a room which does not connect to either a kitchen or bathroom and which has the fewest windows, doors and outside walls. Though direct sunlight is always nice in any room, a northern exposure is preferable, since sunlight will cause temperature fluctuations from day to night, as well as changes in the colors of wood and paint. Indirect lighting is more favorable than overhead flood or spotlights which can heat up objects under them. Finally, the smaller the room can be and still incorporate your instruments and related objects, the easier it is to limit the demands of humidifying and air conditioning. These strictly pragmatic considerations, if found all together, may not make it the most welcoming room in which to spend time.

With buildings, as with people, age makes a difference in how tight everything is. Building codes and materials have changed a great deal over the last thirty years, and most recent buildings have excellent vapor barriers to keep the exchange with outside air to a minimum. Older buildings, even those made of brick, will “breathe” to some extent. Old wood frame buildings are the most porous, and while storm windows and insulation in the walls help a great deal, it is not enough to cancel out drafts and the inevitable exchange of air with the outside. Though it is never a good idea to put an instrument against an outside wall, this might be all right in a brand new airtight home. In any case, it is easy to test for yourself.

Evaluating where you keep your instrument is more important in regions of the country where seasonal change is greatest. As fastidious as it may sound, I would urge you to spend just a few minutes during the extreme seasons of the year to monitor the effects of your heating or air conditioning. All you will need are one or two cheap thermometers and an accurate hygrometer (see section 3). On an average winter day (a windy day is best) check the temperature

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Maintenance, continued from P.5

in several places in the room: at both ends of the instrument, at floor level against an outside wall, right next to a window, at the entrance to the room, and in the middle of the room. It is a good result if there is no more than a five degree difference in all the readings. In that case your instruments should be staying happily in tune. More than that is still normal, but if you notice instruments going out of tune after a few days—by checking four notes in octaves—you might want to think about some changes. More than a fifteen degree variation from an outside wall temperature to the middle of the room should be cause to take action.

It is also a good idea to make a temperature evaluation from day to night. Much more than a five degree difference in ambient room temperature from mid-day to late night can cause your tuning to drift quickly. A likely cause of this is your day/night thermostat, which can easily be adjusted to reduce the day to night differential.

A second test is to see how long it takes for the humidity to drop by about 10% under normal conditions. In the morning of an average day in the heating season, place an accurate hygrometer in or near your instrument, and turn off your humidifier. A good result is that there is almost no change at the end of the day. A drop of more than 10% by the end of the day would not be unusual, but you might consider adding a second humidifier elsewhere in your home. A large drop in the humidity should also

reinforce your motivation to tighten up the leaks in your music room.

While these two simple tests tell you how stable the environment is in your music room, they will also tell you about your instrument. If you have a very stable room, and the instrument goes uncomfortably out of tune in a few days, then your instrument has a problem.

What to do varies in cost and complexity. A minimum is to make sure your humidifier is working well. Caulking all outside walls at corners and windows pays off well and is easy to do. On a cold windy day, you can use the back of your hand to track down these drafts, and run a small (and hardly visible) bead of clear latex caulking into the leaks. A further measure is painting the walls and ceiling with a good vapor barrier paint, and perhaps upgrading the quality of the storm windows. The ultimate solution would be gutting the room, installing insulation with a plastic vapor barrier, replacing old windows, and generally making the room airtight. The answer depends both on your financial ability and your patience to undertake such major work.

Finally, some general suggestions about how to manage your instrument at home and while traveling. What follows is not a comprehensive list, but responds to a few recurring questions and problems of instrument owners.

Keeping the lid down when not in use is an unpopular but very good idea. It will help keep the tuning stable, and over the long term keep dust and lint off the strings. It is

also a very good idea to blow and brush the dust and lint out of your instrument at least once a year.

If you are going away for longer than a few days, putting the instrument's cover on will help maintain the tuning. Draping the covered instrument with heavy plastic during long unattended periods is also a good idea.

Be careful that no direct sunlight hits the instrument, and that it is at least three feet from a radiator, and more from hot air vent or air conditioner. If the latter is hard to arrange, using a screen or small bookcase as a baffle to block the direct flow of air is a good measure.

There are several reasons (too long to discuss) why not to let an instrument get really cold or freeze. They have to do with preventing broken strings and with the long-term health of the instrument. An hour unattended in a cold car is not disastrous, however, if the instrument is tightly wrapped in a cover.

When moving an instrument, it can be helpful to have along a thermometer and hygrometer. With the home atmosphere known, you can have a good idea how long it will take for the instrument to acclimate to the temperature in a new room (about an hour per three degrees, as mentioned above). It is not a problem to leave the instrument for a few days in a hall that your hygrometer tells you is very dry if the instrument is tightly covered and perhaps draped with plastic.

Allan Winkler

The Boston Clavichord Society

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