

# Aesthetic Realism and the Art of the Flute

## An Interview with Barbara Allen

In conversation with

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This interview with the noted flutist and music educator Barbara Allen took place on April 21, 2014. Ms. Allen is my colleague at the Aesthetic Realism Foundation, a not-for-profit cultural and educational foundation in New York City. Together with Anne Fielding, director of the Aesthetic Realism Theatre Company, we teach the class "The Opposites in Music" at the Foundation. Ms. Allen is music director of the Theatre Company, and as its conductor and flutist, she has taken part in performances across the country--including New Orleans, Atlanta, and Baltimore.

Aesthetic Realism, the philosophy founded in 1941 by Eli Siegel (1902-1978), was described by him as "the art of liking the world and oneself at the same time, by seeing the world and oneself as aesthetic opposites." Mr. Siegel first gained renown in America as a poet, when, in 1925, he won the prestigious Nation magazine poetry prize for his "Hot Afternoons Have Been in Montana." About this poem, William Carlos Williams was to write in 1951: "I say definitely that that single poem, out of a thousand others written in the past quarter century, secures our place in the cultural world....We are compelled to pursue his lead."

Early in the 1940s, Mr. Siegel wrote the philosophic masterpiece *Self and World* (Definition Press). In it, he shows that reality has a structure akin to what makes for beauty in the arts--the oneness of opposites; and that the questions men and women face in everyday life are aesthetic.

In the interview which now follows, Barbara Allen describes this new and grand education--with a focus on the art of which she is a master: the art of the flute.

**Edward Green:** You are known, both as a performer and as a music educator, for your advocacy of the Aesthetic Realism viewpoint and method. Can you tell us about its main principles?

**Barbara Allen:** Yes, certainly. I had the honor to study with its founder, the great poet and educator, Eli Siegel. What I learned is the thing which distinguishes my teaching of the flute and what I say as I perform publicly. Aesthetic Realism has three major principles, each terrifically relevant to flute players and how we approach the delightful, amazing instrument we've chosen. I should add that while I'm speaking here about the flute, I feel it stands for all instruments people have played since ancient times and are playing now.

The first principle is that every person's deepest desire is to like the world on an honest basis. This, I've seen, is the impulsion behind a person playing an instrument—say, bringing a wind instrument to his or her lips and blowing across a reed or mouthpiece. One way of defining the world, according to Aesthetic Realism, is *everything which begins where our fingertips end*.

The flute certainly begins where our fingertips end; it stands for the outside world. And how we see that outside world affects very deeply the way we hold the flute and produce the sound that it and we make together. I'll say more about this later.

The second principle is: "There is a disposition in every person to think we will be for ourselves by making less of the outside world." This is a description of contempt, which is the great opposition in ourselves to art. In fact, contempt is the cause of all cruelty—between people and among nations. I've seen through my own life that if we look on the world, which very much includes people, with a scornful, self-aggrandizing attitude, we hurt our relation to everything, including the flute.

EG: You'll talk about this more later?

BA: Definitely. And the third principle which I see as the most important single statement about aesthetics and its relation to our lives is this sentence by Eli Siegel—"*All beauty is a making one of opposites, and the making one of opposites is what we are going after in ourselves.*" I love this principle—and it is the basis of all of my teaching and my study of flute literature.

EG: I know that early in your study with him, you wrote a paper titled "The Flute—Lyrical and Pungent." Somewhat later I had the privilege to be your accompanist when it was presented to the public. How did the paper come to be? And were there surprises as you wrote it—new insights into the meaning of the flute you hadn't had before?

### This Is What I Learned

BA: In order to answer those questions, I'm going to speak somewhat autobiographically. Though I grew up playing the flute—I'm from the Chicago area) and had some of my biggest emotions doing so, continued my study at the University of Illinois and developed technically, something began to happen which troubled me very much. As time went on, the tone which I'd been praised for, became harder and I developed a constriction in my throat which made for a guttural sound as I played. I remember vividly one day standing in a room in Spain, trying to play the opening passage of Mozart's Concerto in D, going up that first run and trying to hold that long D. The sound was angry and tight. I couldn't bear making this sound, and so just two years after college, where I'd been rather successful in the music department, I stopped playing altogether.

I tried to resign myself to the feeling that the flute would no longer be part of my life. It was, as you can imagine, a terrible thing to feel. Fortunately, it was at that time I returned to the United States and began to study Aesthetic Realism. It was then I learned that I had developed an *attitude to the world*—using things I'd seen early in my life to harden myself against things. It was this *attitude to the world*, which was interfering with my life and playing and I learned it could change!

A key question Eli Siegel asked me in one of the first Aesthetic Realism classes I attended—and to say it was a privilege to study with him is a huge understatement—was, did I see other people as having inner lives as deep and rich as my own? I had not; I saw myself as sensitive, much more

sensitive than other people. And I was really not interested in what my father, mother, or the men I knew felt. And it was this attitude of separation from people—not respectfully asking what did they feel, what were they hoping for—that was making me cold and stopping me from what I most wanted—to play the flute and be a kind person.

EG: I'm glad you spoke about this. So, if I understand you right, you're saying that your flute tone grew harder because your way of seeing the world had become harder?

BA: Yes, I am. The relation of yielding and force needed to produce a beautiful tone, I could not have. *There is definitely a connection between technique and our attitude to the world.* Every technical aspect of approaching the flute—from the angle of the embouchure, to the breath support, to how we use our fingers—is affected by whether we see the world as something to care for, respect, even love, or as something to have contempt for, be cold to, hide from.

And what happened next in my study was a very big thing. It was shortly after that class with Eli Siegel, in which he asked me questions about how I saw people, that I read a paper written by Martha Baird, poet, critic of music, a paper with Aesthetic Realism at its basis. It was later published in *Allegro*, the newspaper of local 802, New York City's Musicians Union. The paper was titled "Junction and Separation in the Elements of Music."

In it, Ms. Baird showed that these opposites—separation and junction, the same opposites I was learning about in myself—are the very heart of music. In fact, she showed they need to be one for a note or sound to exist at all! For example, all sounds result from matter meeting matter—two separate things meet—that's separation and junction. When moving air passes through, say, the brittle winter branches of a tree, we hear whistling.

I'll never forget that early Saturday morning in Spring, when I was walking down the street and I thought to myself, "I wonder how separation and junction are in flute playing?" I couldn't get home fast enough. I took out my flute after almost two years of barely touching it, and I played the first note—I was amazed! It sounded good! It was me plus the flute—that's junction! And it was the fast moving air against the solid flute that caused the sound, making a richer and more open tone than I had ever heard before. I began fumblingly to play things mainly in the low register and asked why...why such a change in the tone?

The answer came to me—you care more for the world, you know that through Aesthetic Realism, you can see the world more as it truly is—as wide, filled with sounds, sights and people you can see meaning in. The restriction in the throat thousands of flute players and singers worry about was gone!

As my attitude toward the world changed, and I liked reality more, this made for physical changes, position changes, a more tender and fuller relation of my embouchure and the silver Haynes flute I had had since high school.

I imagine you can understand by now why I'm so grateful to Eli Siegel and to the philosophy he founded. Seeing my relation—through the opposites—to reality freed me to play again and this has continued all the years since.

EG: Yes, I certainly do see it. This is some story!

## Music and the Oneness of Opposites

BA: This leads me directly to the next point, since you asked me what surprised me most as I worked on that paper on the flute. I learned that music itself shows in Mr. Siegel's words "what the world is like." Music is not in a separate and better world. The world, Aesthetic Realism explains, is made aesthetically, it is a oneness of opposites. For instance, a tree is One and Many—it has a thick trunk with many branches able to move in the wind. Niagara Falls is a oneness of Power and Grace: There is power as water plunges from its edge, and also ever-so-delicate mists radiant in the sun. They are the same opposites that are one in beautiful music, and they need to be one as we play an instrument. They are—and I want to emphasize this—the same opposites we are trying to put together in ourselves.

Here I'll mention another principle which in a way I'm illustrating: "The world, art, and self explain each other: each is the aesthetic oneness of opposites." I was excited to see that I was not just blowing across a tube for hours while practicing, I was learning about the structure of the world and also myself at the very time I was studying my long tones—isn't a note one and many at the same time; a single A is 440 vibrations per second? And aren't force and delicacy together as one in the opening flute passage from Mozart's D Concerto?

[Click Here for Opening Flute Passage](#)

EG: That's us playing, yes?

BA: Yes. The big thing is, I want to stress again that music is not in a separate world. Musicians have hurt ourselves thinking we could do well on stage, and have a different purpose off the stage—not listen to people, or leave reality in some fashion—through drink, drugs, and other ways.

## Music Is about This World

Music is about this world—it is about the world with its pleasure and pain, gentleness and harshness, order and chaos, joy and sadness, love and hate. Bach, Mozart, Duke Ellington were real people who felt reality deeply and as we play their music on our instruments, we have the honor to try to be close to them, to see and feel how they made beauty of these very opposites.

In one Aesthetic Realism class, Eli Siegel described something particular that made for new thought in me—he said that two of the major opposites important to wind instrumentalists (especially) are *advance and retreat*.

Yes, I said to myself, to blow out in order to produce the various tones *is* advance; to take air in is retreat. It's one of the largest difficulties all wind instrumentalists have—when is a good time to take a breath? How is the breath to be as deep and full as possible? How can I give the impression that I'm not desperate to breathe while playing, and that there is enough, but not too much, for each note?

One of the biggest changes that I noticed right away in my playing is that I cared more for the air. In order for one to breathe air in and give it back, it is necessary to care for the world actively and through thought.

EG: I've heard you talk about that as you've critiqued students in your classes. Making students aware of that connection seemed to help the tone of these students right away.

BA: It has, and it did so for me. When a person becomes conscious of the need to care, honestly, for the world, it inevitably makes for a more beautiful—a richer and also more focused—tone. It also makes for a deeper welcoming of air, and better breathing.

The more I thought about this matter of the oneness of advance and retreat, the more I saw how crucial it is for good flute playing: *within* each note there is a oneness of advance and retreat. The low notes are quieter, recessive, but to play them one must give more air. The high notes have more of the advance or aggressive quality, but to play them well, one has to yield deeply while giving them the exact velocity of air they deserve. Musicians who study Aesthetic Realism are fortunate to be able to ask: What does this note deserve? It is not unlike the question Mr. Siegel asked me about how I saw people—do I grant people what they deserve? Do I want to see their inner lives? Both people and notes have inner lives.

EG: You mentioned earlier Chicago and the University of Illinois. Who were your teachers, and what were the most valuable things you learned from them?

BA: I was fortunate to grow up in Elmhurst, Illinois, where music was very much respected as it is in many suburbs surrounding Chicago. My first teacher was Glennis Stout, who introduced me to Handel's *Sonata in G minor* and there began a long relation to Handel. Then, I began to study with Hobart Grimes. His strictness and warmth affected me very much. I always felt he wanted me to be exact, to practice my scales, exercises, but he wanted my tone to be warm, and full. I remember once as I was learning "The Flight of the Bumble Bee," he called my father in and asked that he help me practice *slowly* so that I would be exact and free at once. And it worked! Under Mr. Grimes's supervision, I tried out and made the Chicago Youth Orchestra during my junior and senior years in high school. Also, he taught me about vibrato. He said, "Never let your vibrato get out of control. Let it serve the music." I see now in light of what I'm telling you about Aesthetic Realism that he wanted me to put opposites together. This means the expansion and contraction of the sound needs to serve the meaning of the melody, not be automatic. This is what makes control and freedom one in vibrato.

When I reached college age, I went to the University of Illinois, because I wanted to study with Charles Delaney—I loved his tone: it was a beautiful relation of depth and brightness. This is in keeping with what Theobald Boehm, whose writing on the flute I respect very much, said: that the tone we look for in a flutist is at once "brilliant," and "sonorous." And I found in Mr. Delaney, a generous and very demanding teacher. Though I did not major in music, he insisted that I do a junior and senior recital. I'm grateful to this day for what I learned from him for it affected my own understanding of the tone of the flute.

Then after college, I studied briefly with Joanne Bennett of the Chicago Symphony, but by that time, I had become, as I said before, increasingly distressed about my tone, and I had to discontinue.

It was then I had the good fortune to study with Eli Siegel. He was the kindest person I ever met. Mr. Siegel had a relation of great scholarship and warmth I had never seen before. His knowledge was enormous, and he always used it to bring out what was good in every person who studied with him. In my instance, he restored something I thought I'd lost, the ability to play the flute; but even more

importantly, I learned from him a new way of seeing the whole world, for which I could respect myself and which made me happy.

## The Meaning of Instruments

EG: I've heard you speak movingly and powerfully about the meaning of instruments, *per se*—not just the flute. Can you talk about this?

BA: It is a wonder to me that human beings have been impelled to make and play musical instruments for over 30,000 years. Recently, in fact, a flute was discovered what is now Germany that they've dated back 42,000 years. And in the caves of France and over a thousand miles to the east in what is now Russia, two kinds of musical instruments were found—the flute with 7 holes and a series of drums, perhaps capable of different pitches. Why were people, who must have had to do very much simply to survive, so impelled? It's a question that I love, and so does my husband, Arnold Perey, who is an anthropologist, and who teaches the subject at the Foundation. We've had many conversations about it.

What Aesthetic Realism says about the deepest desire of a person being to like the world is the reason humanity was impelled, so very early in its history, to create instruments. These instruments, from prehistory to the present, are made from materials to be found in the world—wood, bone, ivory, silver, brass, gold. And every instrument must be played by a person. So when we hear a *note*, what we hear is a successful oneness of a person and the world: opposites we're trying to do a good job with from birth. The first musician and the musician today have this in common: the instrument is a means of joining oneself to the whole world.

EG: I think that's why musicians can have such a deep feelings about their instruments. Love, really.

BA: I agree! And it's the same principle when it comes to love between two people: a feeling *you* bring me closer to the whole world.

EG: That's an exciting relation.

BA: Yes, it is. And while this is an interview about the flute, and how I teach it, you know that I also am a consultant to women in my work at the Aesthetic Realism Foundation. Marriages do depend on it: the need to use a person to feel, as Eli Siegel once put it, "closely one with things as a whole." Love of music, love of an instrument, and love of a person have that in common. The world has to be honored.

EG: On your website, you've posted papers on music, education, and love. Some combination!

BA: Yes; also on economics, and what it means—in that field—for people to see each other with respect rather than contempt.

EG: What's the URL?

BA: [www.barbaraallen.org](http://www.barbaraallen.org). No dot between my first and last names.

EG: Good. And since readers will likely be interested, what is the URL of the Aesthetic Realism Foundation?

BA: It's *www.aestheticrealism.org*. The website is rich, and there is information there about the many classes, in different subjects, that are taught at the Foundation. I mentioned the classes on music and anthropology; among the other classes are ones in education, poetry, acting, cinema, the visual arts, and a class I teach with my colleagues Anne Fielding and Pauline Meglino—a class for women entitled "Understanding Marriage!"

EG: Thank you. A great curriculum.

BA: Yes it is. And now back directly to the question you asked about instruments. There are, historically and anthropologically speaking, essentially three kinds. You can see them in every culture. There are instruments which are hit—percussion; instruments which are plucked and bowed—stringed instruments; and instruments which are blown.

Each family, I've come to see, is a different way of putting together opposites—fundamentally the opposites of continuity and discontinuity, or surprise. Every instrument shows what reality can do:

- The drum has an explosive, abrupt, discontinuous sound. At the same time it can be suggestive.
- The plucked-string begins sharply, lingers a little, and dies away. The bowed string accents more continuity, though discontinuity occurs and the bow goes back and forth.
- And the wind instruments are more continuous, though, of course, one can play staccato passages.

These opposites aren't just "acoustical." They aren't just "impersonal" and scientific. They are also big in people's lives. Sometimes *we* feel explosive. Sometimes *we* have sharp thoughts which may linger. And sometimes we feel more continuous. We are all three. We are, in effect, like an orchestra, which also has the three basic families together.

But the *way* we feel explosive and the *way* we feel things are continuous very often is not beautiful. Boredom—too much continuity—and agitation—too much discontinuity—are painful forms of the opposites all musical instruments put together well —continuity and surprise, junction and separation.

EG: The connections you're making, through the opposites, between art and life are wonderful. You spoke earlier about love and marriage. That's a duet. In our work together we've spoken of how the flute and the right hand of a Bach Sonata have what love needs to have—and both need to care for the bass line in order to really get along. Can you say something more about the meaning of ensemble playing—and what makes it good?

### The Ethics of an Ensemble

BA: In every ensemble two or more instruments join, and when the music is beautiful, they join in such a way that they add to each other. This is so important. People in orchestras all over the world feel something as they play together which is necessary for us to feel in our everyday lives. The drum and flute are different, and played well, they bring out the strength of each other. *A successful ensemble is ethics as beauty*. The flute is not saying, "I'm more refined and superior to you." The drum

is not saying, “I can play more loudly and drown you out.” They are different, as people are different, and they need each other.

In all ensemble playing there is an implicit call for each instrumentalist to be faithful and fair to his own part and to have good will—that is, hope and work to have the other parts stronger. The beauty that results when the 90 people and their instruments are playing, say the Brahms First Symphony, stand for the ethics we need as we think about each other, how women should see men, and men, women; how we should see people of different nations, or skin tones.

EG: Are you saying that we can learn from music about one of the big things troubling America now—racism?

BA: Definitely, I brought to this interview a passage from the periodical *The Right of Aesthetic Realism to Be Known* written by Ellen Reiss, Aesthetic Realism Chairman of Education, which I care for very much and which stands for what people in America can learn from music about one of the toughest and most urgent matters facing us. She writes in issue 1264:

“What needs to replace racism is not the feeling that the difference of another person is somehow tolerable. What is necessary is the seeing and feeling that the relation of sameness and difference between ourselves and that other person is *beautiful*. People need to feel, with feeling both intimately personal and large, that the difference of race is like the difference to be found in music: two notes are different but they are in behalf of the same melody; they complete each other; each needs the other to be expressed richly, to be fully itself.”

EG: We’ve performed the Mozart concerti together in many concerts, and one thing I particularly loved was working together to provide commentary about the music—talking and illustrating the music first, and then performing the concerti. Could you say something about how you see concerto form, as such, and then also some specific things about these two concerti—still the most frequently played in all of flute literature?

BA: Yes, I’m grateful that we’ve studied and played together these two concerti. Perhaps in future interviews we can speak about the opposites in each in detail. For now, I’ll say something of the first one you mention.

### Mozart’s Work Shows How We Want to Be

When we wrote about this concerto, we gave our presentation the title “Mozart’s Flute Concerto in G; or, the Victory of Self-Questioning.”

EG: Right. I like the title because it brought ethics and music together.

BA: As we looked at that concerto we saw that within its structure the flute stands for a self, always accompanied, criticized, and encouraged by the many-pieced orchestra, standing for the world, which you were able to convey with the piano. That relation—of Self and World—really is at the heart of concerto form. And in this particular concerto, the character of the melody Mozart gave to the flute at its first entrance is both triumphant, bold, even trumpet-like as it plays the tonic and dominant notes of the scale, leaps an octave, but then instead of remaining there, it falls one step, which makes for a feeling of questioning or doubt. So it’s got that combination of triumph and self-questioning, and it’s a beautiful, honest combination.

[Click Here for Opening Flute Melody of 8 Notes \(Flute Alone\)](#)

As we worked on this concerto, we were fortunate to have a discussion with Ellen Reiss, who teaches the professional classes for persons studying to teach Aesthetic Realism. She said as she heard this music and our description of it:

“It seems that you want to speak about the self as triumphant, strutting, brilliant, trying to be one with the self humble, self-questioning, even regretful.”

And we saw and heard regret magnificently expressed in the second movement where Mozart has the orchestra repeat the same note seven times until the flute welcomes it, takes it up and continues with a melody that is such a oneness of pride and humility, fullness and modesty—it is truly one of the most beautiful ever made.

[Click Here for Example from Second Movement](#)

Mozart himself wrote a letter which affected us very much as we looked at this work. In this letter which he wrote to his wife Constanze in 1790, the year before he died, he said:

“If people could see into my heart, I should almost feel ashamed. To me everything is cold—cold as ice. Perhaps if you were with me, I might possibly take more pleasure in the kindness of those I meet here.”

And it is this feeling of regret he gave form to in the second movement of his concerto. Studying this music encouraged both of us to criticize our own ways of being cold and aloof.

EG: Yes, it did. Can you expand on what you mentioned earlier: that a person’s attitude toward the world affects the sound he or she makes on the flute?

BA It does, and I don’t think the importance of this can be overstated. Aesthetic Realism makes very clear that every person is in a fight all the time between the desire to like the world, see value in things and people; and another desire—the hope to feel superior, more accomplished, better than other people. This is the fight between respect for the world and contempt. It takes thousands of forms. If we look at a fellow flutist and say to ourselves, “I hope she or he makes a mistake during the tryout,” what do we do to ourselves? Do we make ourselves stronger or weaker—do we appreciate beauty more or less? As I know from my own life, the desire to find flaws in people, be superior and scornful, with men in particular in my case, is life-sapping. It makes love impossible. And it caused me to have a very deep dislike of myself. This unfortunately is representative of how most people, musicians or not musicians, men or women, see one’s own importance. And it hurts art.

I saw my mother, who played the piano very well and was my first teacher, have a different purpose with the keyboard in front of her, than she had as she talked about the neighbors with suspicion and scorn. She didn’t know, because Aesthetic Realism was not known in Elmhurst, though it could have been in the 1950s, that the deep sounds in the bass and the brighter sounds in the treble as she played “Für Elise” stood for a hope in her to put low and high together, modesty and pride. Instead, her contempt for the world and people caused her to suffer. Years later she learned from Aesthetic Realism the cause of her depression, and her life changed! She told me she wanted me to tell her story because it could be of use to everyone. I want musicians to know this.

EG: Thank you, we'll make sure they do. How does your understanding that contempt and respect are purposes which are in everyone affect your teaching of the flute?

## Teaching the Flute

BA: It's an important question. Let me approach it by first mentioning a passage from Theobald Boehm's book *The Flute and Flute Playing in Acoustical, Technical, and Artistic Aspects*, and then place Boehm's scientific finding with what I've observed in myself and my students.

The place a flute player most intimately meets the instrument is with the mouth—the embouchure. The way the lips are formed has a great deal to do with how precisely and how richly the air meets the instrument. When we are in a debate between having contempt for the outside world—sneering at it, which is done with the lips—and having respect for it, even wonder—this debate will affect the sounds we make. And I think the effect of contempt for the world is what Theobald Boehm is documenting when he wrote this in 1872:

“Experience shows that all wood-wind instruments are affected by the manner of blowing so that they become either better or worse with regard to the tones and their production....The reasons for this have never yet been satisfactorily explained....The best flute loses an easy speech by overblowing and its bright clear quality of tone by a bad embouchure, and conversely gains in speech and tone by a correct handling and a good embouchure.”

The purpose of every lesson I give, either to classes or to an individual, is to encourage my students to use learning about the instrument to know and like reality. In an early lesson I've quoted these sentences to my students from Eli Siegel's *Self and World*. It's from the chapter 3, “The Aesthetic Method in Self-Conflict.” These are the sentences:

“There is a deep and ‘dialectic’ duality facing every human being, which can be put this way: How is he to be entirely himself, and yet be fair to that world which he does not see as himself? The definition of aesthetics is to be found in a proper appreciation of this duality.

“We all of us start with a *here*, ever so snug and ever so immediate. And this *here* is surrounded strangely, endlessly, by a *there*. We are always meeting this *there*: in other words, we are always meeting what is not ourselves, and we have to do something about it. We have to be ourselves, and give to this great and diversified *there*, which is not ourselves, what it deserves.”

There are various technical things which these sentences address and which make for sound which is good or not. For instance, as we hold the flute—our right hand goes towards the world as *there*, and our left hand faces ourselves *here*. Our attitude towards what is *there* affects how we position these hands. Sometimes I've seen students pull back the right hand and as soon as this happens, the tone is stifled. The triangle of right, left hands and embouchure needs to be beautiful, in such a way that the flute is the thing that stands forth, not one's mouth, or oneself.

Likewise there are errors in turning the flute head joint too far in or too far out. We can ask: How much does the desire to manage what is not ourselves on the one hand, and be aloof or distant, on the other affect our placement? There is either a stifled quality or an airy, unfocused quality. What we want is to be ever-so-close to the instrument and at the same time honor, care for the fact that it joins

us to what is outside—the notes that Bach wrote in 1732 perhaps. It is a great feeling when this happens.

So I've talked about these opposites: Here and There; Turning in and Out; and Force and Gentleness. And of course there are other pairs I could mention—including Firmness and Flexibility. But the main thing is, it is the oneness of opposites we're looking for every moment in life— and good flute playing comes from this aesthetic imperative: utter yielding, and giving oneself to the music without any ego-distortion, at the same moment as we are showing who we are in our fullness, engaging the music with all of ourselves: our best mind and our deepest and most sincere feelings.

EG: Thank you. As this interview begins to round to a close, I want to make sure to ask: what flutists, in the past and now, do you most admire?

BA: Rampal, for sure. William Kincaid, Julius Baker, Doriot Anthony Dwyer, and more recently Emmanuel Pahud—they all come right to mind. The key thing I like about each is the richness and warmth of tone, directness and suggestion.

EG: Thanks for this really engaging hour of conversation. Is there anything you would like to say in conclusion?

BA: Yes, and thank you, too, for this interview. I would like to close by quoting sentences about the flute by Mr. Siegel which I love. When I first heard them, I felt how beautiful they were, as though he were speaking for the flute and its purpose. I also felt very honored that he included me.

So here it is. I don't know of anything more wonderful ever written on the meaning and beauty of the flute—let alone in such a compact manner.

"There are as many as forty pairs of opposites that, if one hears diligently, one can find in the music of the flute. Even the Magic Flute of Mozart had expansion and restraint at once; had energy and delicacy; had resonance and piercingness; had high and low; was straight and casual. Furthermore, when Barbara Allen plays the flute, she is herself and simultaneously, perhaps, at one with a composer of the 17th century or of 1850 or of a few years ago.

"And the flute is such a wonderful mingling, amazing oneness, of sadness and cheerfulness. The flute is springy, and can sound like the everlasting complaint of one bird in one wilderness coping with the justice of God. If we looked at the literature of the flute, we would reach forty—and more, too—instances of the flute being a various mode, accompanied by an intellectual and human pleasure, of showing how the world we have and which others once had, is present in the possibilities of the graceful instrument which begins and ceases with such fetching and powerful subtlety."

## EDWARD GREEN

### Manhattan School of Music

Edward Green is a professor of composition and music history at Manhattan School of Music. For several years he served as a Senior Scholar in American Music for the Fulbright Foundation, and under their auspices and that of CIES taught a doctoral course at the Pontifical University of Argentina in Buenos Aires. His own doctorate is from New York University, with a thesis on the late vocal music of Haydn and Mozart. A musicologist of diverse interests, who is on the editorial board of several journals, including the International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music, Dr. Green is likewise editor both of *China and the West: The Birth of a New Music* (Shanghai Conservatory Press) and of the recently released *Cambridge Companion to Duke Ellington*. Edward Green is an award-winning composer, and in 2010 his *Concertino for Piano and Chamber Orchestra* was nominated for a Grammy in the category "Best Classical Contemporary Composition."

## BARBARA ALLEN

### Aesthetic Realism Theatre Company

Barbara Allen graduated from the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana where she studied flute with Charles Delaney. She has taught in the public schools of Chicago and West Orange, New Jersey. Ms. Allen began her study of the education Aesthetic Realism with its founder Eli Siegel in 1970, and is an Aesthetic Realism Consultant. With her colleagues at the Aesthetic Realism Foundation in New York City, she conducts classes in various subjects, including: "The Opposites in Music" and "The Aesthetic Realism Teaching Method." Her husband, the pioneering and highly esteemed anthropologist Dr. Arnold Perey, is also on the faculty of the Foundation. With Dr. Green, who conducted this interview for HJMEC, Ms. Allen has given many public presentations of important works from flute literature—performances with critical commentary. Among these were: "Dignity and Abandon in Handel's Sonata in G Major;" "Mozart's Concerto in G Shows the Victory of Self-Questioning," and "What Can We Learn about Love from Johann Sebastian Bach's Sonata in E-Flat?" Barbara Allen likewise is musical director of the Aesthetic Realism Theatre Company, and performs with it as flute soloist and as choral conductor.