

# Arts & Entertainment



Jean-Pierre Rampal

## Virtuoso Rampal breathes life into golden flute

By Jeff Lonowski

From the moment Jean-Pierre Rampal breathed life into his golden flute Friday night before a sold-out Kimball Hall audience there was a reverberating sensation of song and reverie. The premier flutist captivated his audience with a vigorous display of total musical artistry and unshackled self-expression.

Rampal's message was clear — to share the splendor of his instrument and his music and to present it in a way that would challenge even his most devout disciple.

The largest crowd ever at Kimball saw and felt this splendor and before Rampal left the stage for the last time, the crowd appeared to have acquired an affinity for his unseemingly grace and deft insight in a musical medium he has almost single-handedly revolutionized.

Rampal is acknowledged internationally as one of the great virtuosos in history and has been credited as being

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the first flutist to merit world-wide attention equal to that usually drawn only to pianists or string virtuosos.

Rampal is the master of Baroque-era music (c.1600-c.1750), but his interests span a large musical spectrum. He has released a jazz suite recording with pianist Claude Bolling and, more recently, an album of classic Japanese melodies entitled "Yamanabushi."

Rampal played Baroque sonatas during the first half of Friday's performance. These included the passive "Sonata in E Minor" by Jean-Marie Leclair and J.S. Bach's "Sonata in F Major," a lively piece to which Rampal executed notes at an incredible rate while maintaining a rich timbre and crystal clarity.

Rampal held eloquent rapport with accompanist John Steele Ritter, who played harpsichord for the first half of the evening, then switched to piano.

Ritter played flawlessly, showing astonishing control as he complimented Rampal's chimerical expressions. Rampal even gave Ritter equal recognition, as they took their bows together.

Rampal's precision of attack and purity of tone became even more impressive during the second half of the performance. He chose selections with a slightly more contemporary flavor, such as Borne's "Fantaisie Brillante sur Carmen," and the dramatic "Joueurs de Flute, Op. 27" by French composer Albert Roussel.

At one point it sounded as if Rampal was playing two flutes, an uncluttered mix of dominant melody and subtle accompaniment. In reality it was just Rampal, giving another paramount performance to another spell-bound audience.

The audience's affectionate accolades drew Rampal out for three encores. He and Ritter delighted in variations on "Greensleeves," Chopin's "Minute Waltz" and the highly animated "Ragtime Dance (1905)" by Scott Joplin, in which Ritter added a bit of foot stomping for amusing effect.

## 'Gimme a Break' tough to swallow

By Pat Clark

Last week: Robert Nielsen, patriarch of the renowned television-watching Nielsen family, has been kidnapped by the Video Nostra, a small but devoted band of TV terrorists. The Video Nostra seeks to influence network programming by making Nielsen their mouthpiece. They are utterly devoted to what they describe as the Revolution, although they are absolutely unable to define it.

Antenna directed Nielsen to one end of a dusty maroon couch. "Just the place for you," he said. "No more than a 30-degree angle from the screen. A video vet like you ought to appreciate a good angle."

"Oh yes," Nielsen said modestly. "This will be fine."

"I'll go check on your TV dinner," said Antenna, his coaxial cable headband beginning to go slack around his forehead. "We wouldn't want the new propaganda minister for the Revolution to go hungry, would we?" He had the kind of voice that slithered out from between his lips; the wide, too-red lips of a man who either played the trumpet for a living or had a passion for cherry Popsicles. "Make yourself at home," Antenna said. "You might as well, this is your home," he added, a sinister cackle racing along after the words.

Nielsen sat down on the maroon couch. The foam gave, and he sunk into the couch the cushions billowing up around his arms like puffy shackles. "What's on?" Nielsen asked no one in particular, a hint of trepidation sneaking into what he had hoped would be his calmest voice.

"Can't tell yet," said a woman in Technicolor-patched denim attire who called herself Spinoff. She picked up her opera glasses and carefully turned them to look through the big lenses into the smaller ones. "You have to do this to really appreciate the insignificance of what you see on television," she said. "I've been able to

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stare at the set all day through these and not be able to distinguish one show from another." Nielsen thought he recognized the voice; it had the vapid, airy sound of one of those pan-galactic queens who fell in love with Captain Kirk on "Star Trek."

Nielsen heard a rustling to his left. A swarthy-looking man was sitting in a brown recliner, around which had been constructed an elaborate network of venetian blinds. He pulled up one blind. "This should be 'Gimme a Break,'" he said gruffly. "Let me know when it's 10 o'clock." He pulled the blinds down around himself again.

"Is there a reason he does that?" Nielsen asked the man sitting next to him, who had turned around on the

couch to watch the television through its reflection in a faraway mirror. "He can't face the direct glare of prime time," the man said. "None of us can."

"Then why do you watch?" Nielsen said, asking what he thought was the obvious question.

"It fills us with revolutionary fervor," Spinoff said with a dearth of emotion that other people might use to talk about favorite laundry detergents. "Antenna says that watching prime time is the sacrifice we must make to keep the revolution from dissipating. And he's right. Just look at 'Gimme a Break' here."

Nielsen looked at "Gimme a Break." An overweight black woman with a heart of gold and a tongue of vinegar was working as the hired help to an upper-middle class white family. He recognized the woman as Nell Carter, but the rest of the cast were total strangers to him.

"Do you see what we are being subjected to?" Spinoff said. "Two decades of social upheaval, and the only black woman on the show is still the hired help. Changes are happening everywhere except on television."

Nielsen kept watching. He knew he had never seen "Gimme a Break" before, but he was certain he had seen the same characters, material and plots appearing under various aliases on other shows.

Nell Carter's character was Florida Evans from the old "Maude" series all over again. The patriarch of the family, played by one Dolph Sweet, consisted of pieces of every thunder-voiced, lord-of-all-he-surveys television father from Archie Bunker to Fred Flintstone. Due to the untimely death of his wife, the family patriarch was left to bring up a more worldly and precocious version of the same "three very lovely girls" who had to share one bedroom on "The Brady Bunch."

Of the three daughters, the oldest was cute enough and old enough to open up whole volumes of the same double entendre humor used most recently by Valerie Bertinelli in "One Day at a Time." The middle daughter was the smart one; Nielsen could tell because she wore glasses and didn't get many joke lines. The youngest girl was a newer, mouthier model of the Joanie Cunningham character on the early "Happy Days" shows, years before Joanie ever heard of Chachi. The youngest character appeared to live in paradox; she was innocent enough not to flinch when her father referred to himself as "daddykins" when talking with her, but worldly enough to be able to state confidently that a local kid named Jack Rhinehart, the very portrait of high school macho, "has a van that sleeps two."

Nielsen had to admit that "Gimme a Break" was tough to swallow. Spinoff was right; life was changing everywhere except on television. He wasn't sure yet what the Video Nostra wanted to do, but if they wanted to get rid of "Gimme a Break" they couldn't be all bad.

Next Week: Counter-revolutionary activity.

## German film: Impossible to build walls

By Eric Peterson

Behind (around, through?) all the sex parts, which will turn some people off, and turn other people on, "Taxi Zum Klo" is an ironic picture of how one man decides to commit himself to a different kind of private and professional life than he began with. The main character, a schoolteacher named Herr Rippluh, has the same last name of the director, Frank Rippluh, and it's no daring jump to guess that the film might have some autobiographical passages. "Taxi Zum Klo" is the UPC Foreign Film Series at the Sheldon Film Theater, with shows tonight at 7 and 9 p.m.

Against a background of postcards and images ranging from the Madonna to beefcake, you hear "Peggy" tell how his life has two rigidly separate worlds — his family and schoolteaching, which take up his days, and his cruising in Berlin's gay hot spots by night. He will come to discover that he can't keep them separated.

There is no question about which world he enjoys and

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relishes; when he asks "Do you want to come with me on my adventures?" at the start of the film, he doesn't take you to meet his mom.

Peggy's real life is driving along in the night in a white car that looks like a preying sea beast, driving into the beautiful red and green lights shining above his favorite districts of Berlin. These car scenes recur as visions of excitement, desire and loneliness.

Adventure for him may lie in the man at the gas station who grins, sticks the gas nozzle in the tank (symbol, symbol), and leaves his hand in the frost on top of the car.

The fact is that no one's life is so easily separable into night and day, private and public. Peggy's days at school are intercut with scenes of the men's room, which the schoolteacher sees in his mind's eye, and in a particularly sizzling rubdown scene, we hear his voice, a little bored, wondering what to buy for his mother's birthday.

All this is emphatically not to say that Peggy is one of those monsters who thrive in the imagination of Paul Cameron, one of those teachers who can't keep their hairy palms off the schoolboys. It simply means that people's experiences melt into one another, and that those who build walls between different sides of their life are probably fooling themselves.

The film tries to give sex the look of ordinariness. The homosexual sex scenes are interrupted with odd blue heterosexual porn shots. This gives all the scenes an ironic feel; it's just something that people do, the film seems to say, in whatever way they end up doing it.

Peggy himself views sex in a strangely detached way. This may be because he is detached from any permanent mate until the end of the film; he doesn't enter into any one thing too deeply. He and Bernd, the man he stays with, skate together in an idyllic snow scene, looking very dark in their leather coats against the white. Peggy pisses a heart in the snow, and Bernd broaches a plan for them to find a farm together. At this point Peggy mockingly completes the picture; they will be an old gay couple, with a lesbian cook . . . they will adopt a mongoloid child and put up a Beware of Dog sign. "Oh, you always have to spoil everything," Bernd says.

Peggy finds each passing stranger too intriguing to love only Bernd. Peggy follows a knight in black leather into an alley, the man's light jeans standing out from his leggings like a codpiece. Bernd comes home to hear them making love, and looks at the pair through a broken pressed glass pane. Peggy insists it's not his problem if Bernd doesn't feel comfortable enough to join in the next time. Then he's in his cruising car, heading for the bright lights, only his own head in the car illuminated by the headlights of the car behind.

Peggy only tries to keep this illusion of objectivity and independence. When other people in the skin clinic are repelled by an enormous prostitute who wears her heart, and perhaps her diseases, on her sleeve, Peggy pre-

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