

Update on the Fifth Congress

Newsletter

of the International Jew's Harp Society

No. 2

March 2004

Dear friends,
The 5th International Jew's Harp Festival and Congress is planned for July 2006 in Amsterdam in the music centre called "Het Muziekgebouw".

This is still some time to go and therefore we would have liked to have an IJHF in 2004; and in fact, we –Fred Crane, Leo Tadagawa and myself– tried about everything to realize this urge. The chronology of our efforts, hopes and disappointments is as follows:

1 April 2003, the organisers of the proposed next IJHF in Amsterdam inform us that *"at this moment the constructor is building Het Muziekgebouw but unfortunately there are again delays in the construction and as we can see it now, the building won't be ready before the summer of 2005."* On my request for a realistic date for the IJHF we receive the answer: *"My suggestion would be to take no risks and to schedule the Jew's Harp Festival for the summer of 2006. The date must be possible by any means."*

Fred Crane immediately suggests to go for an IJHF in 2004

since the time between the festival in Norway (2002) and in Amsterdam (2006) is too long. Between April and June 2003 we correspond intensively on behalf of a site and organiser for a IJHF in 2004. Realistic possibilities in terms of a quite strong national organisation, a dedicated organiser and the chance to obtain the necessary funding seem to be Japan with Leo Tadagawa, the USA with Janet Gohring, Germany with Soeren Birke, and Hungary with Aron Szilagyi.

Leo Tadagawa wants a IJHF *"within two years. If I were a billionaire, it would be no problem, but..."* and *"We will organise a Jew's Harp Congress in Japan within 20 years."* Thus, we wish Leo to become at least a millionaire and will take him at his word.

Janet Gohring promises to *"discuss and research"* the possibilities for a IJHF in the USA, supposing *"there is a chance we could organise something but that is a 'mountain' I haven't even thought of!!! ... After attending Molln, we KNOW how it should be done ... they were a perfect example. And after organising our little festival for so many years, I KNOW what a big job this would be."*

Soeren Birke from Germany sees a possibility of linking the IJHF with an already planned Overtone-festival but foresees funding problems.

Aron Szilagyi from Hungary would prefer to organise an IJHF after Amsterdam but he is very enthusiastic about the idea itself and keeps searching for realistic possibilities for 2004. *"I would love to make a lively, vivid festival, which makes Hungarian media to focus on this instrument (June 2002)".* Aron finally finds the seemingly fitting circumstances ensured in Veresegyhaza (30 km east of Budapest) by linking the IJHF with a scheduled traditional festival. In the consequence in September 2003 we get into quite detailed communication on financial and technical issues, including participants and program for the festival as well as for the congress. For proving the seriousness and support of the International Jew's Harp Society to Aron and the local authorities, we provide Aron at the end of September 2003 with an official letter of Confirmation, whereby the quickly developed letterhead quite impressively names all members of the board with their respective nationalities and uses for the first

time the logo of the IJHS, designed by Leo Tadagawa. In a concerted international email-action between the USA (Fred Crane), Norway (Svein Westad), Austria (Manfred Russmann), Japan (Leo Tadagawa), Yakutia (Spiridon Shishigin) and Moscow (myself), we succeeded to agree on the letterhead and content within one week. At this point Aron on the one hand is very enthusiastic regarding the beautiful location and the prospects for funding the big event. On the other hand, Aron becomes sceptical regarding his partners for organising the festival. *"The problem is that the 3 parties (local government, Tradicio Foundation and us, the IJHS) have not sat down around the same table to negotiate the tasks, the responsibilities etc."* In October 2003 Aron intensively negotiates with the parties involved, only to learn in November that his partners are caring mainly for their own interests and did not transmit the application for funding in time. We decide to set 1 December 2003 as Go/No Go-deadline for the IJHF in Hungary 2004 and with this date and after having put incredible efforts into realization of this idea, Aron writes: *"My decision is to call off the 5th IJHF in Veresegyhasz, Hungary in 2004. ... I am very sad that the next IJHF won't happen in Hungary, since I've been having this dream for long now and it was sooo close, ... maybe after the Amsterdam one we could make a properly prepared nice, big, profes-*

sional fest in Hungary. I'm up for it!!!"

Thus, with December 2003 we are back to where we began. We are quite careful now with making unfounded announcements but with 28 January 2004 upon my request for confirmation of the Amsterdam-festival I received the following email from Annelies van Esveld, program manager at "De Ijsbreker" (the name of the music centre until the new site is ready) in Amsterdam and known to some of you from the IJHF in Norway: *"Jan Wolff (director of the music centre) asked me to send you hereby the confirmation for the Jew's Harp Festival in July 2006 in 'Het Muziekgebouw' in Amsterdam. Het Muziekgebouw has a big hall for 700 persons and a small hall for 200 persons. Furthermore there is public space for other activities. Of course during the festival the building will be completely available for the festival. There are also possibilities for informal sessions and lectures in one of the rehearsal spaces. The halls are technically fully equipped."* De Ijsbreker has an excellent international reputation as a professional and sophisticated organiser of concerts and yearly festivals dedicated to one special music instrument. Since this music centre is funded by the municipality of Amsterdam, the overall budget for the IJHF comprises about 100.000 Euros, which should allow for comfortable planning and programming.

According to our Bylaws, *"A Program Committee for the Congress and Festival shall be appointed by the President well in advance ..., consisting of a chairman and two other members.... The Program Committee shall have a role in the selection of papers proposed for the Congress, and ... shall also advise the local organisers with regard to the Festival Program."* Additionally, at the end of the Congress, *"one half of the Board members shall be replaced or renominated"*.

Dear friends, it is still two years to go until the next IJHF, but nevertheless we will start the preparation this year for making it an extraordinary and unforgettable event. It will be the first time that the IJHF takes place in a big Western city and we are looking forward to the impact of urbanism and a sophisticated audience on our IJHF. Without going into details yet, the combination of urbanism and a well-equipped budget should allow for an exciting mix of hitherto in the West unheard ethnic musicians and avant-garde approaches to the Jew's Harp. With those first ideas I would like to end my message, but not without thanking again Aron for his efforts, call on you to get prepared for Amsterdam and wishing you lots of great events with the Jew's Harp until we meet again.

Boing,
Franz Kumpul

Dizzy Gillespie and the Jew's Harp.

The other day I was watching an episode of *The Cosby Show*—you remember it—Bill Cosby is Dr. Cliff Huxtable, and the main members of the cast are members of the Huxtable family. Anyway, daughter Vanessa (Tempestt Bledsoe) is totally incompetent on the clarinet, and she wants to drop out of an upcoming concert. So the music teacher, Mr. Hampton, is called in to give some extra lessons. He shows how he can puff out his cheeks hugely. Then I notice the moustache—it's Dizzy Gillespie! He takes out a Jew's harp, and proceeds to play it, in Dizzy's unique style. (The episode, "Play It Again, Vanessa," is no. 8 or 9 of the show's first season, 1984–85.)

Dizzy was, in fact, an enthusiastic and excellent Jew's harpist, with a unique style. People ask me or offer information about Dizzy's recorded harping, so here's an attempt at a complete discography. Please send any additions and corrections—particularly, I mostly don't know on which tracks Dizzy plays Jew's harp.

Chuck Mangione with Dizzy Gillespie and Steve Gadd, *Tarantella*. A&M Records double LP SP-6513 (1981). Recorded Live at The Americana Hotel Ballroom, Rochester, New York, December 27, 1980.

Lilian Terry with a very special Guest Star Dizzy Gillespie "Oo-shoo-be-doo-be...Ooo, Oo" "...Ooo, Oo." LP: Soul Note SONO 121147 (1985). CD: EAN/UPC 0027312114720. Recorded May 13/14/15, 1985 Barigozzi Studio, Milano, Italy.

Dizzy Gillespie and Arturo Sandoval, *To a Finland Station*. Fantasy/Pablo/Original Jazz Classics OJC 733-2. Dizzy harps on Track 2, "First Chance,"

Track 4, "Rimsky," Track 5, "Dizzy the Duck." Recorded at Takomontie Studios, Helsinki, Finland, September 9, 1982.

Dizzy Gillespie. Digital at Montreux, 1980. Original Jazz Classics OJCCD-882-2 (LP: Pablo 2308-226 (1981)). Dizzy's harp: Side 2, band 2, "Get That Booty."

Jon Faddis, *Hornucopia*. Epic 46958 (1991). Dizzy: Track 5, "Rapartee."

Dizzy Gillespie with the Mitchell/Ruff Duo. *Enduring Magic*. LP: Black Hawk/Bellaphone-BHK LP 51801 (1970).

I find it hard to describe Dizzy's harping technique. I have access to only "To a Finland Station." Much of the time, he makes the harp growl away in a low register—a striking contrast with the high brilliance of Dizzy's trumpet. I think he's just blowing hard to get this effect. At other times he plays clear tones in upper ranges. But I don't detect any deliberate scalewise playing—pitch is just a color added to the rhythm.

And as one might expect from one of the great jazzers, the rhythmic aspect is subtle and ever new. "Dizzy the Duck" has two harp tracks, with harps in two different pitches. Tongue clicks, flutter-tongue, breath sforzandos. Is there one section where Dizzy's trumpet imitates his Jew's harp?

At one point in "Rimsky," the harp speaks: "I love you."

Frederick Crane
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Logos

Tadagawa Leo has designed not one, but two logos for the Society. The first, flat one was given final form by Kojima Megumi, and the 3-D one by Kojima Ryuji. The editor will take a step outside his reportorial objectivity to say that the 3-D logo is stunningly effective in its simultaneous appeal to the cognitive and the aesthetic perceptions.



Please note: Each year's dues, in addition to supporting the Society, includes payment for that year's issue of the Society's annual Journal, and whatever Newsletters are issued during the year. The Newsletter is distributed by e-mail to all members who have that service, and by regular mail to those who do not. The Journal is a publication of about 100 pages in large format. The Journal for 2003 has been delayed, but should be mailed out in April 2004. The Journal for 2004 should be mailed out before the end of 2004.



International Jew's Harp Society Application for Membership

New member Renewal

Name and address:

E-mail address: _____

The annual dues are US\$20.00, and may be paid by International Postal Money order payable to International Jew's Harp Society. The amount may also be paid in cash, with a risk of loss in the mail. No bank cheques are acceptable.

- I enclose payment in the amount of US\$20.00 to cover dues for the year 2004.
- I am not yet a member, and enclose US\$20.00 to include the Journal for 2003.
- I am unable to send the dues, because of technical difficulties with exchange, or other good reason.
- I enclose an additional amount of US\$_____, as a subsidy for members not able to pay.

The Secretary-Treasurer's postal address is

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