

The Evelyn Glennie Music Library:

An Interview with Greg Malcangi

By Norm Weinberg

During PASIC '94 in Atlanta, Evelyn Glennie's husband, Greg Malcangi, offered to make Evelyn's music database available to PAS members through the World Percussion Network. To find out more details, *PN* Associate Editor Norm Weinberg conducted the following interview with Malcangi.

Norm Weinberg: What sort of materials are contained in Evelyn's database?

Greg Malcangi: Evelyn has been steadily collecting pieces of percussion music since her student days. Because of the large number of works, we were starting to encounter some problems. Concert organizers and TV and radio stations were asking Evelyn to play pieces of music that would fit into their time slot, or with their chamber orchestra, or be suitable for their particular audience. Unlike the piano or violin, the organizers were not knowledgeable about the percussion repertoire and required a list from which to make a selection. Sifting through 1,800 pieces every time a list was required was obviously not practical, so Evelyn commissioned me to write a computer program which could carry out the task a little quicker. This was the origin of the Evelyn Glennie Music Library (EGML).

During the programming, the scope widened so that stored along with each piece was just about all the information that was or could be available. So, in addition to the information sent to the organizer, the EGML also contains information about the history of the piece, the program notes, the biography of the composer, and it will even list any recordings of the piece Evelyn may own. There are also programmed links to the Address Database to look up the publisher's and composer's address.

Although the facility exists for all this information to be stored, in some cases this additional information is not included on the score and Evelyn has no contact with the composer, so this additional information is therefore not included in the EGML. So far, all the pieces—solo percussion, percussion ensemble, and study books—have been entered and the number of program notes and biographies entered is growing, but

it will be a little while before all the information we have will be stored.

It occurred to me during the programming that with a little extra work, the information could be output in a format that would enable it to be very useful to other percussionists through the WPN. For reasons outlined later, Evelyn was very enthusiastic.

Weinberg: Since the EGML database is always growing and is constantly "under construction," how are you going to make the information available to WPN users? How often is the database updated?

Malcangi: Evelyn receives between 150 and 200 scores a year, collected when abroad, sent to her by composers, or commissioned by Evelyn herself. As soon as she returns home she enters them in the EGML. Access to this information could not be simpler for WPN members. Send a public message to Evelyn Glennie in the Music forum, asking for a list of pieces that match your requirements.

Weinberg: Let's say that I call the WPN with a repertoire question. What type of specific information can I expect to receive?

Malcangi: Here is an example of a reply to a question already asked on the WPN by Tim Tull, about music for percussion and harp (see sidebar below and on page 72).

Although this is not the full list of matching pieces, it is the type of output you can expect to see. It may be that

"Waterlight" takes your fancy—in which case you could send us another message asking for further information. If we have it, we can give you the commissioning/premiere history of the piece, the program notes, the composer's biography, and any recordings that we know of. It is important to be as specific as possible when making requests. For example, asking for unaccompanied recital pieces produces a list containing 686 pieces! Including a minimum and maximum duration will also cut the list down to a more manageable size.

Weinberg: Can you describe the "classification" system? Is it a ranking of difficulty or of style?

Malcangi: When designing the database, Evelyn and I discussed a classification system at great length. The problem as I saw it, with a ranking of difficulty, is Evelyn's objectivity. Evelyn measures technical difficulty in terms of her ability to communicate the music. The physical difficulty is irrelevant. We decided, therefore, that "style" would be more informative. It is, of course, still a subjective decision made by Evelyn and is split into six levels: Light 1, 2 and 3, and Contemporary 1, 2 and 3, running in listening difficulty from Light 1 to Contemporary 3.

The other area that might need some clarification is the "Soloist's Instruments" category. It proved impractical to individually list all the instruments for

The Evelyn Glennie Music Library—Search by Accompaniment

The following shows how the information for each listing is formatted and which search criteria have been specified.

TITLE:		DURATION:	
COMPOSER:		PUBLISHER:	
SOLOIST'S INSTRUMENTS:		STYLE:	STUDY BOOK:
PERFORMANCE TYPE:			
ACCOMPANIMENT:			
WATERLIGHT			
CARL, ROBERT		American Comp. All.	
Vibraphone		Contemporary 3	
Recital, Duet			
Piano, Percussion, Guitar, Harp			
DIRGE IN WOODS		08.00	
THOMAS, ANDREW		Margun Music Inc.	
Multi Tuned		Contemporary 2	
Trio			
Soprano, Harp			

The Evelyn Glennie Music Library—Search by Composer

The following shows how the information for each listing is formatted and which search criteria have been specified.

TITLE:	DURATION:
COMPOSER:	PUBLISHER:
SOLOIST'S INSTRUMENTS:	STYLE:
PERFORMANCE TYPE:	STUDY BOOK:
ACCOMPANIMENT:	
PRO VILLA	
ROSAURO, NEY	
Marimba	Light 3
Recital	
Unaccompanied	
CENAS AMERINDIAS NO. 1 - BRASILIANA	03.45
ROSAURO, NEY	Pro Percussao
Multi Both	Light 3
Recital	
Unaccompanied	
CONCERTO PARA MARIMBA E ORQUESTRA DE CORDAS	15.00
ROSAURO, NEY	Pro Percussao
Marimba	Light 3
Concerto, Recital	
Strings, Wind Band, Piano	
ELDORADO	03.45
ROSAURO, NEY	Pro Percussao
Multi Both	Light 3
Recital	
Unaccompanied	
PRELUDE NO. 1 - E MINOR	
ROSAURO, NEY	
Marimba	Light 3
Recital	
Unaccompanied	
PRELUDE NO. 2 - A MAJOR	
ROSAURO, NEY	
Marimba	Light 3
Recital	
Unaccompanied	
PRELUDE NO. 3 - C MAJOR	
ROSAURO, NEY	
Marimba	Light 3
Recital	
Unaccompanied	
RHAPSODY FOR PERCUSSION SOLO AND ORCHESTRA	30.00
ROSAURO, NEY	Pro Percussao
Multi Both	Light 3
Concerto	
Orch Symphony	
SAMBA	
ROSAURO, NEY	Southern Music Co.
Multi Both	Light 3
Perc Ensemble	
Percussion	
SONATA (PERIODS OF THE LIFE)	
ROSAURO, NEY	Zimmermann
Multi Tuned	Light 3
Recital	
Unaccompanied	
SUITE POPULAR BRASILEIRA	
ROSAURO, NEY	Music For Percussion
Marimba	Light 3
Recital	
Unaccompanied	

multi-percussion pieces. They are, therefore, divided into three categories: Multi-tuned (only tuned percussion; e.g., a piece for marimba, vibes and glock), Multi-Untuned (only untuned percussion; e.g., a piece for drumkit, tam tams and log drum), and Multi-both (all of the above).

Weinberg: *What about compositions that are currently in manuscript? Is there any way to get information about ordering manuscript copies from the composer?*

Malcangi: As you can see from the example, the composer's name and publisher is given. If no publisher's name is given, either the information was not printed on the score or more likely the piece isn't published. If the latter is the case, then send us a message and we will search our Address Database for the composer's details.

Weinberg: *Once a repertoire search is requested, how soon might a PAS member expect an answer from you?*

Malcangi: We will immediately process any requests and reply by return E-mail. The vast majority of requests would therefore be answered within forty-eight hours. Dependant on the timing, you may well receive a reply the same day you sent the request!

Weinberg: *Since you live in the U.K., won't your phone charges cost you a fortune?*

Malcangi: Our first year on the WPN cost us about \$800 in phone charges! Then, the WPN was moved to Lawton and Version 2 was introduced. Of particular use to us in the new version is the QWK mail feature. QWK will search through all the areas on the WPN we have specified and collect all the new messages in those areas (including our private mail), since the last time we connected. QWK will create a "packet" of all these messages and send this packet to us in a matter of seconds. I then disconnect from the WPN and use a program (obtained from the WPN) to read messages, reply to messages or create new messages. When I've finished, the program creates another packet, so I reconnect, send this reply packet to the WPN and disconnect again. The WPN then sorts my new packet and automatically sends these new messages to the right people in the right areas. On average, for both connections, I total about two to three minutes of phone charges. Instead of once a week, we now connect to the WPN two or three times a week. I can afford to carefully consider and send longer replies and still reduce our WPN phone charges by more than 75%!

Weinberg: *This database must have taken a great deal of time and effort to prepare, and you and Evelyn have been very generous with sharing this information with the general PAS membership. Do you think that offering your database will have an effect on others who may have information to share on the World Percussion Network?*

Malcangi: The programming of the EGML took about a month; it took Evelyn a further four months to enter all her pieces. I expect all the program notes and composers biographies to be entered by summer, and Evelyn's collection of over 1,000 percussion recordings to be entered by winter. I should mention at this stage that the EGML was not designed to be a comprehensive database of all percussion music. A piece will not be entered in the EGML if we only know of its existence; Evelyn must actually own a score.

By joining the PAS and attending PASIC, Evelyn gained knowledge and experience unavailable to her contemporaries. She has no doubt that this has contributed to her current success. Serving on the Board of Directors for the PAS and participating in the WPN are two ways of giving something back. In recent years percussion has come more and more to the fore and competition for students, teachers and professionals continues to increase. Finding repertoire that suits the musicality of a particular percussionist will delight examiners and audiences alike. The WPN is now able to help in this area of information.

Information isn't just the "in" word for the '90s; it can give you a serious advantage over the competition. Want to know what the examiners are looking for? Ask one on the WPN. Want to know how to encourage a gifted or difficult student? Join the Methods Forum on the WPN. Want to get into electronic percussion? Get expert advice in the MIDI Forum. Searching for that sound in the recording studio? Looking for used or new product information? Is marching band your area? Evelyn and I see the WPN as being the foremost center of information exchange for percussionists in all parts of the world and one of the most important aspects of the PAS.

Many PAS members will have read articles about the WPN and thought, "That's a good idea. Maybe one day when I can afford it I'll buy a modem and join the WPN." The question is, can you afford not to join?

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