

Tribute to Arnold Jacobs



On December 17, 1998, a Tribute to Arnold Jacobs was held at Symphony Center, Chicago.

The program contained this message from the Jacobs family:

The Arnold Jacobs family greatly appreciates your presence today at this wonderful tribute for our loved one. We thank Henry Fogel and the Chicago Symphony members, colleagues, students, and all who participate.

We are grateful for the variety of sentiments bestowed upon us from so many of you. The plants, flowers, cards, letters and phone calls we received - and are still receiving - from all over the world are happy reminders of love, affection, admiration, and friendship so many had for our dear Arnold, and in some ways for his family.

Letters from many who studied with him say that when they are playing or teaching, Arnold seems to be right therewith them, his voice guiding them. We must believe this is not the "end of an era" but through them, the contribution of the Arnold Jacobs tradition and method of teaching will exist for generations to come.

Arnold's sudden death left the family and the world stunned, shocked and heartbroken, but our memories will keep him alive. While we have tearful moments, we must also rejoice for him, for the new life he entered is free from pain and he has perfect vision again.

That grand orchestra in heaven needed another tuba player, and Arnold quickly answered the call, joining his old buddies in a joyful musical reunion.

We know Arnold is with us in spirit right now, and it is time to say "goodbye." He wants to leave us his favorite quote: "Be good to each other - until we meet again."

The following statements were made during
the *Tribute to Arnold Jacobs* on December
17, 1998:

Henry Fogel, President, Chicago Symphony Orchestra

Good afternoon. On behalf of the family of Arnold Jacobs, and all of those who had the privilege and pleasure of working with Arnold Jacobs, whether at Northwestern University or the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, I want to welcome you all to this Tribute to a remarkable life. The members of Arnold's immediate family are with us this afternoon, sitting in the box level, and I welcome them and we all pay our respects to them. They chose not to speak today because it would be too difficult for them, but they asked that I begin by reading portions of a prayer that was read at a small family final viewing. It was written by Alva Guntner, a friend of Gizella Jacobs for 77 years.

"Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, oh Lord my strength and my redeemer. I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and whomever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." I think the first prayer that many of us learned as children was: "Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep. If I should die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to take." I know for a fact that Arnold's soul left his body and went to be with Jesus. We know that now he can see, and get around without a cane or wheelchair. He's playing his tuba in God's Heavenly Orchestra and telling all the others how to breathe right. I am sure there are plenty there who didn't have the opportunity to take lessons from the master.

Arnold was a very special person, who will be remembered all over the world. Those of us who were privileged to know him personally have always considered it an honor. He wasn't just a famous tuba player and teacher. He

was a friend and a kind and generous individual. Last Easter, when he and Gizella were at my daughter's for dinner, I remember him saying that he didn't have anything to show for all his years of working. I reminded him that he had taken care of his father, Gizella's mom, his sister and brother, and God only knows how many others. I told him he stored up treasures in Heaven. A truer Christian I shall never know.

God gave Arnold a special talent, and he gave it away as long as he had breath to do so. He will live forever in the memories of all his students and friends that came to know him. Remembering, and sharing these memories with one another will help to heal the broken hearts of all of us who loved him dearly, just for being Arnold.

I would like to inform you that there are memory books, located in the lobby off the main floor, for you to enter your thoughts and reflections. These will be given to the family. Also, there will be a reception after this Tribute on the first two floors of the Rotunda of Symphony Center – staff will be available to point the way. The Jacobs family will be present, and there is a display commemorating the life and career of Arnold.

You will note that we have chosen the word Tribute to describe this occasion. That is no accident – much thought went into it. The family and we felt that this was not a memorial service. It is a tribute to a great man – a celebration of that man's life and career. At occasions of this nature, there is always a question that people in attendance have – am I supposed to applaud after a musical performance? I spoke this morning with Gizella Jacobs, and we both felt that the answer was yes. Jake would not understand performers not being recognized and applauded – and therefore we urge you to express your appreciation to the musical performers today.

Finally, a personal word. I came to the Chicago Symphony in 1985 – and so was only here for the last three years of Arnold Jacobs remarkable tenure. But I long knew his playing from concerts and records – and his reputation as a teacher. I feel privileged to have been able to experience those three short years. I had never thought of the tuba as a bel canto instrument until I started regularly hearing Jake play – and now I know its possibilities. And on top of that, I had the pleasure to know the man – generous, warm, caring, sensitive, witty – all of the things that made him a unique colleague. If one's goal in life is to make a difference, I can assure you that Arnold Jacobs made a difference. The institutions and people who crossed his path were better off for having done so.

**Edward Kleinhammer, Bass Trombone, Chicago
Symphony Orchestra (Retired) Read by Norman
Schweikert, Horn, Chicago Symphony Orchestra
(Retired)**

There exists a special bond between the bass trombone and tuba players of an orchestra. This is not only because they sit next to one another, but because they collaborate in providing the all-important bass line for the brass section and for the entire orchestra in conjunction with the timpani and the lowest instruments of the string and woodwind sections. They work closely together, practicing the critical octaves and unisons for perfect intonation and proper balance, so that their beloved art - music - may be served in the best possible way.

From 1945 to 1985 Edward Kleinhammer and Arnold Jacobs together did just that. The wonderful results of their labors can be heard on the many excellent recordings made during that period. It was a team effort still remembered with reverence.

Ed Kleinhammer, now enjoying his retirement in northern Wisconsin, is unable to be here this evening, but he asked me to read the following letter at this special celebration of Arnold's life:

For over forty years it was my great fortune that Arnold and I were colleagues. Every day I was in awe and humbleness of his great musicianship, his "big daddy" sound and his ability to make a simple scale sound like a concerto. Arnold was a great inspiration to me day after day.

Countless are the times that I had a "key hole peek" into heaven playing next to Arnold in a world class orchestra. And countless are the teachings I learned from him in so doing. We had a great understanding and respect between us.

To Gizella and Dallas and friends of Arnold I send my deepest sympathy and conclude with a few lines by Emily Dickenson.

*This world is not conclusion;
A sequel stands beyond,
Invisible, as music,*

*But positive, as sound.
Amen*

Adolph Herseth, Principal Trumpet, Chicago Symphony Orchestra

Good evening to all of my family, which is what we call a gathering like this. We are all here to really celebrate a very special person and a very special life. And I would say that my sentiments echo very much the remarks that have ahead been made by Mr. Fogel and the letter from Ed Kleinhammer.

It was a great experience to have a colleague like Jake. We enjoyed so many things together, musical things, personal things, social things, shared a lot of experiences - even a sip or two. And I only want to say, especially to Gizella and Dallas, it was a pleasure and a privilege to know him and to work with him and it is a pleasure and a privilege to be here.

Harvey Phillips, Distinguished Professor Emeritus, Indiana University

Arnold Jacobs was a man of the highest integrity in all facets of his very active and admirable life. He was a husband, a father, a friend, and a treasured colleague. He was a mentor to the many who benefitted from his enormous talents as a musician and as a teacher, My first contact with Arnold was in August, 1950. I called to request his recommendation of someone to replace me with the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus Band; William Bell had invited me to study at the Juilliard School in New York City. Arnold immediately recommended Harold "Mac" McDonald. Mac finished the circus season, and later joined the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra.

Every time I performed in Chicago, Arnold was always there, whether it was ballet, brass quintet, Sauter-Finegan or other. His interest and expertise crossed all music disciplines. We had many opportunities for conversation over drinks and/or dinner. I was always impressed with the depth of Arnold's knowledge and his willingness to share it. He had, in abundance, the most precious asset of any teacher..., inspiration. Arnold was an inspiration to all who knew him, who worked with him, who studied with him,

During the summer of 1963 I had a dream relationship with my two tuba heroes of this century, William Bell and Arnold Jacobs. The three of us served as faculty for the Gunnison Music Camp; we were the tuba section for the Gunnison Music Camp Directors Band. On the final concert of the summer our tuba trio performed and recorded in unison, with band accompaniment, Paganini's Perpetual Motion. The mutual admiration, the camaraderie and the countless social gatherings with Bill Bell and Aggie, Arnold and Gizzy, provided Carol and me with the most enjoyable summer of our lives.

Into the next millennium, ad infinitum, Arnold Jacobs will stand as an icon of music pedagogy for all teachers and performers of vocal, wind, and brass instruments. As an orchestral tubist he was a uniquely gifted master. His orchestral performances set ever higher standards for others to emulate, and aspire to equal; his interpretations were definitive.

As a master teacher, I believe it can be said that, "Arnold Jacobs never met a musician he couldn't improve; his teaching and personal example inspired a better understanding of themselves, their art, and their instrument. He provided logical comprehension and artistic application of his 'wind and song' philosophy and pedagogy. But, oftentimes, his greatest and most lasting gifts to friends, colleagues and students, were positive changes in attitude and commitment. With knowledge, wisdom, patience, love and understanding, Arnold Jacobs infused desire for self-improvement, purpose, and fulfillment into the lives of all who sought his counsel," Through his many devoted students and new ones they will inspire, Arnold Jacobs will live forever.

Gene Pokorny, Tubist, Chicago Symphony Orchestra

I consider it a privilege to be speaking to you today about Arnold Jacobs.

A little over 54 years ago, a young man walked onto this very stage and along with his colleagues here, began to forge an orchestral brass section that, at least in terms of reputation, was to have no equal anywhere at any other time. To have been an original member, as well as the foundation of such an august team, would have been quite a career in itself. To have concurrently been a music teacher who revolutionized the concepts and application of wind instrument playing and instruction would have been another worthy career. Between these two roles that he alone effectively mastered, he positively affected millions of people.

This is testament to the difference one person can make.

It was an overflowing, ever-flowing life.

These extraordinary accomplishments of Arnold Jacobs, however, are all secondary to something else.

The way he chose to lead his life is, for me, most worth studying and emulating. He had the intelligence. He had the talent. As a young person, he seemed to have the emotional and financial support of his parents, especially through the hard times of the Depression. All of these positive influences would not have made him a success unless he chose to strive to develop that intelligence, that he chose to develop that talent, that he chose to act on the curiosity he had for the production of sounds on wind instruments. In the end, that he chose to make a difference.

If we are to celebrate Arnold Jacobs life, I suggest that there are things we can remember about the decisions he made in his life that, if we choose to, may make a difference in the lives we lead and the lives we influence as performers, music teachers, human beings and family members.

In his journey through life, he believed in eliminating complexity by keeping things simple and child-like. His curiosity in the process of wind playing led him to choose to study the subject soon after he, Gizella and Dallas moved to Chicago. He took up the subject with zest and eventually discovered some basic tenets of wind playing that were very simple concepts. Jake did not choose to disrupt outmoded playing concepts or to bring undo attention to himself. The only thing he chose to do was to act on his curiosity.

The way he chose to teach this material is also worth examining . Although he would teach the subject through instruction and by example, he never forgot that he was not so much teaching the subject as he was teaching the student. To this degree I do not know if he realized how much of a "surrogate parent" he was to players who came to see him. I get the feeling that some people came to him with their playing problems because he would be the only person who would believe in them and give them the instructions needed but, most importantly, the hope they needed to solve problems. if as teachers we could give students hope along with the solutions for problems, how much more affirming to the human spirit that would be. The old adage 'I don't care how much you know until I know how much you care' is an apt one.

With the myriad of good opportunities that came to him, he chose to say 'no' to some very good things so he could say 'yes' to the best ones. He may have chosen to not attend an after-concert reception so that he could help a trombone player with high range difficulties. He may have chosen to not be in attendance at an orchestra members' meeting so he could walk down the street to his studio in the Fine Arts Building to help a young Swedish trumpet player from losing his job due to a debilitating playing problem. He may have chosen to not answer many letters or write down his theories regarding wind playing or even take an afternoon nap on a difficult tour but it always seemed to be because he chose to do something else that was going to make a more positive difference to another player, another friend, another colleague or, most importantly, his family.

Probably the most important lesson he taught me was how much he loved doing exactly what he was doing at the moment. When he was on stage, he loved to perform. When he was teaching, he was with the student the entire distance. The slides you will soon be viewing reflect a person who was seemingly at peace with himself; simply enjoying life as it unfolded. When you see him as a child or as a young man or even early on in his career, the twinkle in his eyes was not for knowing what he was going to discover or the bounds he would break with those discoveries; it was for knowing that something exciting and positive was going to happen. Even towards the end when his eyes were failing him and his legs were refusing to walk, his attitude was always positive. No matter what he was struggling with physically, he always seemed to be able to smile.

And nobody did that better.

I will always remember the graciousness with which he welcomed me to his chair on this stage that he vacated less than ten years ago. His helpfulness and availability while I was getting my footing here was welcome. Once settled, he offered advice and his counsel was particularly welcome when it came along to dealing with some of the human issues which occasionally invade life in this space. I cannot think of many persons who would wish success on people and encourage them to expand on their successes as much as he did. I cannot think of many persons who included so many people as friends and yet was always happy in finding new ones.

A French philosopher once said:

'We are not human beings have a spiritual experience

We are spiritual beings having a human experience'

Knowing Arnold Jacobs as I did makes me believe this statement for, although he did not strike me as an overtly religious person, he was definitely one with spirit and benevolence. For me, his life resonates with the reality that we were in the presence of a very special person, a very special mentor and, personally, I am ever so lucky to have experienced one of the great human beings of the ages.

Rex Martin, Instructor of Tuba, Northwestern University

Arnold Jacobs was the greatest teacher of any subject whom I have known. Arnold Jacobs was also the finest tuba player I have known. To have achieved such greatness and excellence in two separate fields, teaching and playing, however closely related, is indeed rare and perhaps unprecedented.

Mr. Jacobs was a tremendous teacher for many reasons, but because mainly he had an absolute mastery of three subjects: physiology, psychology, and musicianship. His command of each of these three subjects was so complete that they blended together to form his own pedagogy. He developed an entirely new way of teaching the brass instruments.

Most people teach the way they themselves have been taught. Arnold Jacobs was largely self-taught, and this gave him the freedom to develop a new pedagogy based on how to sound, and not based on how to play. Imitation is an extremely efficient way to learn, and a tuba lesson with Arnold Jacobs included a lot of it. This was a particularly natural way for him to teach, since he was such a master of his instrument.

My greatest inspiration as a player comes from remembering his tone quality – from my very first lesson with him 20 years ago in the Fine Arts Building – in a studio many of you I am sure are very familiar with. He had the most crystalline clarity to his tone, and the first time I heard it, I knew that I had just listened to the most beautiful sound of my life. I can still hear those few notes, as if he had just played them for me this morning. Arnold Jacobs had a tremendous influence on my playing, my teaching, my career, and my life. He was not just my mentor, but my friend, colleague, inspiration, and role model. Without a doubt, Mr. Jacobs had the greatest impact on my life of anybody I

have come in contact with. I know that he influenced not only my generation and generations before mine. I also know that he will leave his mark on generations after mine, for many teachers and players of brass instruments subscribe to his approach to music. Current students study him vigorously, and I would like to read to you what Mike Parker, a senior student of mine at Northwestern University, said upon the news that Mr. Jacobs had died:

Yesterday Arnold Jacobs stopped breathing

And some might say that he has passed on

But today I heard him singing

He is still here, he lives in our song

Mr. Jacobs taught for many years at Northwestern University, and the Northwestern Faculty Brass Quintet will now perform the first and forth movements from Victor Ewald's third brass quintet. This was the last piece that Arnold Jacobs performed in a brass quintet. Members are Barbara Butler, Charlie Geyer, Gail Williams, Mark Lawrence and Rex Martin.

Bernard Drobowski, Dean, School of Music, Northwestern University

During his over forty-five years on the faculty of Northwestern University, Arnold Jacobs was responsible for influencing the lives of thousands of our students, regardless of their instrumental or vocal specialization. I am proud to be one of those students. Mr. Jacobs was my teacher. Mr. Jacobs had a major influence on developing my competence as a musician and tubist, but most importantly, he had a major influence on my life. Mr. Jacobs was my friend.

As I stand on the stage of this still newly renovated Symphony Center, I can still feel the spirit of Arnold Jacobs. He may have left us, but I can actually still hear his sound in my inner ear . . . the composer could be Berlioz, Tchaikovsky or Strauss -- but it was Jake who proved the acoustic foundation for that legendary Chicago Symphony sound.

If you listen carefully, you too can still hear his sound today -- it will forever

resonate in the sonic environment of this wonderful hall.

In fact, if you try hard enough, I'm sure that you can even see him here on this stage . . . We're awaiting for the beginning of a performance of the Verdi Requiem. Arnold has just entered upstage left, instrument in hand, ready to perform. He takes his seat, right back there -- patiently awaiting to lift his beautiful silver plated York Tuba from the stage floor. He embraces the tuba, and as his mouthpiece settles into place, the moment arrives for Dies Irae. While the choir sings in ancient Latin: "Tuba mirum spargens sona," the audience reads a King James translation of this famous text: "Trumpet, scattering sounds of wonder, rending sepulchers asunder. " But as the mighty brass chords thunder forth, with that legendary Jacobs bass tuba foundation, King James is discarded and all in the hall hear the sounds not as "Trumpet Mirum," but unquestionably "TUBA mirum." For decades, in this and other concert environments, our emotions and spirits have been momentarily lifted from the dust of the earth to another plane because of that sound . . . Jake's sound -- and now in perpetuity -- our sound.

Jake taught his students that the tuba was just a cold, chunk of metal. It has no brain, it has no spirit, it has no soul, it has no feeling . . . it was our responsibility to bring it to life, and through that ideal sound -- that Jake sound -- we would learn to embrace it in our inner ear and nurture it in our inner-soul, and with that sound, constantly strive to awaken in others that special magic that music had touched in our own lives.

First and foremost, Jake was a teacher . . . not a tuba teacher -- but the consummate educator. "The meaning of life is to be found in our passions, or it can be found nowhere." Jake's passions were his family, his music, his teaching and his students. As one of his colleagues recently noted: "This man was a great natural teacher who could have probably taught anything, but who just happened to be a wind specialist. He's the kind of legendary teacher that Liszt was for pianists of the 19th century."

His worldwide sphere of activity brought him a wealth of pupils and an ever-growing international reputation. His precepts became circulated throughout the classical music world. The relationship between the brain, the body, and the systems of nerves were emphasized, as was the necessity for maintaining a lyrical sound. But those of us who knew Jake, realized that all of these were secondary to his desire to help us develop as fully functioning human beings. Yes our chops were important, and Jake's techniques to improve our breathing and air flow efficiency were legendary, but when you studied with

Jake you finally realized that through his weekly assignments of etudes, solos, and excerpts that helped develop our musicianship and artistry, he was also helping to develop our souls, our spirits, and our intellects.

It is almost impossible for me to avoid sharing a few of his most repeated axioms. -- I believe you will agree with me that they are equally valuable for setting life's goals as they are for improving one's performance.

"Make each note worth \$500, not \$5."

"Remove conflict. Sneak in the back door of problems."

"The important thing is not what you sound like. It's what -- you-- want-- to sound like."

"Be a story teller in sound Express emotion in music. Play to feel better."

"Think like a child so simplicity comes through."

"Practice the beauty of sound. The norm is lyric playing, the love song, or bel canto. Be the great player who maintains a lyric sound at all speeds."

"Start with bad sounds and make them into good ones. Silence cannot improve."

I was stunned when I learned of Jake's passing. It was just a few months before that I sat in Regenstein Hall on the Northwestern University Campus, listening and watching him weave his magic once again with students in his yearly Summer master class. In the audience were dozens of young professionals, many experiencing this remarkable man for the very first time, but most were like me, familiar with his pedagogy, but wanting to be there for another shot of his wisdom, his advice . . . and his love.

We are the slaves of words. All too often, they are all we have to express those wordless feelings that so fill our minds and our hearts. Yes words are all we have, and yet at times such as this, they are simply not enough.

But with Jake's passing, words are all that I have today to express my profound sense of loss.

As Arnold Jacobs was a man who lived a life worthy of respect, so we shall

always respect his memory: as he was a man of honor who brought honor and dignity, civility, and professionalism to every situation he entered, so we honor his name; he was truly a gentle man.

As he was entirely devoted to his wife Gazelle, and his son Dallas, we honor his commitment to family and praise him for being a model of dedication to family and to family values.

As he was the consummate teacher -- we are inspired by his example to be more dedicated to the challenge of teaching and learning ourselves.

As he was a man who touched our lives and left us the better for the association, so his passing touches us now and leaves a void in our lives, a void that may close with time, but one that can never be made completely whole.

Ray Still, my colleague on the NU faculty and the legendary former principal oboist of the SO, stated most sincerely: "Arnold Jacobs is simply God's gift to wind musicians everywhere and I hope he lives forever." There are those of us in the universe of art today who may feel that he has gone, But looking around us and listening to his beautiful sounds with our inner ears, there are many more of us who are certain that he will live forever.

Arnold Jacobs' artistry and teaching leave those of us who carry on after him better musicians, better educators, but most importantly -- better human beings. I speak for hundreds of his students when I pledge to Gizella that we stand as living memorials to Jake as we will continue to strive for the standards that he established. Mr. Jacobs, we will never forget you. The world cannot help to be a better place because you were once among us. Jake, you are loved. Jake, you will be missed.

At the Tribute to Arnold Jacobs, a tribute was also made by Daniel Barenboim