

A NOTE FROM *Johnstone-Music*

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SPECIAL FEATURE on BONNIE HAMPTON

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born 29th July 1935(Berkeley, California, USA)
cellist, chamber music player and professor

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BONNIE HAMPTON has led an active music life as a chamber musician, soloist, and teacher. A native of Berkeley, California, U.S.A., she did not follow a “traditional” path when it came to pursuing an education in music. Exposed to classical music at a young age - some of her early memories were of hearing the Juilliard String Quartet in performances in her home town - she took courses at U.C. Berkeley and received tutoring from university and conservatory teachers in San Francisco, but never received an official degree. Her instrumental studies were with Margaret Rowell, Zara Nelsova, and the Griller String Quartet.

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She was performing regularly by the age of 15, and at a tender 18 she began teaching cello herself at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. Bonnie took her first faculty position at Mills College at age 23, and more or less at this time was a student of Pablo Casals (see the video below!); indeed she participated for many years in the Casals and Marlboro festivals. Her solo debut with the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra was followed by appearances with orchestras nationally on the States performing the standard repertoire and many 20th century cello concertos.

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Chamber music has always been dear to her. She is a founding member of the Francesco Trio, which was formed in 1964. The trio’s residencies have included Stanford University and the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, where she taught for thirty years. Ms. Hampton’s chamber music guest appearances have included performances with the Juilliard, Guarneri, Cleveland, Mendelssohn, Alexander, Budapest, and Griller String Quartets, and concert tours have taken her to Europe and Asia. She has performed in halls throughout the United States, including Davies and the Opera House in San Francisco, Alice Tully, the Library of Congress, the Kennedy Center, Jordan Hall, and many chamber music venues throughout the world. She has also performed as the Hampton-Schwartz Duo with her late husband, pianist Nathan Schwartz.

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Teaching has always been important to her. Apart from the previously mentioned position, she joined the Juilliard faculty in 2003 where she was

professor in cello and chamber music until 2012. She was awarded an “Excellence in Teaching Award” from SFCM and Indiana University. In 2018, she was awarded an Honorary Doctorate Degree from the San Francisco Conservatory of Music.

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Q & A by our featured cellist:

If your students could only remember one thing from your teaching, what would you want it to be?

“That while the skills of playing an instrument are of given crucial importance, demanding discipline and perseverance, the lifelong challenge is having the curiosity and openness to seek understanding of the musical language of every individual composer one studies and performs. In other words, a real melding of musical understanding and investigation with instrumental technique in searching for a composer’s expression and meaning and then communicating it to others.”

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See the life experience!:

AS A STUDENT at 25 years old! - From the legendary Master Class Series filmed at the University of California, Berkeley in 1960.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sWuo1mweGkg>

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AS A MATURE ARTIST at 72 years old! - R. Strauss, Don Quixote, Op. 35, Bonnie Hampton with CPYO, 2012

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Xo25r7ucr0>

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‘documenting the cello’

Please do see other original works for many different instruments and groupings, and also special transcriptions for cellists, and cellists with other instruments on the ***Johnstone-Music*** web page

Also both general musical and cello based articles, directories of famous historical cellists, and many other items of interest

DOWNLOADS - Many downloads on ***Johnstone-Music*** are now available, for those that are interested, at a *symbolic* payment, which is to help cover the costs of this web site. Some scores/parts are presented in musical edition programmes but generally they are found here in a most "clear" hand-written manuscript copy (the majority to almost a professional copyist standard) and transferred to a PDF file.

As far as ***Johnstone-Music*** is concerned you are welcome to publicly perform or record any work or piece found in the web; however you DO need to make mention of the name of the composer and the arranger on any printed information (hand programmes, disc covers etc.).

FREE PUBLICITY - If you care to inform us of any public performance (no matter how formal or informal the event is), recording or other uses of the original music or arrangements of David Johnstone or of other musical colleagues included in this web, we are happy to give your event free publicity on the ***Johnstone-Music*** web.

To take advantage of this, try to write to us three weeks or more in advance with any information. Last-minute entries are certainly better than not writing at all - however, understandably, once we have past the calendar month of the event it is not usually possible to add old items to the calendar. It is very interesting for the promoters of ***Johnstone-Music*** to have knowledge of your activity - and so in return for your information you will be entitled to a free gift of a work/s for every diary addition you tell us about. To find out more about this, please visit the "***Cello Club***" section in the web!