

on the lighter side

Jack Nebergall

by Carrol McLaughlin



Jack Nebergall at the Hyatt Embarcadero, San Francisco

Jack Nebergall has been a musician since he was four years old, when he used to perform violin solos, accompanied by his brother at the piano. His family loved music. Jack's grandfather was an old-time fiddler in Albany, Oregon, where Jack grew up. Although he spent fourteen years studying the violin, Jack always wanted to play the harp. He believes his fascination with the instrument may have started in depression times when Marx Brothers comedies were so popular.

Jack's father was the stage manager at a vaudeville theatre. One of his tasks was to carry a Lindeman harp on and off stage for performer Davis Lienneger. Years later, Jack bought that harp for \$400.00 and began taking harp lessons.

Though Jack is now well-known as a performer of ballads and popular music with lush-sounding jazz-like harmonies, his early training was in classical harp literature.

His first harp teacher in Oregon was Doris Calkins. [Mrs. Calkins is the mother of Sally Maxwell—Ed.] In 1944 he moved to San Francisco to study with Kajetan Attl, a Czechoslovakian harpist who was the principal harpist with the San Francisco Symphony, and who had taught many fine harpists including Doris Calkins. Jack studied with Attl for five years, and it was during this time that he also "landed" his first job playing harp with a dance band.

For three nights a week, Jack would play with a 10-piece band under the direction of Dick Foy at the Claremont Hotel in Berkeley. Jack had some written-out harp parts but most often he played from chord charts; he also played harp solos during the intermissions.

Jack received on-the-job training in working with a dance band, in reading chords, and in doing radio work from Barbara Schwartzman and Alice Dillon Stevens. He could



At the age of seven

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ELIGIBILITY

Applications are encouraged from all areas of performance on an orchestral instrument, keyboard, voice, or harp, and from the fields of composition, history or music education.

Application deadline: January 31, 1984
Audition dates: March 9 and 10, 1984

COMPETITION PROCEDURES

Close applicants will perform for a panel of four nationally recognized nonresident adjudicators: Ann Mason Stockton, President, American Harp Society; Armando Ghitalia, Former principal trumpet, Boston Symphony Orchestra; William Jones, Music Director, Greater Twin Cities Youth Symphonies; Elliott Schwartz, composer, Bowdoin College. **Finalists are urged to participate in person in an audition held in the School of Music at the University of Oregon March 9 and 10. However, those entrants who reside more than 150 miles from the campus may be judged by submitting a tape.**

ADMISSION PROCEDURES

Entering students at all levels will be selected for admission as music majors in the School of Music by a representative faculty committee on the basis of the students' qualifications and the space limitations of the school. Early application is recommended.

GRADUATE PROGRAMS

D.M.A. in music education (teaching, composition, performance, history, and musicianship).

D.Ed. in music education (administration).

M.Mus. and M.A. available in all fields listed above, as well as choral conducting and theory.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

WRITE TO:

Morrette Rider, Dean
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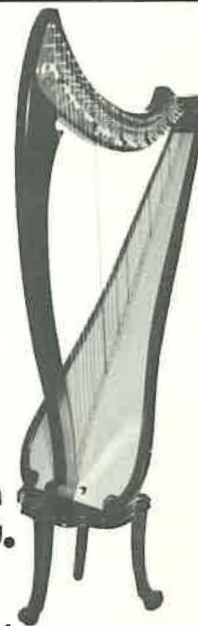
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Jack with his first harp



Performing in Hawaii

take any melody or tune and, mostly by ear, come up with an arrangement of it on the harp.

Nebergall was staff harpist for CBS Radio from 1953–56, when the staff orchestra was dissolved. He performed often with the dance band of Ray Hackett, who had been the musical director for CBS Radio. In 1956, Jack accompanied such soloists as Nat “King” Cole and Ethel Merman at the Republican Convention, working with conductor-arranger Jack Fischer.

Jack has performed at numerous well-known restaurants in the San Francisco area, including Romanoff’s on Knob Hill for two years, Paoli’s for two years and La Strada for eight years. He never uses music, but plays everything by ear. When asked about his repertoire, Jack states, “I just always knew tunes. When I was a kid I used to play with a local group—I used to get up and play jazz on the fiddle at beer halls, dance halls, whenever.”

In 1966 and 1967 Jack performed in Hawaii at the Captain’s Galley for his friend De Wayne Fulton. In 1975 Jack began performing at a hotel in San Francisco which is now well-known for its presentation of the harp, the Hyatt Regency Embarcadero. Jack began as a soloist in the lobby, playing for two years in the afternoon from noon to 4:00 p.m. He was then asked to join Danny Yale and the Regency Strings. The Regency Strings accompanied Jack to the 1980 American Harp Society Convention in Portland

and were the featured artists at the final banquet. (Jack had also been invited to perform solo pop and jazz harp music before the banquet at the Harp Conference in Oakland.) The group has also performed with Jack at the Salvi Summer Pop and Jazz Festivals. They now work with Jack at the Embarcadero Hyatt, 9:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m., Thursday thru Saturday.

Our artist has cut two records, the first with Danny Yale and The Regency Strings; the second was a solo album entitled *Ain’t Misbehavin’*.

Jack considers himself a ballad-style harpist. His favorite music includes such standards as, “The Shadow of Your Smile,” “I Can’t Get Started With You,” “The Boy Next Door,” and “A Time for Love.” He believes it is important for a harpist to project personal ease to an audience.

The form of arrangement for harp preferred by Jack includes the establishment of the melody, followed by an improvised 8-16 bars, a statement of the bridge, then a return to opening material and “finishing” (or re-stating) the piece. Jack urges harpists, “*listen* to yourself and do not forget that the public always wants to hear a clear melody line.” Jack admits he “just sort of has a feeling for it . . . a feeling for the rhythm.”

Jack’s “feeling for it” has set him apart as a very special artist, touching many with the “serenity of the Jack Nebergall style.”

