

Do I Hear A Harp?

by Lois Adele Craft

Yes! (and playing a "Waltz", too.) Like homing pigeons, we migrate toward that beckoning sound and find our reward in—as critics at home and abroad have entitled him—"The Amazing Young Man." "America's Foremost Swing Harpist," Lloyd Lindroth, presenting his Harpists Bazaar that included anything from Bach to Bacharach—and "back" again—something for everyone!

That distinctive, far-reaching harp-sound was possible because of Lloyd's one-of-a-kind, patented, \$15,000 electronic harp. He reveals that his harp has four special pick ups, all so individually controlled and balanced, there is no distortion whatever. He says this allows for the special effects and creates the unexpected "today sounds" with a harp, never before successfully done. Lloyd's system is exclusively for the harp and was developed through many years of research and understanding of what is required to keep real harp quality in amplification. The harp includes a Ring-modulator for Psychedelic Rock, a Wah-Wah pedal for bending the harp tone, an Echo-plex, producing many effects, especially "concert hall sound" in a small area. He is currently involved with the Moog Synthesizer in his ever demanding drive for perfection. This, combined with Lloyd's own talent as a jazz harpist, has made him a rising Star into the big Night Clubs—nationally, in Canada, plus Australia, the Far East, and very soon to include Europe.

Undoubtedly Lloyd Lindroth had destined attraction to the harp, for as a lad, delivering papers to a particular home he would sit on the porch fascinated, watching through the window a girl playing her harp. Sometimes she would invite the little boy in to listen. Eventually, she allowed her number one Fan to take an Irish harp home with him. He hid it and himself in the attic and endeavored untutored practice. Alas, one day his mother, who must be away at work, happened home earlier than expected. With much disapproval she made the boy return the harp to its owner. He never forgot the joy and sound of that harp.

A few years later, he discovered a harp in a music store. He approached a salesman and asked if he might

not practice on the harp while he waited the arrival of his own new harp. (We will call this positive thinking and not fabrication.) Eventually the teacher that taught at the store discovered Lloyd trying to play. In stern words and tone of voice he was ousted and told not to come back!

His mother was not without awareness of her young son's interest in music, as he played saxophone and clarinet in the school bands, so she allowed him to join a Community Music School for a small fee where he was to receive full musical instruction. Lloyd signed up as a (you guessed it) harpist! With courage he again used the same story he had tried at the music store but added, that he knew of a harp at the High School and could use that until his harp came. The Institute surprisingly



LLOYD LINDROTH

bought the harp. There was no teacher, so after six weeks of bluffing, the night of the first concert arrived with Lloyd's mother, grandmother and sister in the audience. The curtain went up—and there sat Lloyd as harpist of the orchestra! Now his mother understood all that propaganda about the harp she had been receiving in her son's effort to prepare her for this moment. His grandmother and sister were proud and delighted, but not "Mom", and it took the three of them two years to convince her that this was a right idea and to allow serious harp instruction.

Lloyd lost no time in finding Edith Lundgren as his teacher and telling her his whole story. She kindly arranged for him to rent an old Erárd harp and included lessons, for ten dollars a month. He paid for this through a job at a bakery and a newspaper route. The summer he became seventeen years old, he went to live at his teacher's home, practicing every available moment. Miss Lundgren, discerning his interest in "sounds" and "effects," allowed freedom in his approach to the harp.

The two following years brought rapid progress on the No. 23 he was now playing. His mother, thoroughly convinced, made a trip to Chicago and "plopped down"—as Lloyd expressed it—\$150.00 on a reconditioned No. 21 harp. At last, his very own harp! He happily assumed the rest of the debt and paid for his lessons. He studied with Herbert Graff and received a scholarship at Seattle University. During this period he won on the Horace Heidt Show, gave concerts at clubs and

community concerts. He went directly from school into the United States Army Band as their solo harpist for three years, giving five command performances at the White House.

It is interesting to note that Lloyd says he has never performed without amplification, even as a youngster. While in the Service, his "electronic sound" really began its unfoldment and when he was shipped to the Far East in 1958 he had his own equipment to take. Development continued and in 1964 his electronic harp was ready and was introduced at the Riviera Hotel in Palm Springs. Lloyd forever listens, moving in that early drive for effects and sounds unlimited. The late Arthur Matz of the Los Angeles Lyon & Healy harp salon was his biggest booster and would travel many miles to hear Lloyd play.

The following is Lloyd's request for a direct quote:—

"It is my desire to open the harp to the guy next door. I don't want to hear comments such as—'I never heard a harp before'; 'Never heard it played like that before'. People should be familiar with the instrument and know what they are hearing. If the electronic concept hits with the public, it will open doors for students and professionals that have never been possible before. It means jobs and job opportunities for harpists and the harp, and this is the great purpose in my work."

[Ed. note: Lloyd Lindroth will perform at the National Conference in Seattle, Washington, in June.]

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