



The Taylor Times



Email: myoozik@aol.com
Jeffrey Taylor

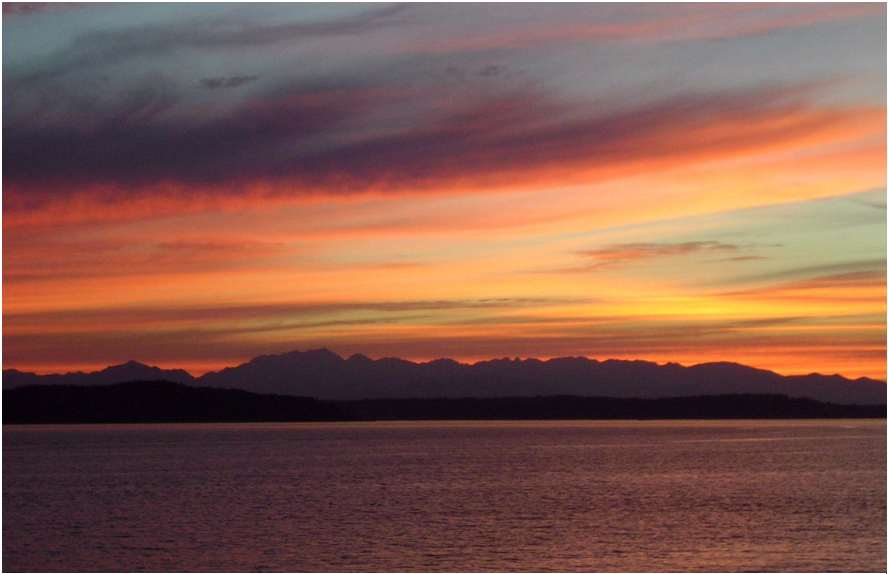
Holiday 2006
Twelve years running

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TOO MUCH? TOO LITTLE?

Every once in awhile there is a year full of so much of everything that it resembles the rain gauge in a Seattle winter. Or maybe a balloon that someone forgot to quit blowing into. It fills and swells. It loses all sense of form and measure, even structure.

It passes without the audible tick of its clock, without the visual movement of its hands. Yet it passes. And one day you find yourself in a staring contest with it. And then you blink. This was one of those years. So where do I begin?



Sunset over Puget Sound and the Olympic Mountains

THE YEAR IN MUSIC

The music world has been an extremely busy one this year. Last year I had purchased a bass trombone, this year saw a great deal of use for it. The Pontiac Bay Symphony found itself without a bass trombonist for a swing concert in June, the last concert of the season, and I volunteered to try to fill the gap. That particular concert was all-swing and quite appropriate for trombone, though I had the tuba there as well. Speaking of tubas I did add another to my collection early this year... this one in Eb. I'm thinking of disguising them in the passenger seat to allow me use of the carpool lanes.

In May I subbed with the Rainier Symphony for a couple pop concerts the orchestra did with the Bottom Line duo, a double bass and 'cello combination that amazed and befuddled even the most seasoned players within earshot.

July was a very crowded month. It began with involvement in a recording session for music written by student composers for student films, done in a very professional atmosphere and studio. I was also fortunate enough to play principal tuba with the Mahler Festival Orchestra this summer, an outrageous concert that included

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Music (cont'd)

a very unique piece by Respighi alongside Mahler's Das Lied von der Erde. But it was also an extremely exhausting stretch of days. During the same two week period as the festival, I was signed up for summer intensive classes with the Pacific Northwest



Hummie directing a student film recording session.

Film Scoring Program, and "intensive" was the operative term. And in the middle of all this was a weekend in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho (5 hour drive), for the 20th Annual Big Brass Bash. Ever wonder what it's like to get 70 tubas together in one room at one time playing "Rubber Ducky"? Well, if you didn't before you might now.



70 tubas - all in a row

But there had to be a downside to the performance picture. When we last left the Seattle Philharmonic (see last year's news) I had been denied a sub position for all of last season. This year the principal post finally came up for audition and I went in for it. Unfortunately it came down to two of us, and while the committee liked certain aspects in each of our demonstrations, mine were not the aspects they preferred. That'll teach me to sit on my aspects. But I wasn't about to let grass grow beneath my feet. It's too difficult to mow. So I joined the Rain City Symphony, a non-auditioning community orchestra,

where I have once again been able to play both tuba and bass trombone. Take the opportunities when you can get them.

I'll mention the Pontiac Bay orchestra yet again, but just to be able to describe a rather remarkable concert this December, that ended the year but started the season. Hollywood composer (and head of the film scoring program and all-around nice guy) Hummie Mann directed the orchestra in accompaniment of three silent films using music that was not intended for that purpose. Many weeks and edits after beginning the process we presented our project to the public. It was amazing that in all three cases the orchestra and movie ended at exactly the same time and the audience loved it. You'd almost think it was planned that way.

In September I finally got to solo. No, not in an airplane. This was with the Brass Band. Every other instrument in the band had gotten to do a solo, except the Bb tuba. I was beginning to feel like Red Buttons at a celebrity roast... never got a solo. But I really wanted to do it despite the fact that the music was not exactly on the A list at Carnegie Hall. Nevertheless I think the audience appreciated Tubanera as best it could.

My output of written music has been a bit more than usual this year. Early on I had finished a tune begun the previous year called Expressions for Trombone and Piano. After hearing the Bottom Line Duo while playing with Rainier I had the urge to do a set of Variations on Blue Moon for the brass quintet. Another piece called Blues Street was also finished for the quintet this fall, followed by the recent tentative completion of one movement of a Symphony for Strings, actually mostly written back in 1999. In progress are a piece for concert band, and the dreaded task of orchestrating the Concertino for Tuba and Band and In Memoriam 911, originally written for band to the sounds of orchestra and now reverting officially back to orchestra. (Did you follow?) So there's most of the music and by the way, that was the 'nutshell' version. (You can hear various renditions of music, including a tribute to Dad, through the quintet web site. Go to www.blackdiamondbrass.com. Click on Musicians, then select my picture at the bottom of that page. I have a link to my music page from there.)

TRAVEL JOURNAL

Travels took me near and not-so-near this year. And there were fun times and serious times as well. In June I took a weekend to stay in Whistler, B.C. at one of the Worldmark timeshares for a little outdoor activity. Then there was Idaho for the Brass Bash to be followed by a couple more serious journeys. In September Mom called to say Dad had had a heart attack. It was apparently his third and the prognosis was not good. I immediately headed to Florida where we were all amazed at how well Dad was recovering. I returned to Seattle for rehearsals and a concert, then received the



View from a hike up Blackcomb Mountain in Whistler, B.C.

word about ten days later that Dad had departed. It could have been a very sad time, but I can't help being extremely thankful that I got to see him alive and tell him I loved him. I might have felt differently if I had not been there in time. The memorial service was a glorious musical tribute. I think he'd have been very pleased.

Only a few days after returning from the second trip to Florida in as many weeks, I left for a scheduled vacation to Puerto Vallarta. The trip was really too early yet to



Helping a dolphin get "squid-faced" in Mexico



Uncle Frank lookin' good in the Arizona sun

avoid the steamy summer heat, but was scheduled to allow me to meet friends that had planned it before me. (They've since been severely chastised for their choice of dates.) I'm happy to say the hurricanes had already plowed through and left us alone despite nearly two months remaining in the season. The week included a little golf, restauranting, sightseeing, and an "encounter with dolphins".

For the Thanksgiving week I headed for Palm Springs and an inspection trip of the rental house. This time the weather was perfect... 70s to low 80s and nothing but sunshine. I drove to Arizona for Thanksgiving with Uncle Frank in Phoenix and visits with other friends in Tucson. Meanwhile, Seattle was doing some of that rain gauge overflow dance, which I've found quite difficult to tolerate since returning. I don't like to dance.

Speaking of weather, as I write this we have just been through another ten-year wind storm in the Seattle area with downed trees and power lines all around. We were fortunate to have a power outage for only about 12 hours at my house, but there were many others for whom it took the utilities five days or more to restore. You know, we have enough squirrels in the neighborhood that a nice little cage connected to a generator might just... hmmm, I wonder if the power companies have thought of this for their alternative "green" power source requirements.



WILLIAM "BILL" TAYLOR (1922-2006)

Dad passed away in late September, after a long while in great discomfort, if not real pain. He was a wonderful dad who always had great senses of fairness, generosity, and responsibility, some of which he was hopefully able to pass on to his kids. Maybe he was too picky about a few things that we thought were unimportant, but even that helped teach us an attention to detail. Just shy of his 84th birthday, he'd led a good, full life. Outgoing and smart, he did much to support the company he'd been with until retirement. He was also respected for his military service, but perhaps above all, he was a fine musician and musical businessman. This was in his blood and I personally thank him for sharing it with me.

His pain is past now and I'm sure a great relief as he embarks on his new adventures. And I will look forward to seeing him again and sharing some of those adventures when the time is right. With much love and respect...



An Arizona desert sunset, near Tucson

