

TROMBONANZA

"THE CAT'S PAJAMAS"

BY DR. IRV WAGNER





TROMBONANZA is a phenomenal trombone event that takes place each year in Santa Fe, Argentina. It has become one of the premier destinations in the world for trombonists. Trombonanza is such a “Fabulous Festival” that one must call on common expressions and sayings to describe it, such as: “The Cat’s Pajamas,” “The Frosting On The Cake,” “The Top of the Line,” “First Class,” “Out of Sight,” “It’s A Gold Mine,” “Top Drawer,” “It’s A 10,” and more.

Trombonanza is organized by Rubén Carughi (pictured left). Rubén, a world-class trombonist himself, is normally a teacher of trombone at the Escuela de Música in Santa Fe as well as an active trombonist in Argentina.

Rubén can teach and perform many styles of music and can be heard playing in the Orquesta Sinfónica de Santa Fe as well as in jazz and tango bands. However, throughout the year much of his attention and energy is devoted to the organization of Trombonanza. The results of his work are highly visible during the week-long celebration of the trombone, known as Trombonanza, where the entire city of Santa Fe and the surrounding area becomes the center of this group of participants and the spirit they generate. Rubén successfully persuaded the Ministerio de Innovación y Cultura, la Universidad Nacional del Litoral, la Municipalidad de Santa Fe, and various guilds, unions, and private companies to be involved.

As with many successful ventures, Trombonanza began with a long-held dream of Rubén’s. His dream was to provide the same experiences to the trombonists of South American and especially his country of Argentina that were enjoyed in other parts of the world. Rubén states: “My dream was always that in my country we had the same opportunities as enjoyed elsewhere. I was quite sure of our human potential, but we needed only a strong stimulus and the right tools to develop it. If other



FOTO: GABRIEL COSENTINO

Enrique “Heini” Schneebei

people in the Europe or the USA could do it, why not us?”

Thus in the year 2000 the dream became a reality with the first Trombonanza. Rubén spread the word as best he could about a trombone event that was going to take place in Santa Fe, Argentina; and twelve participants showed up to attend the first event. Kevin Roberts, a North American trombonist then playing in Santiago, Chile, was the only teacher to assist with the teaching and playing. Rubén says: “I’ll never forget the first time we played 12 trombonists together in 2000.” Such sounds, as many of us had already experienced time and time again, had never been heard in that part of the world. And most certainly, the beautiful sound of trombones, the instruction received by the participants, and the experience of fellowship among those who attended was positive in every way. Consequently, the planning for the second Trombonanza was already in progress and the dream that Rubén had grew to larger proportions.

The growth of the dream included the fact that Rubén always had the idea to study with the best teachers possible and despite having excellent teachers in Argentina and South America, he felt the need for foreign teachers to come also. He, therefore, did all that he could



Irv Wagner and Marshall Gilkes playing along with the Mass Trombone Choir



Jamie Williams of the Deutsche Oper in Berlin

to get involvement of international trombonists. He was successful in his endeavor and as he says: "this helped a lot to demolish myths and legends, as all students and professionals can see and hear each year to the best, whatever country they are. I think without thinking, it also helped that the people of Europe and USA know and admire the talented trombone players that are in South America."

Trombonanza has grown year after year into one of those trombone events that is the envy of much of the rest of the world. Each year has become more and more significant. Rubén states that:

For me, the most special is to see and feel our children and young people have the opportunity to be, see, hear, and live with the greatest exponents of the trombone in the world. That experience (generally, people of my generation did not have, or

recently had at an advanced age), they can now have it in Santa Fe. That experience is non-transferable and I think you cannot learn it in any other way. Furthermore, there are no excuses, now just practice and practice is, in the right way, to become a true artist. Another important thing is that everyone can be the 6 days off teachers, eating with them and feeling, talk, move, make jokes, etc. . . . and it also helps to realize many things. . .

Rubén is also clear to express appreciation to all who have been invaluable in the success of Trombonanza. As he says, there are many, but most especially recognition must go to "Enrique (Heini) Schneebeli, my great friend and a tireless worker, with whom we share the same ideas about what should be Trombonanza." Also all teachers, both Argentine and foreign, who have participated every year, sharing their knowledge, without charging any money for their work.

How to name just a few, because each of them has been important for Trombonanza. The list of professors is extensive and I think it would be unfair if I forget just one of them. All my family, who always accompanied me in this venture, which initially appeared to be a meaningless madness. Everyone in the Music School No. 9901, who has worked with me at all times. The provincial authorities, municipal authorities, the UNL, guilds and unions, private companies, factories instruments, theater and movie people, artists.



Gaspar Licciardone from Argentina, Remigio Pereira Pintos from Paraguay, Marshall Gilkes of the USA, along with Rubén Carughi

My own experience began in 2004 when I was a guest clinician at a Brazilian Trombone Workshop in Porto Alegre, Brazil. I was to present a clinic session on the fundamentals of playing the trombone to Brazilian players who only spoke Brazilian Portuguese. The person who was to translate for me was not present, so a gentleman in the audience, whom I had earlier met at an International Festival in Nashville, Tennessee, offered to translate for me. That person was Rubén Carughi. He did a fine job of translating for me, I am sure, and when we met later he invited me to the event in Argentina which he called Trombonanza. I agreed to come to Argentina to be part and did so for the first time in 2005.

Since 2005, I have been a fan and supporter of Rubén and his dream. Trombonanza draws trombonists of all ages each year from the entire continent of South America.



Massimo La Rosa of the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra

The stories themselves of young trombonists riding three or four days and nights to participate in Trombonanza are inspirational as is the information about those with very little money who spend whatever they have to make it to the event.

Many and most of the participants sacrifice so much to absorb the atmosphere and good music of Trombonanza. They are even willing to go without sleep, maybe not even a good place to sleep and literally devote all their resources in order to be involved.

The faculty for Trombonanza that Rubén assembles each year is an outstanding group. First and foremost they are outstanding trombonists, but in addition are wonderful human beings as well. At the top of the list is Gaspar Licciardone. Gaspar is the leader and teacher

of every trombonist in Argentina and provides the inspiration from which so many benefit. He is, as I refer to him, the “Godfather” of the trombone in Argentina. Next on the list would be Enrique Schneebeli, bass trombonist in the Orquesta Estable del Teatro Colón and the co-organizer of Trombonanza. Then, also from Argentina, comes Pablo Fenoglio, one of the greatest trombonists currently active in the world. Also participating as instructors are Carlos Ovejero, first trombone in the National Symphony in Buenos Aires, and Jorge Urani, a truly great young bass trombonist.

Other South Americans coming also to teach and assist in Trombonanza include Remigio Pereira Pintos from Paraguay, one of the most accomplished jazz players one can ever hear, Francisco Alaniz from Chile, Carlos Quiroz from Perú, and Miguel Sanchez of Venezuela. International faculty members include such regulars as Eckhard Treichel from Germany and Conrad Herwig and Irv Wagner from the USA. Each



FOTO: GABRIEL COSENTINO

Irv Wagner conducting the Massed Trombone Choir



Rubén Carughi

year some new international artists make the journey to Santa Fe, and the list is incredible with some examples being Massimo La Rosa of the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra, Jamie Williams of the Deutsche Oper in Berlin, Dan Satterwhite of Lynn University in Florida, Paul Compton of Oklahoma State University, and the great jazz artists such as Marshall Gilkes from the USA and Renato Farias from Brasil. There is also a tuba/euphonium component to the Trombonanza headed up by the great tubist, Vasile Babusceac with assistance from Hugo Migliore on euphonium from Argentina and Albert Khattar on tuba from Brasil.

All in all it is a faculty to be admired. My list is not intended to be complete, but certainly the ones mentioned specifically along with the others who have not been named make a phenomenal contribution. AND all receive no compensation.

Trombonanza has several features which set it apart from other trombone events around the world. First, all the participants play in ensembles both large and small everyday while also playing in Master Classes. This makes for a “fully used lip” at the end of the day for all. Second, professionals and students mix and perform side by side throughout the week.

As I have written in an earlier article, it is difficult to fully describe the aura and spirit of Trombonanza, but it can safely be said that this is one of the greatest musical conferences and trombone events held anyplace in the world. And to see outstanding professional players standing beside young trombonists making music together is an emotional experience of the highest sort. Trombonanza as a musical event coupled with the spirit generated during the week is a model and inspiration for all.

The name Trombonanza came about during the first event in 2000 when Rubén, Kevin Roberts, and others were talking when the “name Trombonanza come to our brain as the union of trombón and Bonanza, that old TV series, with the good brothers, always making his efforts in the same direction.” That concept describes the event perfectly and is what keeps it going and growing.

Trombonanza really is “The Cat’s Pajamas” and “the Cream in Your Coffee” with the sharing of great times, heartfelt exchange of culture and people, and the inspiration of the music performed and heard.

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WEB**

For more information visit

www.trombonanza.com.ar/conciertos.html

www.facebook.com/trombonanza.ediciones

Dr. Irv Wagner is a faculty member at the University of Oklahoma where he is holds the distinguished titles of David Ross Boyd and Regents Professor of Music. At the University he teaches trombone as well as serves as the Coordinator of Graduate Studies and Music Director and Conductor for the Music Theater Program. Complimentary to his regular duties at the University, he is a trombonist in the Oklahoma City Philharmonic Orchestra as well as an occasional Conductor for Pops Concerts of the Orchestra.