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Kenosha, Wisconsin: G. Leblanc, May 6, 1996

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May 6, 1996

LEBLANC 



A NEWSLETTER FOR MUSIC RETAILERS, EDUCATORS, EMPLOYEES AND FRIENDS OF G. LEBLANC CORPORATION

A COMMEMORATIVE ISSUE

LEBLANC 

50 YEARS LEBLANC USA

VITO'S VIEWS

Leblanc's history is that of promoting the benefits of music to the world

by Vito Pascucci
Chairman, G. Leblanc Corporation
PDG, G. Leblanc S.A.

Over 50 years ago, Léon Leblanc felt it was his duty to ask his father to approve his selection for the leader of their prospective American enterprise. As you may know, they chose an American private first class soldier in his early 20s, a repair technician for the Glenn Miller Air Force Band. To have enjoyed this good fortune all stems from my appreciation and respect for music and for all those engaged in making music.

Léon Leblanc said he had been looking for a partner for 25 years, and his final decision struck me as unusual because of my young age. What great courage the Leblanc family had to put their trust in an American soldier with almost zero net worth—a young man who had not known that the ultimate decision was between one of the wealthiest men in the country, Mr. John Jacob Astor, and me. Mr. Astor was at that time married to Gertrude Gretsch of Gretsch & Brenner, Leblanc's American distributor since the early '20s. This made Mr. Leblanc's choice of a young man from Kenosha, Wisconsin, all the more courageous.

The Leblancs knew I had very little capital, but Mr. Leblanc said, "We don't need money, as we intend to start small and grow. What we need is your imagi-

Special edition

Welcome to our special 50th-anniversary edition of the *Leblanc Bell*, a 32-page double issue. On the pages that follow, we'll indulge in a bit of introspection and retrospection, marking this important corporate milestone. We trust you will find our musings of interest.

— Mike Johnson
Managing Editor



"America and the world have come to understand that music has the power to enrich our very humanity."

nation and youth." It was difficult to believe what I was hearing, but this was the start of a great father-and-son story between Mr. Leblanc and myself, a story that would culminate in fulfillment of a seemingly impossible dream—to form a musical instrument company with the name Leblanc in Kenosha, Wisconsin, in 1946.

Léon Leblanc often told me stories of how important quality and value are in musical instruments. In those days, there were many instruments that were not constructed well, difficult to play in tune and almost impossible to keep in regulation. Leblanc and Noblet had built their reputations on the superior intonation and mechanical qualities of their instruments, which stayed in proper regulation for their buyers—both students and performers.

The Leblanc and Noblet trade names were well known in some areas of the United States, but hardly at all in others, making Leblanc's American start agonizingly slow. Léon Leblanc reminded me that in his experience, when a family works only for money, they never seem able to meet their expectations. He often said that material rewards will come in proportion to the contributions a manufacturer and distributor makes.

Even then, he was irritated by the "fictitious domain" of the clarinet world, where meaningless intangibles sometimes take precedence over the intrinsic values that make one instrument superior to another.

Although we did not always agree, I came to love the Leblanc family, and our differences surely arose from the fact that I did not always understand their philosophy. Nonetheless, Léon and I built a magnificent business with our instruments, based on family values and backed up with superior quality and value for both the dealer and the consumer.

When Leblanc America's sales vol-

ume grew sufficiently, I was able to join the Young Presidents Organization, which at that time had 800 members throughout the U.S. and the world. Today there are over 1800. With that organization, I received much of my business training, which I then passed on to our dealers in what we called our Dealers Sales School. I am still very proud of the alumni of that family of dealers.

It would be impossible to speak of Leblanc's early contribution to music without mentioning several key employees. When Ernie Moore was hired to start our educational department, he was magnificent in his ability to inspire young band directors and musicians. When the eminent Lucien Cailliet joined us, he brought a new level of musicianship. Then we added Jim Neilson, whose contributions were also legendary.

Don McCathren and Mark Azzolina made further contributions to the development of the clarinet choir. Bill Gower worked to bring together the needs of dealers as well as educators, prompting an exchange of ideas that helped us build new interdependent friendships between teachers, musicians, dealers and manufacturers.

As the world works toward an improved standard of living, the need for music becomes more important to humanity. I am extremely proud of the great accomplishments the American music industry has already made in establishing music as one of the most important elements of our society. Making music is an activity proven to have great beneficial effects on our mental well-being in this ever more complex, fast-paced world.

It seems, at last, that America and the world have come to understand that the learning of music, the making of music and the performing of music have the power to enrich our very humanity. □

LEON'S TOO

At Leblanc, a dynamic future is rooted in a tradition of innovation

by Leon Pascucci
President, G. Leblanc Corporation

Working side by side with one's father for more than 20 years is no doubt an increasingly rare occurrence, and how fortunate it is for me to have such a great teacher and boss in my own father.

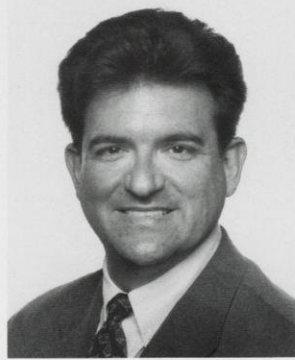
Sometimes I'm asked if it isn't difficult. Sure it is, but then I've never really worked for anyone else—or wanted to. The satisfactions of working in a family business, the small pleasures derived from working closely with employees well known and the ability to chart our own course—all these advantages do indeed make our company and our industry as a whole very appealing.

My godfather, too, Léon Leblanc, has been a strong inspiration, both directly to me and indirectly through my father, for many years. Vito has always spoken of Léon Leblanc in almost reverential tones, but we have a most irreverent photograph of Mr. Leblanc playing a bass clarinet with his very young godchild sticking his hand in the bell, searching for the source of his beautiful music.

What a treat it was to spend time with Mr. Leblanc in his testing room in France, surrounded by instrument models showing innovations from the past and improvements yet to be realized in production—all springing from his fertile imagination and unparalleled experience.

As we cast our sights to the next century, Leblanc will continue to refine its woodwind and brass instruments. Computer technology in design, engineering and production allows us a flexibility and freedom that help us bring new features and constant improvements much more quickly to the marketplace.

Handcraft will always be an important aspect of wind-instrument mak-



"A tradition of excellence, established by my father over the last 50 years, now serves as the bedrock of Leblanc's future."

ing, but we continue to follow the philosophy set forth by Georges and Léon Leblanc: Invest in mechanization where that is appropriate, but save for the hand those artistic skills that machines cannot duplicate.

Mechanization and research would mean nothing without our strong family of skilled employees, each dedicated to producing the best possible wind instruments. Our employees truly enjoy explaining the complexities of their tasks to the many visitors who tour our factories each year. Almost all visitors are amazed by the extent of hand workmanship involved in producing our instruments; they are delighted, too, to see that such skills are still being practiced today.

New materials may be on the horizon for wind instruments, and we actively experiment with different forms of plastics, composites and metal alloys—all in search of instruments that are easier to play in tune and remain in tune—all in order to give the player maximum satisfaction.

As a company, we strive to provide fast service and personal attention. Leblanc has long been in the forefront of computerization of its clerical, accounting, production and marketing functions, and we continue to update our equipment (whose computer isn't "obsolete"?) so that we can offer instant order and stock information to our network of dealers. But we also maintain the "ancient" handwritten warranty registrations for Holton and Martin (and Leblanc in France), since so many players write to us asking about the date of manufacture and other information regarding their prized older instruments.

Our active involvement with the world of music education continues, as we strive with our retailers and with Leblanc artists to offer master classes and clinics for music students across the country. Both Vito and I, as well

as a number of other Leblanc officers, have been busily engaged with industry groups such as the National Association of Band Instrument Manufacturers (NABIM), the Music Achievement Council and the American Music Conference, all of which share the common goal of promoting music education and expanding opportunities for young people to learn music.

On the musical front, our association with outstanding musicians (many of whom also teach) is a source of great inspiration and excitement. Showbiz! These talented professionals, from Barry Tuckwell to Pete Fountain, come to us with ideas for improving their instruments, then set to work with our engineers and designers in pursuit of perfection—an elusive goal, one that is always limited by the laws of acoustics. Aided by the creativity of seasoned musicians, though, we have been able to offer instruments to the world that truly help the player achieve his or her own brand of perfection.

This tradition of excellence, established by my father over the last 50 years, now serves as the bedrock of Leblanc's future. □

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50 YEARS

Leblanc celebrates a half century of music history in Kenosha, Wisconsin

As the new millennium approaches, the coming years hold significant milestones for Kenosha, Wisconsin-based G. Leblanc Corporation and, indeed, for the entire music industry.

The Noblet name, for example, still vital as a brand within the Leblanc France line, will mark its 250th anniversary in the year 2000, and the Frank Holton Company, Leblanc's brasswind division, celebrates its centennial in 1998. This year, G. Leblanc Corporation itself celebrates the 50th anniversary of its American founding.

In the music industry, Leblanc in America is a mere youngster compared to the French company, and while Leblanc is America's oldest and largest wind-instrument manufacturer under





In this 1906 photo of workers outside the Noblet factory in La Couture-Boussey, France, six-year-old Léon Leblanc is shown seated on the ground, bottom right.

continuous ownership, other American companies have older charters. What makes this anniversary special is the remarkable scope of accomplishment and progress Leblanc has made in the comparatively brief span of a half-century.

Since its modest beginnings as a two-man shop, the company has grown to a position of international prominence under the fatherly leadership of its cofounders, Léon Leblanc and Vito Pascucci. The Kenosha-headquartered corporation employs a family of some 500 workers at three sites in Wisconsin (two in Kenosha, one in Elkhorn) and approximately 75 additional workers at two locations in France.

At left: Vito Pascucci (seated) cofounded G. Leblanc Corporation 50 years ago with the Leblanc family of France. Vito's son, Leon Pascucci, namesake of former partner Léon Leblanc, now serves as president of the American company.



The Leblanc family recruited Charles Houvenaghel, the greatest acoustician of his age. "Music is an art," he wrote, "but it is governed by the laws of science." Working long before the advent of computers, Houvenaghel's complex mathematical formulas (visible on his desk) were developed in longhand.

The story of G. Leblanc Corporation's inception and ultimate growth is one of the most captivating and well known in the music industry—the stuff of which, as the saying goes, legends are made.

French roots. G. Leblanc Corporation traces its origins to the founding

of Ets. D. Noblet of France in 1750, when the great flourishing of instrumental music at the court of Louis XV created a demand for musical instruments of all kinds. More than any other instrument manufacturer, Noblet refined and developed early woodwind manufacturing techniques, securing for the French nation its preeminent reputation for producing the best wind instruments in the world. Based in La Couture-Boussey for nearly two and a half centuries, it is among the oldest continuously operating companies in France. G. Leblanc Corporation still honors the Noblet name with Noblet and Normandy clarinet models within the Leblanc France line.

In 1904, with no heirs to carry on the company, the Noblet family passed its holdings to Georges Leblanc, descendant of a long line of distinguished French instrument makers. By the time he acquired Noblet, Georges Leblanc had gained a reputation as one of the finest woodwind makers in all of France. The workshop at the

Leblanc company headquarters in Paris became a meeting place of the great woodwind artists of the era. Working side by side with Georges was his wife, Clemence, who actually managed the factory while Georges fought during World War I.

From the beginning, the Leblancs were constantly guided by scientific principles and inspired by their inborn musical genius. As a result of this relentless dedication toward progress, Georges Leblanc and his son, Léon, set up their Paris workshop as the first full-time acoustical research laboratory for wind instruments. They recruited the talents of Charles Houvenaghel, regarded at the time as the greatest acoustician since Adolphe Sax.

The subsequent growth and success of G. Leblanc Cie. as a manufacturing entity was largely due to the work of Léon Leblanc, who in addition to his reputation as an instrument maker and businessman, was also known as a gifted clarinetist, holder of the first prize of the Paris Conservatoire, the first and still the only instrument maker to have held such an honor.

He had before him a brilliant career
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as a concert clarinetist, but chose instead to remain true to his heritage, feeling that he could make a greater contribution to music by combining the talents and sensitivities he developed as a musician with his skills as an instrument maker.

Together, Georges, Léon and Houvenaghel pushed the theoretical limits of instrument design to produce the first truly playable complete clari-

“Musicians of today should not be handicapped by the deficiencies of those before me. Acoustical, mechanical and musical improvements will be made. To this end, I have dedicated my life.”

— Léon Leblanc



As a young man, Léon Leblanc proved himself a supremely gifted clarinetist when he captured first prize of the Paris Conservatoire. He was the first and is still the only instrument maker to have held such an honor.



Vito Pascucci at his workbench as repair technician to the Glenn Miller Band during World War II. Shortly after this photo was taken, Major Miller “recommended” that Pascucci shave the mustache—and he has not worn one since.

net choir, ranging from soprano to octo-contrabass, encompassing a range that surpasses that of the orchestral string sections. Perhaps even more significant, the Leblanc firm was the first instrument maker in history to manufacture clarinets with interchangeable keys, resulting in instruments that were easier to play in tune by artists as well as beginners.

As Léon Leblanc once noted, “Musicians of today should not be handicapped by the deficiencies of those before me. Acoustical, mechanical and musical improvements will be made. To this end, I have dedicated my life.” Today, at age 96, Monsieur Leblanc still serves as *président honoraire* of the French firm.

The history of the G. Leblanc Corporation, Kenosha, Wisconsin, U.S.A., dates to the last months of World War II and a chance meeting between Léon Leblanc and Vito Pascucci.

Enter Vito. Born in Kenosha, Vito Pascucci showed a marked interest in music and played cornet in the Kenosha High School band. While still a schoolboy, he became fascinated with the construction and design of musical instruments and began to devote a large amount of time to their study and repair. He diligently studied from all available sources, served a summer apprenticeship in the art of instrument making at the Frank Holton Company (the Elkhorn, Wisconsin, brass-instru-

ment manufacturer that Leblanc would later acquire), and then, while still in high school, augmented his family's income by operating his own instrument-repair shop located in the back room of his brother's music store.

In 1943, Pascucci was called into the armed forces. He took his heavy instrument-repair kit with him, lugging both it and his barracks bag wherever he went. His effort was rewarded when he was assigned as a trumpeter and repairman to Army Field Bands, then as repairman with the Army Air Corps Band, led by Glenn Miller. He began with the Miller band in New Haven, Connecticut, then traveled with them to Europe. Stationed in England, Pascucci and Miller became close friends and formed plans to set up a chain of music stores after the war.

When the band received traveling orders to newly liberated Paris, Vito journeyed ahead of them, having arranged with Major Miller to visit the renowned musical instrument manufacturers located in and around that city, intending to establish contacts for their future enterprise. A few days after Pascucci's arrival, on the Friday he was to meet Miller in Paris, the sad news that Miller's plane had disappeared over the English Channel was announced, his untimely death putting an end to their mutual plans.

Vito decided nonetheless to keep his appointments. First, he toured the firms most well known and highly re-

puted among his bandmates and with musicians back in the States. One of the last companies he visited was G. Leblanc Cie., a brand relatively unknown in the U.S. Midwest. More than any of the others he visited, Vito found himself entranced by this company's high standard of quality, the craftsmanship, the skill and care that characterized each operation.

Not until his tour was complete did he realize that his guide was none other than Léon Leblanc. The two became fast friends and Vito began spending all of his free time at the Leblanc factories in Paris and in nearby Normandy. He spent days learning the ins and outs of instrument making and observed a use of machine methods most unusual for Europe—a practice of using the hand where hand craftsmanship is best suited while using machines where machines can perform better.

Vito was welcomed as if one of the Leblanc family, dining at their home, discussing philosophies of business, music and almost every other conceivable topic. A paternal relationship grew between the instrument maker and the young American.

At dinner, Georges and Léon related how they had assured their former



Vito Pascucci (left) with Clemence and Georges Leblanc (Léon Leblanc's parents), inspecting an early shipment of French metal clarinets at the new plant in Kenosha.

American agent that he would remain Leblanc's exclusive distributor for life. Upon his death, however, the Leblancs needed to weigh new plans for U.S. distribution. Their primary concern, which had not been sufficiently addressed by any European wind instrument maker till that time, was that the instruments be delivered to American dealers in perfect playing condition—no small feat, considering the climatic perils of the long ocean transport.

"Then, one day," recalls Vito, "Mr. Leblanc told me that for 25 years he had been seeking a man in whom he could have confidence to do a job with his instruments in America." Without any further discussion, he told Pascucci that his search had reached its end and asked him if he would like to start a company for them in America. In this young GI, Mr. Leblanc found a man with the skill, the energy and the deep love for music necessary to head a Leblanc firm in the United States.

"Though I had no experience in running a company," Pascucci explains, "they felt I had the curiosity and the integrity, and they felt that if I could accept their methods and teachings, I was the man they wanted. Needless to say, I was extremely honored and touched that they believed in me that

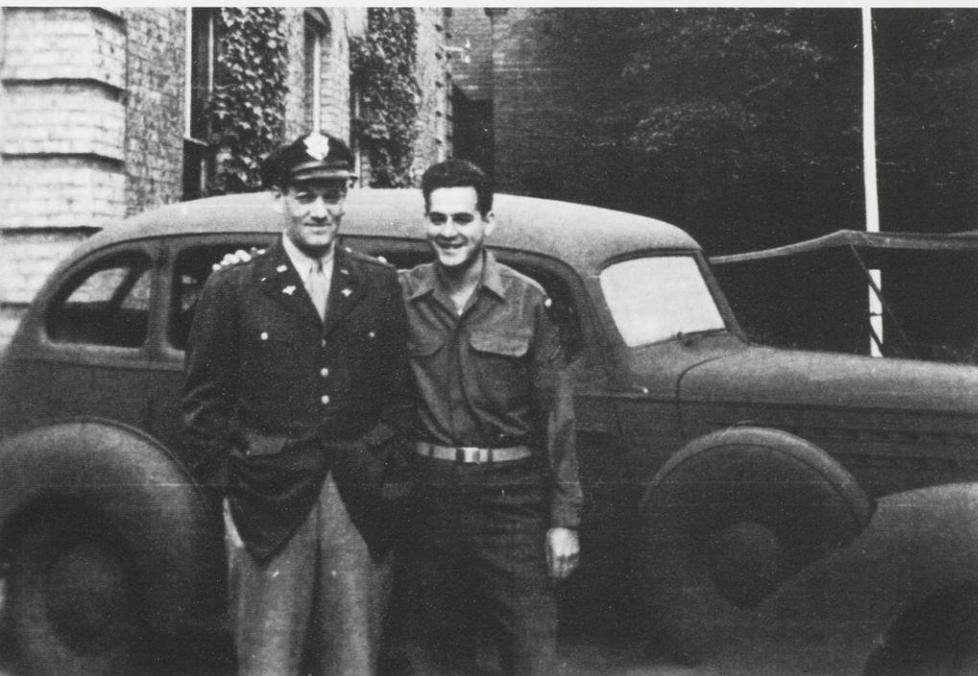
much, and I will be forever grateful for the opportunities they bestowed on me."

After receiving his army discharge in 1946, Vito Pascucci returned to Kenosha, where shortly after he received a cable from Leblanc asking that they meet in New York City. Léon Leblanc wanted Vito to set up operations in New York, but Pascucci campaigned for his hometown of Kenosha, a town with which he was already familiar, a town whose people he knew were honest, eager and dependable, imbued with a strong Midwestern work ethic.

As a show of confidence, Leblanc consented. The two returned together to Kenosha, where the first small service shop was set up with only Mari Bilotti and Ralph Zumpano, Sr., as helpers—both of whom are still employed by the company. Léon Leblanc was well aware of Pascucci's youth and limited resources, and he was willing to grow slowly, financing the partnership to the limit that the French government would permit.

A shop for the purpose of disassembling, climatizing and reassembling wood instruments was set up as part of the new firm. After shipment to America by sea, the wood was allowed to stabilize under the new atmospheric conditions, and the instruments were restored to original factory specifications, reassembled, adjusted, thor-

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Major Glenn Miller and Vito Pascucci at an American base in England.

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oroughly tested and given a complete final inspection.

Thus the music dealer was assured that wood clarinets would be delivered in perfect playing condition. Discriminating clarinetists were assured that every instrument would be musically as well as mechanically correct. And band directors were assured that the instruments their students played would possess a harmonious timbre, have correct intonation and be free of mechanical deficiencies.

Vito Pascucci worked at the bench by day, wrote letters to retailers and distributors by night and saw his business off to a successful if modest start. Within a year's time, the new Leblanc firm was able to hire additional office and factory personnel. Production increased steadily and sales began to boom. A retail dealer network was established and the demand for Leblanc, Noblet and Normandy instruments continued to increase.

Soon, in the 1950s, due to an ever-growing school market, demand for Leblanc instruments in the United States was far greater than the French concern could meet, so Vito proposed a U.S. manufacturing base to produce plastic-bodied clarinets. The French associates agreed, but with the condition that these instruments have playing characteristics, intonation and keywork quality equal to that of their wood counterparts.

The Vito line, comprising a range



Around 1953, Vito poses with employees outside the Kenosha facility. From left (back row): Vito, Dick Hammond, John Plovovich, Bob Hampel, Ray Forgianni, Louie Maracini, Ed Puras, Ralph Zumpano, Don McCathren, Ernie Moore; (front) Elmer Aiello, Pat Byrnes, Frank Sacco, Angelo Rizzo, Dan Henkin, Gil Marschner, Kim Renwood.

from soprano to contrabass, was thus born, thrusting Leblanc to the forefront of the student clarinet market. In 1951, construction of Leblanc's Kenosha factory was undertaken and completed, a plant that to this day provides a model for the industry in its modern equipment, efficient operation and attractive appearance. Ever-increasing production called for the factory's subsequent expansion in 1953, 1960 and 1966.

Pascucci and his expert staff developed innovative methods that brought the production of plastic-bodied instruments to then unknown levels of accuracy and consistency. Rough-cut body blanks of a specially formulated plastic called Resotone were crafted into clarinets with the same care that wood instruments were afforded, rather than merely injection-molding the finished clarinet joints as some other manufacturers were doing at the time.

Unique numerically controlled precision boring machines simultaneously bored out the plastic body blanks, drilled tone holes and the holes for keyposts. Developed in Leblanc's own machine shop, these drilling machines enhanced consistency and efficiency manyfold. If all their operations were to be performed separately,

it would have been impossible to achieve Leblanc's legendary consistency and precision in construction.

In the following years, the company was to enter a period of even greater expansion.

Decades of growth. In 1964, it acquired the Frank Holton Company, located in Elkhorn, Wisconsin, one of America's most prestigious brass-instrument manufacturers. With this acquisition, Leblanc not only gained the revered Holton name, but procured the priceless experience of the craftsmen who had worked there many years prior. To Holton, Pascucci endowed the expertise he had developed at his Kenosha factory, modernizing the Holton plant and instituting his efficient, consistent production methods.

Holton's famed Collegiate line made Leblanc a major presence in the school brasswind market, and this student-priced line then and still does set the school standard. With the acquisition, Leblanc also gained a friend in Philip Farkas, one of the world's leading hornists and teachers. The line of instruments to which the late Mr. Farkas still lends his name comprises the world's bestselling student and professional French horns.

At right: Tester Jimmy Cesario puts a run of Vito Dazzler clarinets through their paces. Every instrument made by Leblanc is thoroughly play-tested, while some other manufacturers test only samples from the assembly line. It's a telling point of Leblanc's corporate structure that testers report directly to the company chairman.



The Frank Holton Company was founded in Chicago in 1898. A new facility (above) was built in Elkhorn, Wisconsin, by that city in 1917. The brass instrument company was acquired by Leblanc in 1964.

The Martin Band Instrument Company was acquired by Leblanc in 1971 from the Wurlitzer company and was relocated to Kenosha from Elkhart, Indiana. Martin, founded in Chicago, would have been America's oldest continuously operating band-instrument manufacturer if not for the Great Chicago Fire. The famous Committee trumpet, favored by Wallace Roney and other top jazz artists, and the innovative Urbie Green trombone both carry the legendary Martin name, made in a progressive, modern plant.

In 1968, Leblanc acquired the Woodwind Company, a respected manufacturer of clarinet and saxophone mouthpieces. Under the guidance of G. Leblanc Corporation, the Woodwind Company brand is widely recognized for the excellence of its manufacture and performance.

On January 1, 1981, Leblanc was granted the exclusive rights to market Yanagisawa artist saxophones in the United States and Canada. Considered the most technically advanced saxophones made, Yanagisawa instruments



Unity in Paris: On April 19, 1989, Vito Pascucci and Léon Leblanc signed the agreement that transferred control of the venerable French firm to American hands.

are played by some of the world's foremost saxophonists.

In April, 1989, Pascucci's service to the Leblanc company came full circle when he acquired majority interest in

the esteemed French firm and assumed responsibility for its management.

Because the Leblanc/Noblet firm has such distinguished and historical significance to the cultural life of

France, the transaction was initially opposed by the French Ministries of Industry and Culture. Léon Leblanc, however, would not entertain any solution to the perpetuation of his firm that did not involve his American partner, whom he considers his spiritual son. Approval for the transaction was finally granted at the Prime Minister's level, near the top of the French government hierarchy.

While this lengthy process was arduous and at times frustrating, it served to convince all concerned parties that the transaction was ultimately in the best interest of both companies, both nations—and musicians everywhere. When the transaction was finally completed, Vito was elected *président-directeur général* of Leblanc S.A., the French firm.

Just as Georges Leblanc passed along a tradition of instrument making from father to son, so too has Vito Pascucci. His son, Leon Pascucci, named after Léon Leblanc, now serves as president of the American company.

Vito's unique position in the music industry stems from his strong belief in the importance of music in the development of the individual. From his own experience,

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he knows that the youngster brought up with music is on the right road. As a healthy outlet for self-expression, and with its emphasis on teamwork and self-discipline, musical study can steer a child into a richer and happier life.

Industry-wide influence. Pascucci has had a strong influence on the present-day concert band. When G. Leblanc Corporation was founded, most school bands had given up using the alto clarinet because of the poor playing qualities of the old instruments and the lack of suitable mouthpieces, reeds and repair parts. Fluegelhorns were also nearly extinct.



Twenty-five years ago, Léon Leblanc brought to Kenosha and demonstrated his newly developed octo-contralto clarinet, among the largest, lowest members of the clarinet family he pioneered.

Convinced of the value and importance of these beautiful instruments, G. Leblanc Corporation conducted a campaign to popularize its new improved models of the alto clarinet and fluegelhorn and to promote the use of these instruments in the band. The present popularity of both instruments may be traced in large part to Vito's efforts, which are considered by many as having saved these instruments from extinction in this country.

The idea of the "balanced clarinet choir," both as a separate group and as the basic tonal center of the concert band, was also championed by Vito. Largely because of his efforts through the sponsorship of clinics, commissions of new music, and publishing of articles and books on the subject, a great movement took place among band directors, composers and arrangers to base the band's instrumentation and repertoire on the concept of the balanced clarinet choir.

Without G. Leblanc Corporation's manufacture of the harmony members of an affordable clarinet family that could be easily played by students, there could have been no balanced clarinet choir movement. There is no question that Vito's efforts to improve their playability helped standardize the use of the Bb contrabass clarinet, the Eb contra-alto clarinet, the bass and the alto clarinets, the basset horn and the Eb soprano clarinets in the concert band of today.

Vito was the first head of a major instrument manufacturing company to employ full-time educators in a department for education within the firm. It was first headed in 1950 by E.C. Moore, then in 1957 by Lucien Cailliet, former bass clarinetist of the Philadelphia Orchestra under Leopold Stokowski and a pioneer composer for the complete clarinet choir. In 1962, the esteemed educator James Neilson took over this post, which he held until his death in 1985.

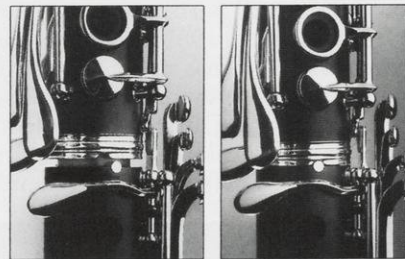
Under Vito's leadership, Leblanc was among the first to develop a marketing campaign based on the importance of music education to the child as opposed to campaigns simply intended to sell instruments. His program reflected a belief that parents do not only invest in an instrument, but also invest in a child's development when purchasing the instrument.

Vito's innovative ideas regarding the packaging of musical instruments and accessories have literally given a new

Positively evolutionary!

Revolutionary change is rare in the development of traditional instruments, which have evolved over centuries. G. Leblanc Corporation has followed a course set by its cofounder and chairman, Vito Pascucci, pursuing constant refinement and improvement. Considered individually, these advances may seem small, but collectively—over time—they have resulted in much higher standards of instrument design and manufacture, benefiting students and professionals alike.

This principle is demonstrated by one of Vito's more recent innovations, which is stunningly simple



while totally effective. Dubbed PRAG (for Positive Radial-Alignment Guide), it is a post-in-notch device that teaches young clarinetists to perfectly align the upper and lower joints of their instruments. PRAG is protected by U.S. Patent No. 5,000,072.

look to the music industry. He determined not only that the player should have an instrument perfect in every respect, but that he should have a case for it that would be as attractive and durable as fine luggage.

He therefore contracted the country's foremost luggage manufacturers to design and construct beautiful cases in a wide variety of colors, shapes and materials, eventually establishing Leblanc's own Case Company. He has also pioneered the packaging of music accessories in unique and practical point-of-purchase displays.

Vito is personally responsible for a number of inventions designed to improve musical instruments. He is constantly seeking to improve the quality of all musical instruments and, in particular, those intended for the beginning player. He has always believed that musical instruments for beginners should be made so that they are easy

to play in tune and give the student every possible opportunity to enjoy the adventure of making music without having to overcome the mechanical or acoustical deficiencies.

Both the company and Pascucci have received many honors and awards recognizing the excellence of their products, their service to music and their reputation as a progressive employer and good corporate citizen.

Among the highlights of Pascucci's honors are: past chairman of the American Music Conference; six terms as president of the National Association of Band Instrument Manufacturers; Hall of Fame, American Music Conference (1980); Edwin Franko Goldman Memorial Citation, the highest award of the American Bandmasters Association (1982); Air Force Commendation

Medal for his morale-building efforts during World War II (1986); Hall of Fame, National Association of Music Merchants (1988); Music Industry Award for outstanding service and support of music education from the Wisconsin Music Educators Conference (1988); honorary doctoral degrees from Florida A&M University (1988), Wartburg College (1995) and University of South Dakota (1995).

The image that Vito chose for Leblanc was one of elegance, refinement and attention to detail. This is reflected in an unwritten but firm policy that the company must always put its "best foot forward," whether in its advertising, the maintenance of its facilities or the appearance of its family of workers. Vito strives for no less in his own life, as evidenced by his frequent inclusion on the list of "Ten Best-

Dressed Men" published by the International Association of Custom Tailors and Designers.

Now, with seven brands of woodwinds, brass and accessories, Leblanc is justly proud of its position as America's oldest and largest continuously owned, privately held full-line wind-instrument maker, offering more choices for professionals and students alike than any other manufacturer.

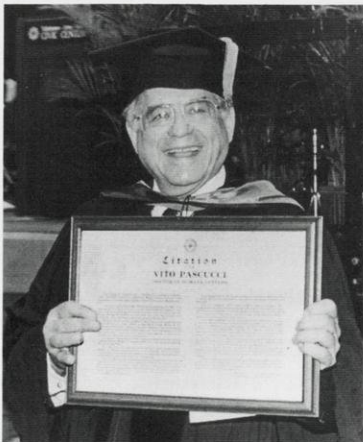
A look behind, a look ahead. Under Pascucci's leadership, the American company has consistently been an innovator in instrument design, manufacturing technique, modern marketing programs and award-winning national advertising campaigns.

Even more important, no other manufacturer can offer as wide a selection of brass and woodwind instruments crafted with the same integrity and dedication to excellence as does Leblanc. Through all stages of the company's growth, advancement and

A small sample of the many honors received by Vito Pascucci over the years, recognizing his and Leblanc's contributions to the music industry.



Above: The Association of Wisconsin Symphony Orchestras bestows its "Outstanding Service to Music" award in 1993, presented by Pat Rodgers, general manager, Fox Valley Symphony, and James M. Bankhead, executive director, Green Bay Symphony.



At left: Florida A&M University awards the honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters, 1988. Other doctorates have been awarded by Wartburg College and the University of South Dakota.

Below: Major Charles D. Metcalf awards an Air Force Commendation Medal, citing Pascucci's morale-building efforts during World War II with the Glenn Miller Band.



Long ago, Georges Leblanc established the basic tenets of integrity, musicianship and creativity for his firms. At G. Leblanc Corporation, these principles still live on.

acquisitions, it has never lost sight of the principles on which it was founded. Long ago, Georges Leblanc established the basic tenets of integrity, musicianship and creativity for his firms to live by. At G. Leblanc Corporation, these principles still live on, propelling the company into the next 50 years of its history—and beyond.

Reflecting on the contributions that have been made by Leblanc to the music industry and to the culture at large, Vito Pascucci said recently, "My greatest pride rests in having built an organization of people who care. From the plants, to the offices, to the salesmen in the field, our employees truly care about producing and delivering instruments that are mechanically and acoustically correct. Without our people, nothing could have been accomplished." □

HOLLYWOOD OPUS

A movie works its magic in hailing the heroics of dedicated music teachers

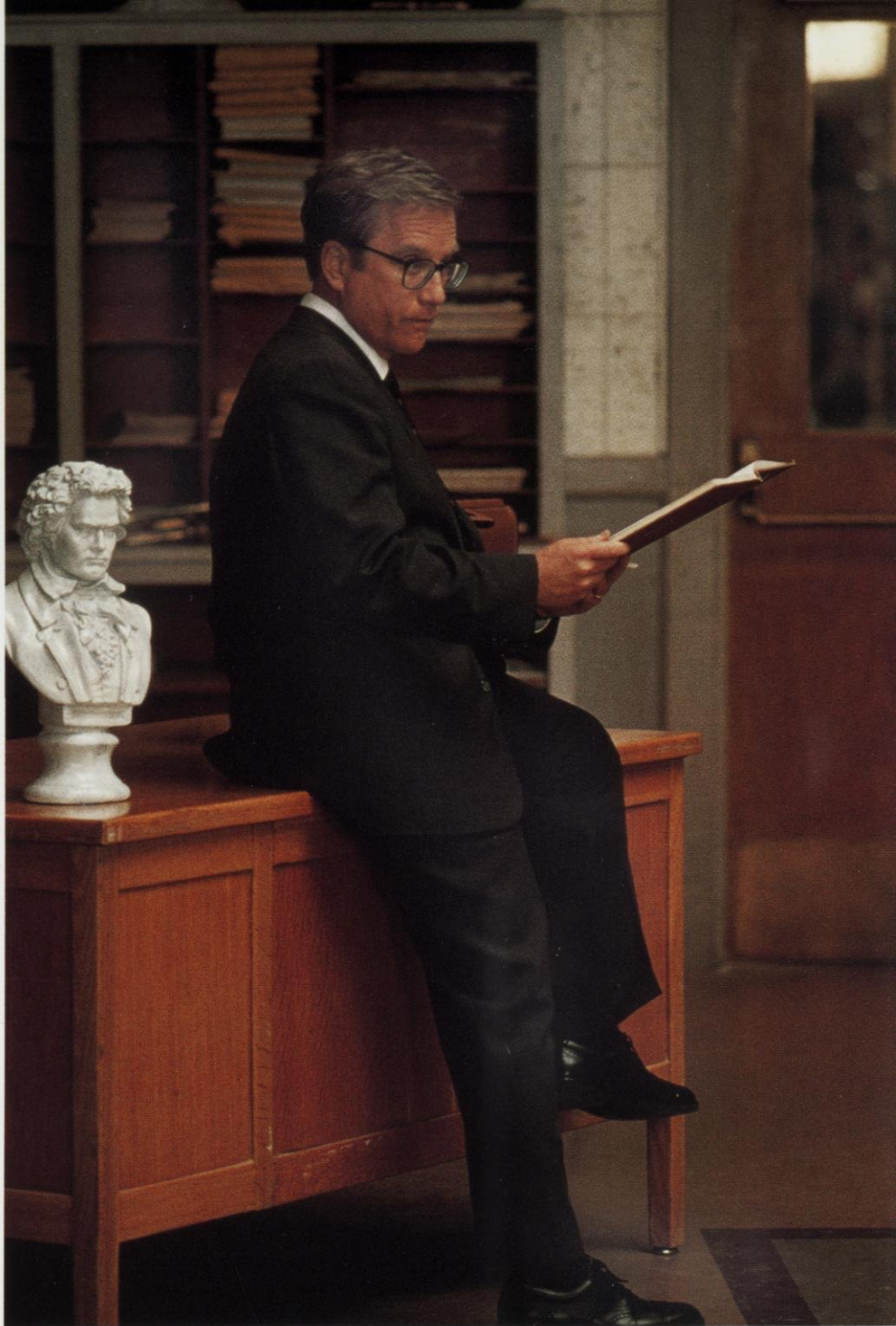
by Michael Gudbaur
Contributing Editor

An exciting new impetus for raising public awareness of the importance of school music has come from an unlikely but welcome source—Hollywood. An important film, released this past January, brings into sharp focus the enormous impact that a single teacher, a music teacher, can have on his students, an impact that extends beyond the classroom to his entire community.

That film, of course, is *Mr. Holland's Opus*, the motion picture that has created a sensation in the music field. One can hardly think of a better vehicle for promoting the industry's mission to increase awareness of and appreciation for the power of music education.

Mr. Holland's Opus, set between the years 1965 and 1995, chronicles the fictional but true-to-life story of Glenn Holland, played by Richard Dreyfuss. A busy professional musician, Holland accepts a "temporary" high school teaching position in order to save enough money to devote himself to his ultimate ambition—to compose a great American symphony.

As his family and responsibilities grow, his four-year teaching agenda is abandoned, and composing eventually takes a back seat to the needs of his students. Over the course of 30 years' triumphs and sacrifices, Holland comes to realize the great rewards of teaching, becoming a dedicated, passionate and beloved role model.



Teacher Glenn Holland: "You can cut the arts all you want, but sooner or later these kids won't have anything left to read or write about."

His students, in turn, are inspired by Holland's love of music, and more than a few students' lives are changed by the example he sets. Near the end of his career, Holland is forced to retire due to budget cuts in his school district, a plight that has been all too real for many music educators around the country. In the film's poignant finale, we see that Holland's career, just as those of all teachers who inspire their students, was anything but ordinary.

A highly entertaining film by any standard (featuring a powerful Oscar-

nominated performance by Dreyfuss), *Mr. Holland's Opus* also demonstrates that arts education as a means to improve our children's lives is not a luxury, but a necessity that mustn't be taken for granted. Though it "teaches," the film is not a cautionary tale, nor is its message played out heavy-handedly. It is, more than anything, a tribute to a music teacher's life and career and the positive, lasting impact he and his music make on the lives he touches.

Mr. Holland's Opus contains none of the ingredients of a typical box-

office smash. There was no pre-release merchandising bonanza, and it has no computer-enhanced special effects. On the surface, there is nothing extraordinary about the character of Mr. Holland. He doesn't practice martial arts or carry a machine gun, doesn't become a private detective or international spy when class is dismissed, and he doesn't rescue the school from terrorists. There is nothing in Mr. Holland's career that almost every other band director hasn't experienced.

Nonetheless, millions of moviegoers have connected with the heartfelt message of *Mr. Holland's Opus* and made this film a number-one box-office hit—perhaps because so many of the ticket buyers remember their own “Mr. Holland,” an inspirational teacher in their own lives. (When this story was written in late March, the film was still ranked among America's top ten.)

The impressive box-office receipts from *Mr. Holland's Opus* demonstrate that music education is for countless people a subject growing ever more worthy of consideration and action. The surge of interest created by this film can only have a positive effect when lawmakers and school administrators make their budget decisions—provided that they see the movie and understand its message.

The music industry was quick to harness the influence that this remarkable film provides. On January 9, the National Coalition for Music Education sponsored coast-to-coast premieres of *Mr. Holland's Opus* in 50 cities, inviting celebrities, community leaders, educators, parents and students. The premieres were intended as both a celebration and a reminder of the importance of music and arts education.

Concerned groups and individuals should take a cue from the Coalition and also use the film for grass-roots advocacy efforts to preserve music programs in their schools. The Coalition recommends organizing group showings of the film, inviting school board members, principals, educators, administrators, civic leaders and government representatives. Larry Linkin, Coalition partner and president of the National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM), emphasizes, “Local communities nationwide must take the responsibility for the fate of music education, to advocate quality programs that will shape the future of our children.”

John Mahlmann, executive director of the Music Educators National Con-

ference (MENC), also stresses the urgency of establishing local strongholds for defending school music. “Teachers need the support of our schools and the community. When that happens, the experience is wonderful. When it doesn't, our children sadly miss out.”

To further generate grass-roots support, regional chapters of the National Association of Recording Arts and Sciences (NARAS) are now awarding “Mr. Holland's Opus Awards” to music teachers with 25 years or more of experience who have made an impact on their students. Not only does this

*“For hundreds of years
it has been known that
teaching the arts along with
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rounded mind that Western
civilization and America
have been grounded on.”*

— Richard Dreyfuss

award give recognition to these dedicated educators, but it serves as a great platform for publicly demonstrating their influence on the outcome of children's lives.

A Mr. Holland's Opus Award was given to 35-year Chicago music teacher Delano O'Banion, resulting in a feature story in the *Chicago Tribune*. The film struck many familiar chords with O'Banion, who could attest to the authenticity of the film's issues. “I related to that movie a lot,” he said in the *Tribune* interview. “Especially when his [Holland's] wife said, ‘You care more for other people's children than you do your own.’ It was all I could do to keep from shedding a tear.”

In a subplot, the film tells of the strained relationship between Holland and his son, Coltrane. In an ironic twist, the son is born deaf, and Holland is frustrated and distanced by his inability to share his love of music with

the boy, the same love of music he shares every day with hundreds of students. The tension this creates negatively affects Col's progress at the high school for the deaf he attends.

In one of the film's most moving moments, Holland at last comes to grips with Col's physical challenges and makes the effort to make music tangible to him. Using sign language, visual effects and speaker vibration, Holland presents a special concert at his son's school, and the power of music renews the bond between father and son. Holland's troubled son is put back on the path to self-esteem and scholastic achievement, demonstrating that music can even break the bounds of physical disability to create new avenues to learning.

Dreyfuss himself is a passionate and articulate advocate for education that includes the arts. In a speech before a worldwide audience at the 38th annual Grammy Awards, he called attention to the urgent need for arts education: “For hundreds of years it has been known that teaching the arts along with history, math and biology helps to create the well-rounded mind that Western civilization and America have been grounded on. It is from [the] creativity and imagination [learned in the arts] that the solutions to our political and social problems will come. We need that well-rounded mind right now. Without it, we simply make more difficult the problems we face.”

As Mr. Holland himself points out while confronting the school board to defend his job, “You can cut the arts all you want, but sooner or later these kids won't have anything left to read or write about.”

If you are a member of the music industry, a music teacher, or simply a citizen concerned about the welfare of school-music programs, it is important to take advantage of the momentum of this film. As NARAS president Michael Greene so aptly states, “*Mr. Holland's Opus* reminds us that the time has come for all of us to make our voices heard to insure that music and arts education are restored to their proper place within our schools.” □

For more information and materials regarding how to start an arts education advocacy group in your community, call the National Coalition for Music Education at (800) 336-3768 or (800) 767-6266, or visit the Mr. Holland's Opus Web site at: <http://www.namm.com/namm/opus>.

GRACE NOTES

Diverse items of interest to friends of music from the world of Leblanc

Harvey Phillips, the tuba's most visible and widely hailed performer and its most active proponent, was honored as this year's recipient of the Edwin Franko Goldman Memorial Citation, the highest award of the American Bandmasters Association (ABA). (G. Leblanc chairman Vito Pascucci was honored with this same award in 1982.) At this year's ABA convention in San Antonio, Texas, Harvey premiered a specially commissioned work on his new namesake Holton TU330C Phillips tuba, receiving an overwhelming ovation. Congratulations, Harvey, on being recognized by this fine organization.



Aspiring composers are urged to sharpen their pencils as the November 1 deadline approaches for the 1996 Third Biennial National Band Association/Merrill Jones Memorial Young Composers Band Composition Contest. Anyone 30 years of age or younger (born on or after November 1, 1966) can submit a work for grade III/IV concert band under eight minutes in length. A prize of \$1000 is offered along with a performance at a national or regional music convention. For entry forms and information, write to Frank Wickes, Director of Bands, Louisiana State University, School of Music, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 70803. Good luck to all entrants!

Erratum: The first-prize winner of the 1995 Lewis Van Haney Philharmonic prize was Stephen Lange, not Keith Brown, as was mistakenly reported in the Winter 1996 issue of the Leblanc Bell. Keith Brown is Lange's teacher at Indiana University. Our apologies to both gentlemen for the error.



You ought to be in pictures! Through a winning bid at a charity auction, Leblanc president Leon Pascucci (*above*) won a walk-on appearance on the ABC-TV sitcom *Coach*. Pictured here with series star Shelley Fabares, Pascucci spent a day on the set filming two scenes for the episode entitled "Fantasy Camp." A lifelong fan of Ms. Fabares—known for her early work on *The Donna Reed Show*, her number-one record, "Johnny Angel," and as a spokesperson for the Alzheimer's Association—Leon also met series stars Jerry Van Dyke and Craig T. Nelson.

To the great sorrow of the music world, John Paynter, a master teacher and champion of wind music, died February 4, 1996. His musical expertise, wit and friendship will be sorely missed by his colleagues, his students and all who knew him. Born 1928 in Mineral Point, Wisconsin, Paynter began playing clarinet in the fifth grade. He received his college education at Northwestern University, serving as student manager and assistant conductor of the marching band. Glen Cliffe Bainum, Northwest-



John Paynter (1928–1996) on the NU practice field in 1988.

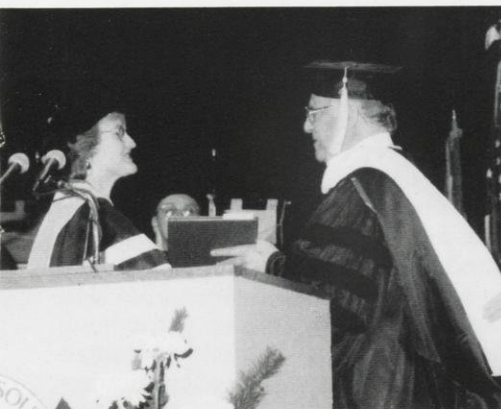
ern's band director, chose Paynter to succeed him in that post, where Paynter remained as band director and professor of conducting and composition for 44 years. He led the revival of community bands in the U.S. and contributed some 400 compositions and arrangements to the wind repertoire. Paynter served at least one term as president of

nearly every band-related organization, including the American Bandmasters Association and National Band Association. "He taught us about pride," said Frederick Miller, former Dean of Music at DePaul University and Paynter's friend of 40 years, "and he taught us about integrity—in our lives, our work and our art."



With a trombone fanfare, Jacques Gaudet and Gerhard Meinel (left and right, in photo at left) of Antoine Courtois brasswinds, presented Leblanc president Leon Pascucci with a specially made Courtois fluegelhorn in March at the Frankfurt Music Fair, commemorating Leblanc's 50th anniversary in America. Leblanc is exclusive North American distributor of Courtois brasswinds. The gold-plated fluegelhorn is hand-engraved with an Eiffel Tower and Uncle Sam, symbolizing the two companies' cross-continental friendship. The Slokar Trombone Quartet of Dresden, Germany, contributed to the impromptu pomp.

Leblanc chairman and cofounder Vito Pascucci has received an honorary doctor of humane letters degree from the University of South Dakota. Ceremonies took place during the school's 20th winter commencement exercises, held on Saturday, December 16, 1995, at Slagel Auditorium on the USD grounds in Vermillion. Pascucci was cited for his efforts to enhance the collection of the university's Shrine to Music Museum, of which Pascucci and G. Leblanc Corporation have been members for twelve years. The Shrine to Music Museum, a nonprofit organization supported in part by the State of South Dakota and by its private membership, houses one of the nation's most extensive collections of rare and early wind, stringed and keyboard instruments. Pascucci has previously received honorary degrees from Florida A&M University in Tallahassee, Florida, and from Wartburg College in Waverly, Iowa.



Vito Pascucci receives an honorary doctorate from University of South Dakota president Betty Turner Ashen.

In a January Chicago performance, septuagenarian jazz trumpeter Clark Terry introduced the audience to his new friend—a gleaming blue-lacquered model T3465 Martin Committee trumpet inscribed with his name and a “Happy 75th Birthday” message. The trumpet was presented last year to Mr. Terry in honor of his birthday by fellow Martin trumpeter Wallace Roney. Before the performance, Clark met Leblanc chief brasswind designer Larry Ramirez (pictured, right) and told him he hadn't played any other trumpet since. Still in peak form, Clark shows no signs of letup in his technique, creativity or enthusiasm. A passionate advocate of music education, he is an immensely popular and charismatic performer, delighting audiences not only with his trumpet, but also with his hilarious “mumbles” jazz vocals.



Colonel John R. Bourgeois, director of “The President's Own” United States Marine Band and music advisor to the White House, announced January 26 that he will retire after nearly 40 years as Marine Band Director. Bourgeois has the distinction of being the first musician in the Marine Corps to serve in every rank from private to colonel, receiving countless awards and honors. He will conduct his final concert as director of “The President's Own” in a change-of-command ceremony July 11 at DAR Constitution Hall. Thank you, Colonel, for four decades of distinguished and dedicated service to music and to the United States.



American Demographics magazine, the business world's consumer-trend bible, examined the musical instrument industry's recent boom in its March, 1996, cover story. It credited the upsurge in music-product spending on higher discretionary income, lower credit card interest rates and the rising number of school-aged children in their prime music-learning years. Music education received special focus, with the article citing scientific research that shows connections between music study and scholastic achievement and mentioning issues such as Goals 2000 and school-district budget cuts. It also pointed out that 63 percent of today's instrument-playing teens learned at school instead of private lessons, compared to only 38 percent of the total number of current and former players, indicating a growing dependence on school for music education. □

FAN MAIL

If a company is known by the company it keeps, Leblanc is among the best

As Consul Général of France in the Midwest, I am pleased to congratulate G. Leblanc Corporation on the occasion of its 50th anniversary. I am particularly proud to acknowledge the success of your company, which was created as a joint venture between two American and French partners, Vito Pascucci and Léon Leblanc, both equally dedicated to perfection in the manufacture of wind instruments.

I am certain that the coming decades will see a continued expansion of your reputed firm and of its important role in the industry.

Sincerely,
Gérard Dumont
Consul Général

If we had a key to the City of Kenosha, its keeper would most definitely be Vito Pascucci, chairman and chief executive officer of G. Leblanc Corporation.

Mr. Pascucci, one of Kenosha's own, with his talent, determination and entrepreneurial spirit, built Leblanc, the

nation's oldest and largest family-owned wind instrument maker. For 50 years, artists and students from around the world have played the finest wind instruments made in Kenosha by Leblanc. The thousands of musical notes played every day around the world by Leblanc instruments serve as testimonials to Leblanc's commitment to quality. That quality has been maintained and enhanced by the skilled craftsmanship exhibited by the men and women who have produced Leblanc instruments for 50 years. We are proud to have them working in our community, and we can't boast enough about "our" Leblanc instruments.

Leblanc's success has been our success, and the citizens of Kenosha recognize and appreciate the contribution Leblanc has made to our community over the last 50 years. It not only employs our people and brings notoriety to our community, but also extends its expertise to support the arts in Kenosha. The outstanding support Leblanc has given to efforts such as the development of the Sesqui-centennial Bandshell in Pennoyer Park and the growth of the Kenosha Symphony have not gone unnoticed. These are only two examples of Leblanc's connection to the fine arts in Kenosha, many of which have been led by Leon Pascucci, Leblanc president. Leon has proven to be as valuable an asset to Kenosha as his father, Vito.

Vito and Leon, as well as the rest of Leblanc's corporate family in Kenosha and around the world, have been a key part of Kenosha's growth. Mr. Pascucci's confidence in our community over the years has been sincerely appreciated. Leblanc and Kenosha have performed as a notable and harmonious duet for 50 years and intend on continuing this tradition for many years to come. Congratulations, Leblanc!

Sincerely yours,
City of Kenosha
John M. Antaramian
Mayor

Dear Vito,

I can't believe that a young fellow like you has been in business 50 years!

Those of us who inherit something have the highest regard for people like you who start something new and see it through to a solid success.

I enjoyed our years together on in-

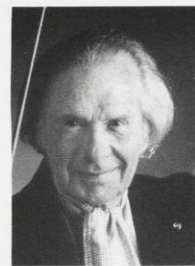
dustry affairs—a subject on which we did not always agree! But your devotion to excellence and sound manufacturing as well as pro-action is an example for all in our industry.

May you enjoy many more years.

Henry Steinway
Steinway & Sons

I was introduced to G. Leblanc Corporation when I sought its exhibit at the Philadelphia Music Educators National Conference (MENC) in April 1952, hoping for a demonstration of its E-flat and bass clarinets. I needed high-calibre instruments for the prospective players in the Eastman Wind Ensemble (E.W.E), which was still five months from being born! Demonstrations by Elmer Aiello and conversations with Kim Renwick, also working at the exhibit, answered all questions. As I was leaving, I gave Kim my last copy of a mimeographed handout to composers announcing the establishment of the E.W.E. in the coming fall.

I was at dinner with Bill Ludwig



when Kim Renwick interrupted to say that, having read my handout, he knew the president of his company, Mr. Vito Pascucci, would be very interested—would I please keep in touch with him.

With our new instruments, "in touch" had begun—they were played at the first rehearsal of the E.W.E. on September 20, 1952. The test pressing for our first Mercury record, *American Concert Band Masterpieces* had come, and I asked Kim to make an appointment with President Pascucci to play it for him.

That first visit to the plant in Kenosha and the enthusiastic response to our recording led Vito to say to Kim and me that a little pamphlet about the Wind Ensemble should be made for him to distribute to educators. Renwick produced Leblanc's high-quality advertisements. We sat at his desk while he asked questions, and I spat out sentences for the history of the wind band and its instruments. I came to the Gilmore Band when Kim suddenly burst out, "We've got a book here!" In Pascucci's office, he repeated his statement, and after a few minutes of discussion, Vito turned to me and said, "I'm an instrument maker, not a publisher, but if you'll write, I'll publish." Those one-liners I spat out be-

came chapter headings for my book, *Time and the Winds*, finished September 12, 1953, published August 1, 1954. Shortly after, Vito came to Rochester to present the manuscript to the Sibley Music Library and a Xerox copy to me.

Next came the LP introduction of Leblanc's B-flat contrabass clarinet at the opening of Owen Reed's *La Fiesta Mexicana*, our third Mercury record with the instrument's exposed, extended and impressive solo—and there was our 1958 recording of Mozart's *Serenade No. 10 in B-flat* with Leblanc's basset horns and added contrabass clarinet.

And so, happiest 50th anniversary greetings to you, Vito, with thanks for all you have always done for our professions, and continued great success and future to you, Leon, and to the entire Leblanc family.

With love,
Frederick Fennell
Conductor, author

Dear Dr. Pascucci,

Congratulations and felicitations on the 50th anniversary of G. Leblanc Corporation in America. Your journey from humble beginnings in assembling Leblanc instruments from France to chairman and CEO of G. Leblanc Corporation was miraculous.

You are to be highly commended for turning your original shop into a seven-brand corporation employing over 500 people and serving a world market from two continents.

As recipient of honorary doctorate degrees from Florida A&M University, Wartburg College and the University of South Dakota, and as recipient of numerous other awards and honors, Dr. Pascucci has to be recognized for his contribution to music education and the band programs of America. Leblanc instruments are incomparable, truly world-class, standing at the top of the industry. Your quest for perfection and

success embodied goals, ambition, commitment, perseverance, determination, hard work, competence, wisdom, enthusiasm, talent, energy and leadership.

It is coincidental that 1996 represents my own golden anniversary—50 years of service as band director at Florida A&M University, Tallahassee, Florida.

Vito, in summary, your career is a testament to the free-enterprise system

in the United States of America. Best wishes and best personal regards.

Sincerely,
Florida A&M Univ.
Dept. of Music
William P. Foster
Chairman

In commemorating the 50th anniversary of G. Leblanc Corporation, the worldwide music-products industry celebrates the distinguished life and character of an extraordinary person, Vito Pascucci, its founder and chairman.

Vito is truly an industry icon—an innovative entrepreneur, visionary leader and tireless advocate for music in our nation's schools. His selfless dedication to the betterment of the industry has elevated not only the band-instrument segment, but the wider global community of music product manufacturers and retailers. His service to the National Association of Band Instrument Manufacturers and the American Music Conference in particular, has defined what it means to be committed to ideals larger than one's self interests.

During the past half-century, Vito's most valuable trademarks have been his own personal work ethic, his progressive business acumen and his ability to mold and lead a team that strives for excellence in all endeavors. His bold, progressive attitudes serve as the bedrock for an enterprise that today is recognized around the world for its uncompromising quality, technological sophistication and its integrity.

Those fortunate to be close to him over the years—in my case more than 30 years—have experienced his unwavering loyalty, the tremendous generosity of spirit and the enduring depth of his friendship. With respect to his engaging style and charm—and above all, his class—there is no equal in our industry. He is an American original.

NAMM is pleased to join the entire global music products industry in saluting Vito Pascucci and the Leblanc team in achieving this important milestone. We extend our best wishes during this, your 50th anniversary year.

With kindest personal regards from the National Association of Music Merchants,

Larry R. Linkin
President, CEO



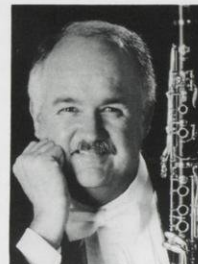
Greetings also from some of the many artists who have chosen Leblanc

Larry Combs

Principal Clarinetist, Chicago Symphony Orchestra
Leblanc France 1190S Opus clarinet

Counted among the most talented and respected clarinetists in the world,

Larry Combs is known primarily for his sensitivity as an orchestral performer with the famed Chicago Symphony Orchestra. He is also a prolific soloist and chamber performer, concertizing regularly with fellow CSO members known as the Chicago Chamber Musicians. Larry was among the first professional musicians to "make the switch" to Leblanc's flagship model Opus clarinet when the line was introduced in 1991. His namesake mouthpiece, made by the Woodwind Company, enjoys great popularity among his peers. Larry remains an active clinician for Leblanc, traveling to clinics and workshops when his busy schedule allows.



I am delighted to add my voice to the many who heartily congratulate Vito Pascucci and G. Leblanc Corporation on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of its American founding.

I have personally known Vito since I was a high school student in South Charleston, West Virginia, and purchased my first Leblanc clarinets from our local music store, Gorby's Music.

I have always been aware of Vito's and Leblanc's commitment to quality and refinement throughout all of their lines of products, from student instruments through those intended for artist professionals, and have been particularly excited by developments made possible by the acquisition of the French Leblanc company.

Vito's commitment to quality and his sensitivity to the needs of musicians and teachers at every level have resulted in Leblanc having become the leading provider of the needs of those in my field.

We all look forward to the next exciting 50 years of quality and progress at Leblanc. Felicitations, Vito!

Sincerely,
Larry Combs

more on page 18

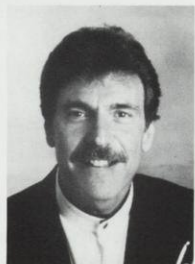
Eddie Daniels

Superstar jazz clarinetist
Leblanc France 1189 Concerto clarinet

As the world's foremost purveyor of modern jazz clarinet, Eddie Daniels can be held personally accountable for elevating the instrument to a status in jazz not seen since the heyday of Benny Goodman. Eddie took up clarinet at age 13 and credits music as his inroad to self-esteem and achievement. After years as a top-notch studio freelancer, Eddie has forsaken the lucrative session scene and now concentrates on his career as a clarinet soloist, occasionally playing his tenor saxophone when the muse beckons. He plays the Leblanc France Concerto model clarinet exclusively. Eddie records regularly and performs around the world, traveling to points abroad from his home in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

I have known Vito Pascucci for approximately 25 years, and the one word I can unhesitatingly use to describe him is "passionate." Passionate about music, education and especially passionate about the quality of "his" instruments—in my case, the clarinet.

This quality is one that I admire and respect and especially understand since I, as a musician, am also passionate about music education and the great quality of the Leblanc clarinet.



Just as an aside, I just realized that I started playing Leblanc at age 13, a mere 40 years ago. Hence, I have a particular warmth in my heart for this man and his wonderful company!

So, to Vito, a self-made man who built his company into the great success that it is, I wish you the best on your 50th anniversary.

With love,
Eddie Daniels

Maynard Ferguson

Stratospheric trumpet legend
Holton ST306 MF trumpet, ST303 Firebird, TR395 Superbone

With a relationship dating to 1972, Maynard Ferguson is one of Holton and Leblanc's oldest friends. A child prodigy, Ferguson led his own bands by age 15 and achieved legend status in the early 1950s as Stan Kenton's wunderkind high-note specialist. Maynard interrupted a career as a successful band leader for a sojourn in the

late 1960s to England and then to India. He burst back on the American music scene in 1972 with a contemporary sound, a young new band and seeking a new trumpet. Together, Holton engineers and Maynard turned his vision of the perfect horn into the Holton model ST306 MF trumpet. He went on to co-create with Holton an entire series of distinctive namesake instruments. At 67 years old, Maynard still puts on jazzdom's most energetic show, maintaining a touring schedule that keeps him on the road most of the year.



Dear Vito,

Congratulations on your 50th anniversary. You certainly deserve all the wonderful things that are happening right now. Recalling my own personal experiences with you, I would like to make it publicly known how wonderful you have been throughout our long association. Vito, our many years of association have been happy ones, and you have always been such a help to me with the teaching projects that I have been involved with in India. I also want to mention that I am sure I will be with you for the next 50 years, because you really *do* know all the best Italian restaurants.

My career has been going well, particularly for the past ten years, and it seems to be escalating with appearances on network television. I am hoping to become an incredible success because, Vito, it is the only way that I can afford your tailor.

Just one more thing: In our future association, it is very important that I get to hear you play the trumpet.

Love,
Maynard
P.S. My wife loves you too.

Pete Fountain

The King of Dixieland
Leblanc France "Pete Fountain" clarinet

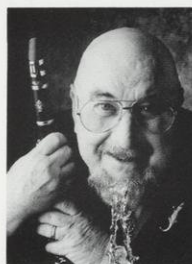
Mention the words "clarinet" and "New Orleans" in the same sentence, and the image you conjure is that of Pete Fountain, the cherubic dean of Dixieland and Leblanc endorser for almost 40 years. As a "skinny kid with bad lungs," Pete took up clarinet on advice of a physician, but his interest fast grew beyond the instrument's therapeutic benefits. By his mid-teens, Pete had become a regular in the Big

Easy's jazz clubs, and his name was being mentioned with those of clarinet legends like Irving Fazola, his mentor and idol. Later, two seasons on Lawrence Welk's television show catapulted Pete into the national spotlight. Over 50 subsequent appearances on the *Tonight Show* have kept Pete's face familiar as an American icon. Pete still performs nightly on his Leblanc France clarinet to packed houses at his own club in New Orleans.

To all my friends at G. Leblanc:

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate G. Leblanc Corporation on the 50th anniversary of its American founding and to personally thank its chairman, my good friend, Vito Pascucci, for all he has

done and will continue to do for the music industry.



My association with Leblanc began in 1958 during my tenure with the Lawrence Welk TV program. During that year, a very articulate and persistent Vito convinced me to change instruments from the clarinet I was playing to the Leblanc Symphonie model. He was able to make this change because I was so impressed with his knowledge of the clarinet and his concern for what I needed—to be the best musician I could be.

From that initial meeting evolved Vito's creation of the Pete Fountain Leblanc clarinet. Through Vito's knowledge of the relationship between a musician and his instrument, he designed the Pete Fountain model with a larger bore that enables me to capture that "fat" sound.

I feel that the success of G. Leblanc Corporation has been based on the genuine values of the Pascucci family, Vito and Leon. Success will undoubtedly continue for another 50 years under the leadership of Leon.

I will always be grateful for my association with Leblanc, but more important, for the genuine friendship that has developed with my "brother" Vito and the Pascucci family. I remain,

Musically yours,
Pete Fountain

Urbie Green

The trombonist's trombonist
Martin 4501 "Urbie Green" tenor trombone

Urbie exploded onto the jazz scene in the early '50s as star soloist of Woody

Herman's band, and he fast became known as the most versatile trombonist in jazz. Born in Mobile, Alabama, Urban Clifford Green began playing at age 12 on a trombone inherited from his two older brothers. He enlisted in the big-band ranks at age 17 and rose swiftly to Herman's top-ranked band. He later set up residence in New York and began a successful freelance and studio career, appearing and recording with such industry giants as Frank Sinatra and Barbra Streisand. The modest and soft-spoken trombone legend continues to be much in demand, traveling to engagements around the world from his home in Delaware Water Gap, Pennsylvania.

Cheers to G. Leblanc Corporation for your first 50 years of excellence in manufacturing musical instruments.

It was an exciting time for me in the early days of the development of my Martin TR4501 trombone. My friend, Sandy Sandberg, then a representative

of the company, contacted me about producing an "Urbie Green" model trombone. He arranged a trip to Kenosha, where I met Vito Pascucci. Vito was very receptive to any ideas I had about the design of this new trombone.



This was the beginning of a series of visits to Kenosha. There, I was fortunate to work closely with master craftsman Joe Gillespie. My visits to Kenosha continued until the final product was ready. What a gratifying feeling it was for me to see my vision of an ideal trombone become a reality. My TR4501 and I are still together after several trips around the globe.

Best wishes to Leblanc for continued success in the next 50 years, and thank you for the trombone that I still enjoy playing today.

Sincerely,
Urbie Green

Howard Klug

The complete clarinetist
Leblanc France 1190S Opus clarinet

Howard Klug's breadth of experience in all areas of music, from teaching to performing, qualify him as one of the country's most well-rounded clarinetists. He is currently professor of clarinet and chairman of the woodwind department at the Indiana University School of Music. As a performer,

Howard is involved with a number of orchestras and chamber groups, including Chicago's Grant Park Symphony, the Chicago Symphony, the Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra, and the U.S. Air Force Band and Symphony Orchestra. In addition, Mr. Klug has written dozens of articles on clarinet pedagogy for *The Clarinet*, official publication of the International Clarinet Association, which he served as president from 1992 through 1994.

Congratulations to G. Leblanc Corporation on this great 50-year milestone. The clarinet world has much to be thankful for due to Vito Pascucci's acquisition of the parent Leblanc company in France in 1989. For the first time, clarinets specifically designed by and for American clarinetists have been created, and their impact on the industry continues to grow. As a result of the energy and vision with which the company decided to reinvent its lines of clarinets and accessories in the last few years, we have been given competitive products to please the consumer and challenge the rest of the industry.



In this era of diminished risk-taking, I applaud Vito and Leon Pascucci and the rest of the Leblanc family for their great contributions to our art. The American clarinetist's simple desire to make music with more responsive, flexible equipment has finally been addressed, and the willingness of those in Kenosha to listen to our requests has been refreshing.

With the long history of the original French company, Ets. D. Noblet has a distinguished heritage. Vito Pascucci's efforts to alter the scope and direction of the modern G. Leblanc Corporation has been appreciated by musicians and teachers worldwide. I congratulate the Leblanc family on the first 50 years of its dynamic company and I look forward to our continuing friendship in the future.

With all best wishes,
Howard Klug

Ethel Merker

Holton's feisty diva of the horn
Holton H175 Merker-Matic French horn

A 50-year career has led Ethel Merker to realms not experienced by many other hornists of her generation, including stints as assistant horn to Phil

Farkas with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, to Motown recording sessions with the Jackson Five—and everything in between. Born and raised in Chicago, Ethel received a full scholarship to the Northwestern University School of Music, carrying a full course load while holding down first chair of the NBC broadcast orchestra, the job that launched her career. A close friend of Farkas, she accompanied him on many of his trips to the Holton factory to act as impartial judge of his French-horn prototypes. The experience came in handy years later, in 1995, when she co-designed her own namesake horn, the remarkable "Merker-Matic." Today, Ethel's main focus is on teaching, bestowing on students her remarkable breadth of experience. She still records, performs and conducts chamber and brass ensembles.

Believe it or not, Vito Pascucci and I go back almost 50 years. In the late 1940s, I was rehearsing with the NBC Radio Orchestra in Chicago—my new gig at the time—when Vito and Léon Leblanc stopped by the studio with some new woodwinds for the guys. Since I was the only woman in the crowd packing a French horn, Vito took notice. He said something like, "One day we'll be making a horn for you." I don't recall if I figured that it was a throwaway line for the only lady in the band or a promise for the future. Today it's clear it was a promise for the



future. It said a lot about his vision, his genius and his drive to build horns that drew on the ideas and experience of the artists who played them. Vito Pascucci has passion that goes beyond

music and business and directly to capturing the soul of the sound through innovative ideas and engineering.

Over the years, I've spent many hours with Vito, his designers and engineers, often in the company of great French horn players like Philip Farkas and Barry Tuckwell, all contributing our thoughts to the development of new products. They are times filled with warmth, humor, the push-and-pull of making a product better, and always the presence of Vito's passion for making only the best musical instruments.

I love and admire this man for his commitment to music of all kinds and

continued on page 20

continued from page 19

his relentless pursuit of creating the tools for musicians to make the greatest music possible. Vito, we love and admire you.

Love,
Ethel

Ricardo Morales

Principal clarinetist, New York Metropolitan Opera Orchestra

Leblanc France 1190S Opus clarinet

Ricardo Morales, 24-year-old clarinet phenomenon, holds the principal clarinet position in the New York Metropolitan Opera Orchestra. Born in Puerto Rico, Ricardo later studied with Anton Weinburg at Indiana University and Ron de Kant at Cincinnati Conservatory. His masterful technique and precocious sense of musicality won him the principal clarinet chair in the Florida Symphony Orchestra at age 18. In Orlando, he was first introduced to the Opus, flagship of the Leblanc France clarinet line, and he was won over by its ease of playing and dark, woody tone. In the spring of 1993, Ricardo won his current position at the Metropolitan Opera, beating out more than 300 applicants from around the world. In addition to his duties at the Met, Ricardo teaches at the Manhattan School of Music and performs acclaimed solo recitals.

Dear Vito,

Congratulations on the 50th anniversary of Leblanc's American founding. I am very happy to be able to share this milestone accomplishment with you, and I am certain that your legacy will continue. The reason I know this is because since the day we met, I have been impressed by your sincere love of music and by your clear understanding of the importance of having a world-class clarinet in order to reach high artistic goals.

Also I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your help and support during the developing stages of my career, the willingness to help emerging artists and your never-ending striving and open-mindedness toward improving and developing instruments. It is reassuring to know that there are people like you always working for the betterment of music.

Sincerely,
Ricardo Morales



Harvey Phillips

Paganini of the tuba

Holton model TU330C Phillips tuba

Unanimously hailed as the world's preeminent master of the tuba, Harvey Phillips has done more than anyone to raise the performance level of—and respect for—the lowest-pitched member of the brass family. Born in rural Missouri, Harvey held jobs with the King Brothers Circus and the Ringling Brothers Circus Band. A scholarship to Juilliard School of Music took him to New York, where he became a busy first-call freelancer. He eventually accepted a faculty position at Indiana University, from which he retired as Distinguished Professor Emeritus in 1994. Today, his attention is focused on his namesake Holton tuba.

Dear Vito,

One-half century of success and service to the music industry, music education and music performance is cause for gala celebrations.

It is appropriate that all who have benefited from your vision and corporate accomplishments take pride and share in these celebrations. It is proper and appropriate that

we congratulate you for your enormous achievements. At the same time, we cannot help but ponder what future benefits to music and musicians will be derived from your continuing vision, high standards and creative leadership. The anticipated future will no doubt be just as exciting as the well-documented past 50 years.

It is a privilege to work with you and the loyal team of experts you have assembled. Friendships that develop from these close collaborations enhance our personal and professional lives immeasurably.

Congratulations on the 50th anniversary of the American founding of G. Leblanc Corporation!

Sincerely,
Harvey G. Phillips

Barry Tuckwell

Virtuoso soloist of the French horn
Holton H104 Tuckwell French horn

"One of the finest horn players who ever lived," raved the *New Yorker*. Its writer was speaking, of course, of Barry Tuckwell. Born in Melbourne, Australia, Barry took up the horn at 13 and moved to London at age 21. He won

the solo position with the London Symphony in 1955, where he remained for 13 years before embarking on his solo career. Barry teamed with Holton in 1988 to create the incredible model H104 Tuckwell French horn, satisfying Tuckwell's search for a single instrument that would allow him to express all the hues of his musical palette. A recipient the Order of the British Empire for his services to music, and first president of the International Horn Society, Barry has recorded all of the major repertoire and commissioned many new works, contributing to the pedagogy with his own book, *Playing the Horn*. Barry has also distinguished himself as a conductor, leading orchestras in Europe and the U.S.

My introduction to Holton horns was at the First Annual Horn Workshop in Tallahassee, Florida, in 1971. Ted Kexel, a most likeable and persuasive man, made me aware of the standard of excellence that is the distinguishing hallmark of G. Leblanc Corporation.

The H180 Farkas model horn was soon to be produced, and in 1972 I visited the Holton factory in Elkhorn, Wisconsin, to try, test and have for my very own one of these new horns. For several days I played on perhaps a dozen horns until I selected the horn that was to be my constant companion for many years.

Since that time, I have visited the factory on countless occasions to discuss ways to fine-tune Holton horns for the professional player, the students and many amateurs who have benefited from the foresight of Vito Pascucci and Philip Farkas.

In recent years, I have become more actively involved, and this has resulted in the H104 Tuckwell model. At

all times, we have worked together to produce the best-quality instruments. It is the pursuit of excellence, which is what Vito Pascucci represents, that has resulted in the continuing success of

the whole corporation.

It has always impressed me that Vito Pascucci is prepared to listen to what the players feel about the instruments he manufactures. He is a remarkable man, and I am sure his integrity will inspire G. Leblanc Corporation for the next 50 years and beyond.

Barry Tuckwell □



NAMM REVIEW

Industry salutes Leblanc anniversary at yearly convention in Anaheim

The National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) held its winter convention in Anaheim, California, in late January, drawing more than 55,000 visitors to more than 1000 exhibits, shattering all previous records.

Leblanc seized the occasion to launch the celebration of its 50th-anniversary year, mounting a gold-themed convention exhibit and unveiling a new ad campaign developed to commemorate Leblanc's American founding.



Larry Linkin (right) presents NAMM's recognition to Vito and Leon Pascucci.

On the Saturday evening of the convention, Leblanc hosted a six-course French dinner for some 200 of its top dealers and distributors at La Vie en Rose restaurant, an event recognized by *Musical Merchandise Review* for "Best Hospitality" in its annual Best & Worst of Show Awards. At the dinner, NAMM president Larry Linkin made a surprise presentation of a framed congratulatory document, hand-lettered in ornate calligraphy. The document, which is now displayed on

an easel in the lobby of Leblanc's Kenosha headquarters, reads:

In recognition.

NAMM is proud to join the worldwide music products industry in saluting Vito Pascucci upon the 50th anniversary of the G. Leblanc Corporation. Through his dedication and sacrifice, unwavering commitment to excellence and personal integrity, Leblanc has become a market leader in the international music products

industry, achieving deserved recognition for fair business practices and uncompromising quality. □

At left: Gleaming instruments, fresh flowers and a new ad campaign took center stage at Leblanc's gold-themed NAMM exhibit, designed by company president Leon Pascucci.



CLARINET COMMENTS

Artist-quality clarinets are an investment in the very soul of school bands

by Tom Ridenour
Manager, Woodwind Company

Each year most music educators receive some funds (and generate other funds through candy sales and so forth) in order to purchase sheet music, equipment and musical instruments. The prevailing wisdom concerning the use of these funds has been to purchase those instruments that the individual student might not be able or inclined to buy, such as tubas, oboes, bassoons, sousaphones, euphoniums or tympani.

This seems the most obvious and logical choice, the one that many band directors unquestioningly make year after year. But what may seem obvious and logical at first blush might not turn out to be the best choice when looking more closely and thoughtfully at the bottom line.

Recently, a band director in the South who has one of the best music programs in his state was confronted with a dilemma: Whether to spend his allotted monies on a new set of tympani or realize his longtime dream of buying top professional clarinets for his best band. He knew that if he bought the tympani, his decision would pass unquestioned. If he bought clarinets, however, he would probably have to justify that decision. What to do?

After extensive testing of other brands of clarinets, and a little thought, he opted to purchase a number of Concerto model Leblanc France clarinets for his clarinet section rather than a new set of tympani, and his reasoning is worth noting.

He said that the tympani would be great for rehearsals and for concerts at school, but there would be many instances when the band would have to perform away from school, and it would not be possible to take the tympani with them. What's more, these "away" performances would often be the most critical events for maintaining the reputation and success



Few bands will lose a top rating for lack of professional-quality tympani or a new set of

of the band, the esteem of its members and the enthusiastic support of the local community.

He reasoned, therefore, that while he would often leave his tympani sitting in the band room, he could always take a section of fine clarinets with him, clarinets from which the band would always benefit. It was this deeper reasoning, based on a proper perspective in regard to musical priorities, that caused him to opt to buy the new clarinets and live with his old set of tympani. My own prejudices aside, this was a very good decision.

This thinking was further underscored for me during a conversation this past February at the Texas Music Educators Association convention San Antonio. I was talking with one of the senior members of the Texas musical establishment, someone who had been a highly successful and respected band director in Texas, as well as a tremendously successful band instrument sales representative.

He mentioned that he came to the conclusion early on that the clarinet section was really the key to the success of a band. Time after time, as both a band director and a contest judge, he

had noted that it was the quality of the clarinet section that literally made the difference between a poor rating or a great rating in competition. He said that no matter how good the other sec-

Correct pedagogy and ideal equipment go hand in hand to create a predictable formula for success. Both are critical for the kind of success needed to help put a band over the top.

tions might be, a poor or mediocre clarinet section brought down the whole band.

This repeated experience as a band director and adjudicator also affected his thinking as a sales representative. As a salesman he had the opportunity



risers. The clarinet section is the key.

to visit band after band, and on his visits he always made it a point to look closely at the clarinet sections. In doing so, he noticed a particular condition with disturbing frequency.

He found that in too many bands, while other sections were full of the best professional instruments, often 90 percent or more of the players in the clarinet section were still playing on their very first student instruments, models they had long outgrown.

Seeing this situation repeatedly, and knowing what he knew about how the quality of the clarinet section affects the success of a band, it was a great frustration to find the band with the best of acoustically designed band rooms, top-quality risers and new music stands and chairs—but with a clarinet section full of well-worn beginners' instruments. It didn't make sense to him, and it doesn't to me, either.

I confirmed to him that in my travels I'd had much the same experience and had found it a mystery. Actually, there were two mysteries.

First, while other wind sections boasted many top-line professional instruments, why were the clarinet sections allowed to continue to play in-

struments they had learned on as beginners? And second, why were the students themselves seemingly disinclined to upgrade that original instrument for a fine wood-bodied clarinet, which would allow them to use the student clarinets they'd outgrown for the marching field?

While I have yet to find a satisfactory answer to these questions, I can only speculate that some educators are not as fully aware as they ought to be of the relationship between the quality of clarinet equipment and one's ability to successfully play the clarinet.

The relationship is profound. In fact, the clarinet is perhaps the most equipment-sensitive instrument in the band. This is especially important to note, since the parameters of acceptable, characteristic sound are more narrowly circumscribed in the clarinet than in almost any other wind instrument.

There is also another variable in the equation of a successful clarinet section that is often not well understood or considered—that of the wide variation of acoustical designs among different makes and models of clarinets within a section and the effects of those different designs on tuning ratios, especially (but not only) in the upper clarion and altissimo of the range.

For some time, instrument makers have arrived at ideal acoustical dimensions for the construction and bore design of most of the woodwind family. Surely, there are variations from maker to maker, but these are not drastic. Where the design differential might happen to be a bit wide, most instruments in the woodwind family have enough inherent flexibility to compensate for the design variations with relative ease, making good intonation a practically realizable goal.

Not so with the clarinet. Clarinets are made with a bore-dimension variation from 14.50 mm to 15.00 mm, a variation wider than any other woodwind's. What's more, the clarinet has the least amount of inherent flexibility in regard to pitch variation than any other member of the woodwind family.

This combination—the acoustical-design variations between clarinet brands, plus the clarinet's cantankerous lack of docility and flexibility regarding intonation—creates in the mind of the astute educator a singular and anguished exclamation, specifically, "Arrrgh!"

After the initial shock of such an

epiphany passes, the educator is led to an unavoidable conclusion: With uniformity of equipment—clarinets not only of matching acoustical models, but also of great acoustical consistency within the *individual examples* of the model in question—relief and the hoped-for success is indeed possible.

While it is helpful, it is not enough simply to have clarinets all of the same make and model. Why? Because some makers produce clarinets that are so acoustically inconsistent from one instrument to the next that an entire section playing the same model would not produce the anticipated results.

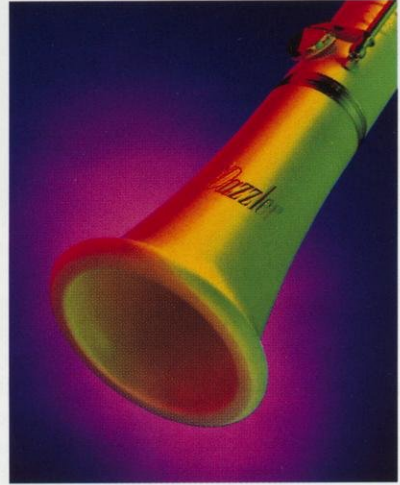
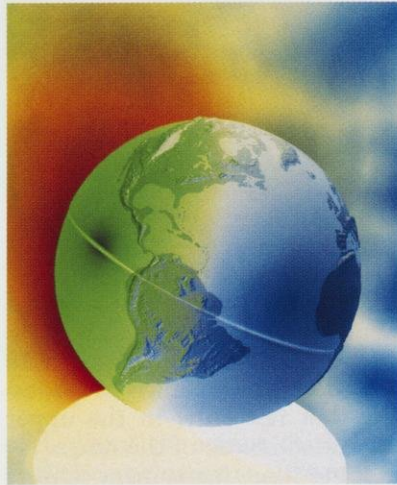
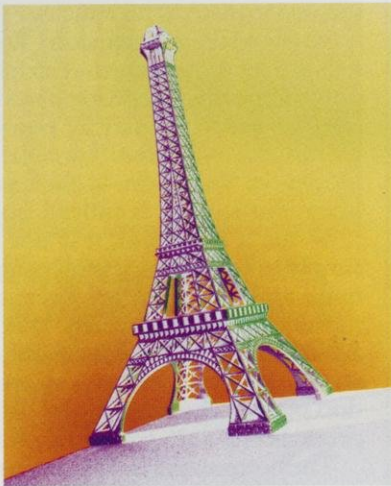
The bottom line is that clarinets must not only be matched by being the same model type, but they should also be highly uniform one to another, especially in the areas of tone quality and tuning.

Our Southern band director not only knew this, but did something about it. He knew that few bands lose a top rating because they lacked professional-quality tympani, an artist-quality euphonium, or for that matter, new risers and the latest music stands. He also knew that using a model of clarinet known for its acoustical consistency would eliminate a great deal of the intonation problems that can and do cause so much difficulty for players and discomfort for listeners.

As was mentioned earlier, this band director said that initially he *had* considered other brands, but in blindfold tests he made with the band's private clarinet instructor (whose own personal instrument was of another brand), the Leblanc clarinets were picked as best in every instance.

That is gratifying for us at Leblanc to hear, and it's good news for the educator who is in need of a solution to a long-standing clarinet problem. Correct pedagogy and ideal equipment go hand in hand to create a predictable formula for success. Both are critical for the kind of success needed to help put a band over the top.

It is hoped that when educators review their needs, they will consider some of the ideas and concepts presented in this article. I would like to encourage them to make the upgrading of clarinets a top priority, either by devoting a portion of their band budgets to the purchase of better instruments or by encouraging their students to upgrade on their own. They will do themselves and their bands the best of favors. □



50 YEARS LEBLANC USA



LEBLANC FRANCE • COURTOIS • VITO • HOLTON • YANAGISAWA • MARTIN • WOODWIND
G. Leblanc Corporation • 7001 Leblanc Boulevard • P.O. Box 1415 • Kenosha, Wisconsin 53141-1415 USA

AD VENTURE

A corporate history as revealed by a dig through past advertising files

by John Hauter
Advertising Manager

Over the millennia, civilizations have come and gone, many with no recorded history. We know of them today only through the remnants they have left behind, the stuff of archaeology.

Modern-day corporations can be thought of as cultures in miniature, with compressed histories that have never spanned eons. They may thrive for decades, sometimes for centuries. During a company's successful years, it is occupied with the business of doing what it *does*—not with recording the minutiae of its day-to-day existence. So its history, like that of some mysterious culture of the past, must be inferred from the tangible documents and artifacts it has produced.

When we in Leblanc's advertising department sat down to brainstorm the

contents of this special issue of the *Bell*, looking for different perspectives from which to tell the company's 50-year history, we felt stymied by the fact that none of us had direct knowledge of the decades preceding our own tenure. Then Mike Johnson, corporate communications director, suggested that a wealth of insightful material was waiting in our own department files.

Advertising is any company's most visible and deliberate link to the cul-

Advertising is any company's most visible and deliberate link to the culture at large. Through advertising, a company defines its own image and tells its own story.

ture at large. Through advertising, a company defines its own image and tells its own story. Leblanc has understood this since its founding in America, thanks to Vito Pascucci's vision and his commitment to the quality of all that represents Leblanc.

Our challenge was clear: Tell the story of Leblanc's 50 years in America through the record left by its advertising. As advertising manager, I presumed that this formidable task would fall to me. But where to start?

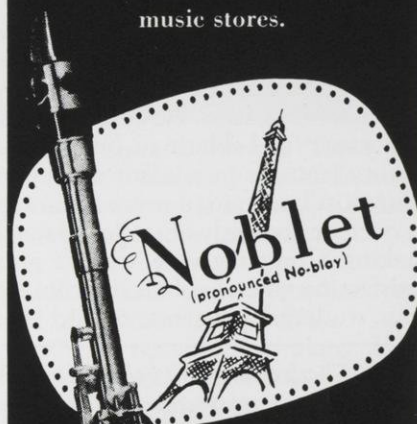
As it turns out, *The Instrumentalist* magazine was founded in 1945, and Leblanc, founded the following year, has been a regular advertiser in its pages ever since. *The Instrumentalist* staff has kindly assisted us in researching and reproducing the earliest examples of Leblanc's print ads. In 1955, Leblanc began maintaining its own archives.

It is impossible to comment on all of the advertisements that Leblanc has produced over the years, so these comments will focus on a sampling of ads that seem pertinent to Leblanc's chronology. The early ads may look "plain" by today's standards, but they are significant—to our company's history, as

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*Then and now: At left, Leblanc's most recent "corporate" ad, developed by Boller Coates & Neu to commemorate 50 years in America. At right, one of the earliest ads placed by Leblanc's "American Division," appearing in a 1947 issue of *The Instrumentalist*.*

STURDY, TROUBLE-FREE
performance... positive,
easy action... these are reasons
why leading teachers
recommend Noblet, the
clarinet with shock resistant
hand-forged keys. Most
expensive of metal
clarinets to build, yet
priced with the lowest.
Before you buy, try a
Noblet. At all leading
music stores.



**THE ONLY
METAL CLARINET
WITH**

*hand
forged
keys*

**LESS THAN
\$100 RETAIL**

**SEE YOUR
DEALER
TODAY**

Noblet (Paris)
wood clarinets
for advanced
students and
professionals
are now available.
Particulars on
request.

G. LEBLANC CO.
(AMERICAN DIVISION) KENOSHA, WIS.

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examples of advertising design and for the insights they provide on the times during which they were produced.

Glancing through the hundreds of Leblanc ads, it's easy to notice a common thread that runs through all of them. That theme, simply stated, is that every instrument Leblanc sells, whether Leblanc France, Courtois, Vito, Holton, Yanagisawa or Martin, is created with the idea that music comes first. Leblanc instruments achieve this goal by being musically, acoustically and mechanically correct—regardless of whether the instrument is artist-quality or a popularly priced student model.

Artist musicians demand the balanced intonation, technical virtuosity and acoustical correctness that Leblanc instruments possess. However, it is also important for Leblanc to bring artist-quality features to student musicians, who must be afforded every advantage in overcoming early obstacles to music making. Company-wide, we take great satisfaction when Leblanc instruments spur students' progress, reward their

The 1953 advertisement below, featuring Henri Druart, represents Leblanc's first use of an endorser in its American ads.

LEBLANC
—choice of Henri Druart, distinguished
First Solo Clarinetist of the
Garde Republicaine Band of Paris!

LEBLANC
—among Garde Republicaine
By clarinetists, more play Leblanc than
any other artist clarinet!

LEBLANC
—and in America, no other clarinet enjoys
such universal acceptance, such widespread popularity.
Your Leblanc dealer will be glad to demonstrate
without cost or obligation.

G. LEBLANC, 70 RUE DES RIGOLLES, PARIS / G. LEBLANC COMPANY, KENOSHA, WISCONSIN

achievement and help them derive the pleasure that stems from playing.

Besides the theme that music comes first, two sub-themes emerge from many ads, old and new.

The first is that of quality and craftsmanship. Leblanc often tells readers how its instruments are made and why making them that way is superior. Over the years, Leblanc has listed its patents for new manufacturing processes and told how these innovations produce better instruments. It has announced the use of new or different metals and alloys that improve tone or durability, and the company has revealed how it has brought higher standards of quality to musicians and to the music industry as a whole. The subtheme of quality and craftsmanship demonstrates that when it comes to making music, a technically superior instrument simply makes better music.

The second subtheme might be paraphrased, "Don't just take our word for it." Leblanc has always let its top endorsers tell the public why they play our instruments. Although a technically superior instrument is certainly easier to play better, Leblanc also recognizes that many players respect and rely upon the judgment of fellow players who have achieved great technical and artistic proficiency. Often, musicians rely more on word of mouth when choosing an instrument than on a specification sheet full of technical information.

To produce its advertising, Leblanc has used the services of some of the nation's most respected advertising agencies, and for a period in the late 1960s, many of Leblanc's ads were produced by its own in-house advertising department. Two of the most notable agencies

14 year old Larry Combs is solo clarinetist of the High School Band, St. Paul, Minn. He has been a member of the Leblanc Clarinet Club since 1947. He plays the Leblanc Symphonie model 476.

PROTECT your investment in Music

Your investment in a musical instrument is an investment in your child—in his happiness and success today, and for many years to come. Back your boy or girl with the finest of artist instruments and you will be amazed at how rapidly your investment brings its returns. For nothing short of the best will kindle quite the same enthusiasm, the same eagerness to advance, or give you the same deep pride in your youngster's accomplishments. Visit your Leblanc dealer today—let him prove what wonders a genuine Leblanc will work in your boy or girl, how very little more it costs to protect your investment in Music and in your child.

G. LEBLANC COMPANY, KENOSHA, WISCONSIN

Above: In the early 1950s, a precocious Larry Combs was featured with his instrument of choice, the Leblanc Symphonie model 476.

that Leblanc has used over the years are Young & Rubicam (New York and Chicago) and Cramer-Krasselt (Milwaukee). Although Leblanc has garnered numerous awards for its ads, Leblanc's association with Cramer-Krasselt earned the American Advertising Federation's highest honor, a national "Addy." Each agency, however, has left its own creative mark as its legacy.

Let's look at a sampling of the advertising that Leblanc has produced over the last 50 years.

One of Leblanc's earliest ads appeared in *The Instrumentalist*, with a documented publication date of November, 1947. This one-column ad for the Noblet metal clarinet (see page 25) serves as a perfect example of how Leblanc stressed the quality and craftsmanship of its instruments. The text reads in part, "Sturdy, trouble-free performance . . . positive, easy action . . . these are reasons why leading teachers recommend Noblet, the clarinet with shock resistant hand-forged keys." The term "hand-forged" later became power-forged, a description still in use today. Also of note in this early ad is that Leblanc's Kenosha location is referred to as the "American Division."

Advertising often reflects the era in which it was produced, and in 1948 the memory of World War II was still alive. Because the seeds for Leblanc U.S.A. were sown during the war, reference to it in Leblanc advertising might seem logical. However, only one ad ever mentioned the war, saying that three out of five French clarinets sold in America before the war were Noblet instruments. The ad clearly reminded readers that now that Noblet was again available, the brand had previously established itself as a leader in the United States.

The first documented use of an endorser for a Leblanc clarinet in an advertisement came in October, 1953. The ad (see page 26, bottom) mentions that Henri Druart of the Garde Républicaine band of Paris played a Leblanc. Another ad that same year mentioned that 13 out of 23 Garde Républicaine clarinetists played Leblanc instruments exclusively. The ad also urged readers to hear the French band, then on tour in America.

In 1954 Leblanc created an ad promoting the premise that an investment in a musical instrument is actually an investment in a child. Its text said, in part, "Back your boy or girl with the finest of artist instruments and you will be amazed at how rapidly your investment brings in returns. For nothing

The 1956 ad below is considered one of Leblanc's all-time classics.

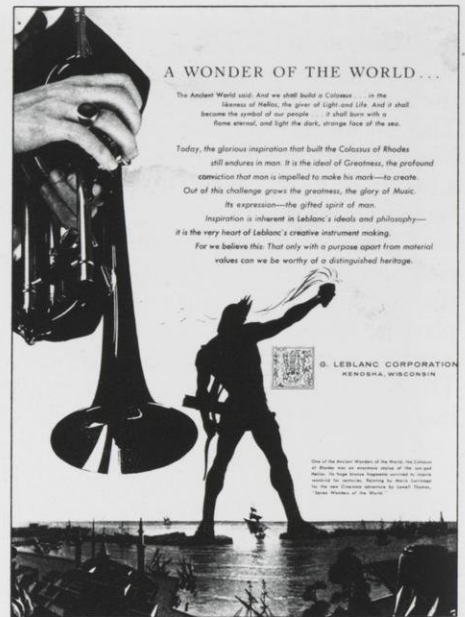
short of the best will kindle quite the same enthusiasm, the same eagerness to advance, or give you the same deep pride in your youngster's accomplishments."

An amazing coincidence is that this ad (see page 26, top) featured a 14-year-old child named Larry Combs! Anyone familiar with Leblanc's current advertising knows that Larry, now principal clarinetist with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, is one of Leblanc's most respected endorsers. In a similarly prophetic vein, note Leblanc's current Concerto clarinet advertisement featuring Eddie Daniels. You needn't guess which brand of clarinet he's shown playing at age 13.

Appearing for the first time in 1956 is a two-page ad that became a Leblanc classic. Headlined "as the twig is bent . . .," it is one of our most touching ads (this page, below). It features a full-page black-and-white photograph on the left page and text on the right. The photo shows a boy in his bedroom packing his suitcase and clarinet case in preparation for an upcoming music contest. The copy reads as follows:

This is somebody's boy.

And he's a little scared. The contest he's packing for is important, and his first. But what excitement—his clothes are spanking new, his hair freshly trimmed, loud Christmas pajamas carefully packed in Uncle Fred's bag, and in his pocket, "just to rattle," is a crisp



This 1958 example from the "Seven Wonders" series, featuring the Colossus of Rhodes, surely ranks as one of Leblanc's higher-concept advertisements.

\$10 bill no one knew Mom had. And most of all, there's his Leblanc.

We wish we could go along. From the wings we'd watch our boy relax and feel his confidence grow as he put his Leblanc through its paces—and thrill to its inimitable tone in this excited, inspired setting of youth.

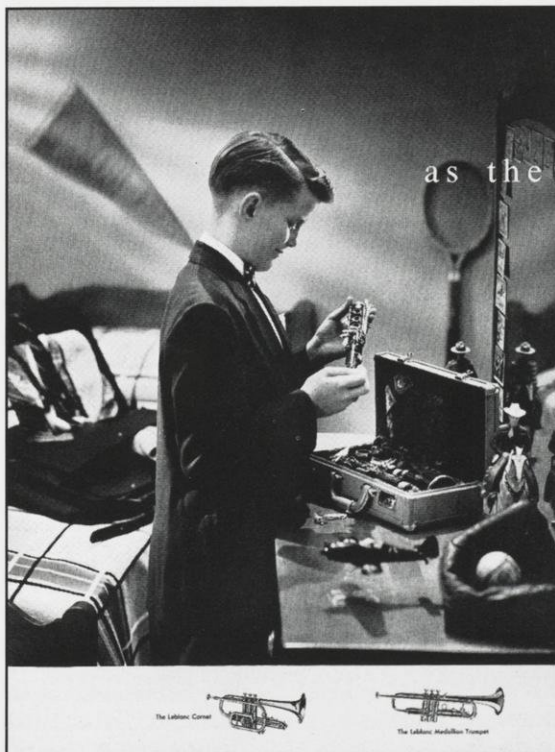
The voice of a Leblanc is a familiar sound in many places—in the great symphony halls, on the screen, T.V. and

radio, wherever great artists perform. But there is a special thrill for us to see and hear our great Leblanc in the hands of a youth. For he is true heir to a great heritage—to a tradition of instrument making which puts Music ahead of material interests.

To us the golden dream of youth is precious coin.

A 1958 ad series featured several of the Seven Wonders of the ancient world as backdrops for Leblanc instruments. The series emphasized that music has played a vital role in the history of man and that the spirit of music is inherent in Leblanc's ideals and philosophy of instrument making. Featured were the Greek god Zeus, the Hang-

continued on page 28



as the twig is bent...

This is somebody's boy.

And he's a little scared. The contest he's packing for is important, and his first. But what excitement—his clothes are spanking new, his hair freshly trimmed, loud Christmas pajamas carefully packed in Uncle Fred's bag, and in his pocket, "just to rattle," is a crisp \$10 bill no one knew Mom had. And most of all, there's his Leblanc.

We wish we could go along. From the wings we'd watch our boy relax and feel his confidence grow as he puts his Leblanc through its paces—and thrill to its inimitable tone in this excited, inspired setting of youth.

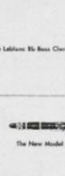
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To us the golden dream of youth is precious coin.

LEBLANC
G. LEBLANC CORPORATION - KENOSHA, WIS.

Every phase in the construction of Leblanc products is personally supervised by Leon Leblanc, holder of the Pat. Conservatory's created 1st Prize, patent in the creation of sax and improved wood instruments.

a heritage of artistry and skill



The Leblanc Cornet



The Leblanc Medalion Trumpet



The New Model Symphonic Dynamic Clarinet

continued from page 27

ing Gardens of Babylon and the Colossus of Rhodes, an enormous statue of the sun god Helios (see page 27, top). The backgrounds were paintings by Mario Lorrinaga from the Cinerama adventure movie by Lowell Thomas, Seven Wonders of the World.

Highlighting the early 1960s is a series of six ads developed to persuade the consumer that the enjoyment of playing a musical instrument does not need to stop at the end of high school. The ads maintain that playing a band instrument is for everyone, regardless

There's a Bit of Haydn in Every Housewife

First chair clarinetist in the high school band — four years ago. Today, a happily married homemaker who put away her band uniform when she graduated, but never lost her love of Music . . . never put away her Leblanc clarinet. You'd be surprised how a "music break" helps brighten her day, breaks up the daily housework routine. For her and millions like her, Music is not a career, but it does play an important part in her everyday life. We are proud that Leblanc musical instruments help contribute so much lasting beauty and enjoyment to those who appreciate and create Music . . . whether it be on the concert stage, in school bands and recording studios . . . or in their own homes.

Musical Instruments That Help Build Reputation and Security

LEBLANC

For Those Who Seek Beauty and Expression Through Music



Would Donna Reed have left that pile of dirty dishes in the sink before taking her "music break"? We don't think so.

of profession, age or stage of life. We might call these six ads the "bit of" series. Headlines include: *There's a Bit of Chopin in Every Cowboy*. *There's a Lot of Music in Every Doctor*. *There's a Bit of Brahms in Every Barber*. One of the ads in the series (this page, left) reads, *There's a Bit of Haydn in Every Housewife*.

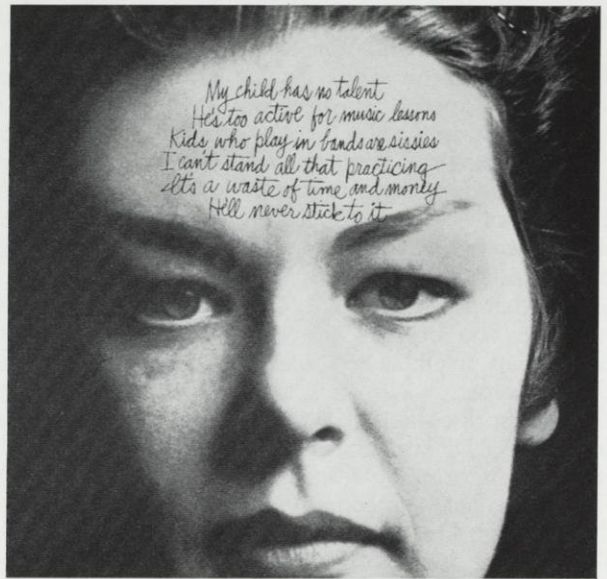
First chair clarinetist in the high school band — four years ago. Today, a happily married homemaker who put away her band uniform when she graduated, but never lost her love of Music . . . never put away her Leblanc clarinet. You'd be surprised how a "music break" helps brighten her day; breaks up the daily housework routine. For her and millions like her, Music is not a career, but it does play an important

part in her everyday life. We are proud that Leblanc musical instruments help contribute so much lasting beauty and enjoyment to those who appreciate and create Music . . . whether it be on the concert stage, in school bands and recording studios . . . or in their own homes.

In an ad that truly reflects the anxieties of the decade in which it was produced, Leblanc addresses the issue of band recruitment head-on. Placed in the trade press in 1962, the ad (this page, top) offers a booklet, "How Music Can Bring You Closer to Your Child," which was the result of a study Leblanc conducted as part of its "Golden Triangle Plan," assessing parents' attitudes toward music education.

The study discovered some fundamental reasons why parents may not encourage their child's music education. Parents' feelings—that their child has no talent, or is not patient enough for lessons, or won't stay committed—are usually not based on actual experience, but on supposition.

Leblanc's booklet meets parental uncertainties regarding school music programs directly and honestly, offering successful solutions. A revised version of the booklet is still available. If you would like one, simply request it in writing from our advertising de-



Browbeaten by their own unconscious attitudes. That's what psychologists found out about parents in the nationwide study sponsored by Leblanc as part of the Golden Triangle Plan. Parents seldom openly express such deep-seated feelings as those pictured above, but these are the fundamental reasons why many don't respond to school music programs—why so many youngsters in your community never become your customers. Now, with the new knowledge revealed in the

Leblanc study, music educators can tackle the recruitment problem in new ways. For the study not only gives the facts, but points the way to successful solutions. What's more, to further help the music educator, you can provide him with the new psychologically sound Parent's Booklet, "How Music Can Bring You Closer to Your Child"—the only such booklet that has ever met parental fears and objections directly and honestly. **LEBLANC**



Above: A 1962 trade-press ad claims that Mom has been "browbeaten" by her own unconscious attitudes.

partment, G. Leblanc Corporation, P.O. Box 1415, Kenosha, Wisconsin, 53141-1415.

A trick seemingly used by art directors at least once in their careers is to spoof a famous painting to promote a product. Two such paintings have lent themselves to manipulation more than any other. One is Grant Wood's farm

Beginning in 1987, Leblanc experienced something of a creative renaissance that introduced a wealth of visually exciting advertising.

couple in "American Gothic," which has been stylized, modernized or modified numerous ways.

The other is Leonardo Da Vinci's "Mona Lisa," which Leblanc used in 1974 as inspiration for an L-70 clarinet

continued on page 30

Her secret.
Could it be
the L-70 by
Leblanc?

Like any classic piece of art, the L-70 clarinet is unique. And as with our famous lady's smile, there's a special kind of mystery instilled in the soul of this artist-caliber instrument. Subtle magic has been worked into the bore, playing resistance, and overall character... so that the L-70 stands alone in achieving the pure, compact, penetrating sound dreamed of by the young musician. The L70. Not just another clarinet. A work of art. An instrument to excite student and music director alike with love at first sound.

LEBLANC

P.O. BOX 439 KENOSHA, WISCONSIN 53141

1974: Mona Lisa readies to play a low F on the Leblanc L-70.

LEBLANC WORLD-CLASS INSTRUMENTS FROM THE WORLD OF LEBLANC

C'est Magnifique!

The Leblanc (Paris) clarinet, the cause célèbre among musicians of taste.

G. Leblanc Corporation
7019 Thirtieth Avenue
Kenosha, Wisconsin 53141

1987: Paper sculpture of the Eiffel Tower epitomizes France.

HOLTON WORLD-CLASS INSTRUMENTS FROM THE WORLD OF LEBLANC

The Holton Tuckwell H104

Designed in collaboration with Barry Tuckwell, crafted by Holton for the world's most discerning artists, the French horn of the future has arrived.

G. Leblanc Corporation
7019 Thirtieth Avenue
Kenosha, Wisconsin
53141 USA

1988: The Holton Tuckwell H104 has landed.

WELCOME HOME

"When I'm onstage, I can't afford to play anything but the best. And with the varied styles of music I play, that means the Leblanc Concerto H190X. I'm playing the Concerto exclusively now and have never felt more solid and comfortable... and never had more fun playing."

Eddie Daniels took up clarinet at age 13. His first instrument was a Leblanc Welcome home, Eddie.

LEBLANC **FRANCE**

WORLD-CLASS INSTRUMENTS FROM THE WORLD OF LEBLANC

G. Leblanc Corporation 7001 Leblanc Boulevard Kenosha, Wisconsin 53141-1415 USA

EDDIE DANIELS
Clarinetist extraordinaire

1993: Eddie Daniels typifies a series of endorsement ads.

continued from page 28
 ad (page 29, upper left). The headline reads, *Her secret. Could it be the L-70 by Leblanc?* The text reads, in part, "And with our famous lady's smile, there's a special kind of mystery instilled in the soul of this artist-caliber instrument. . . Not just another clarinet. A work of art." The illustrator decided not to change her knowing smile—only her hand position, as she readies to play a low F.

In the early '80s, with the Cold War clearly waning, an ad for Holton French horns (this page, at right) played upon previous tensions. Entitled *Soviet disloyalty spied in Washington!*, it features an actual letter written by a man who attended a performance of the Bolshoi Opera in Washington, DC. Intent upon inspecting the Soviet horns, he looked into the orchestra pit and was surprised to see Holtons. He thought enough of the experience to send us the note.

In 1980, Leblanc promoted the Vito clarinet by means of the most "hard-sell" ad we've ever produced (see page 31, top). Headlined *One way to sell you ours is to show you theirs*, it shows a photo of a clarinet with call-outs pointing to various parts on "their" clarinet in comparison to ours.

A sample of the copy reads, "Their trill keys have the usual staggered construction, so key pads have to slide over angled tone holes. Ours have an exclusive in-line arrangement that lets each pad make direct 90° contact with the tone hole. And our tone holes are located above the water line, to virtually eliminate gurgle."

Beginning in 1987, Leblanc experienced something of a creative renaissance that introduced a wealth of visually exciting advertising. The spring issue of the *Bell* that year contained an item in its Grace Notes column that Leblanc had retained Xeno/Chicago to handle its advertising and promotion. The agency had won international acclaim for its contemporary vision and style, and the *Chicago Tribune* called Xeno's work "the hottest graphic design in Chicago—and maybe the world."

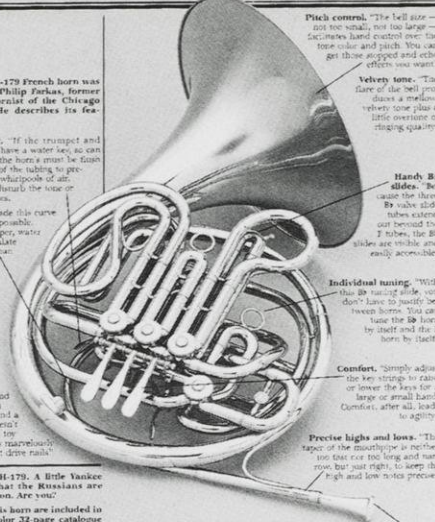
Soviet disloyalty spied in Washington!

Holton Division
 G. Leblanc Corporation
 Kenosha, Wisconsin 53141

Dear sir:

You might be interested to know that recently here in the Washington, D.C. area we had a two week appearance of the Bolshoi Opera during which, in the course of one of the performances, I looked into the orchestra pit with the intention of inspecting the Soviet horns. . . after all, I'd never seen a Russian horn. It turned out that three were Holtons, H-179's.

Yours very sincerely,
J. Hamilton Andrews
 J. Hamilton Andrews



Pitch control. "The bell goes— not too small, not too large— facilitates hand control over the tone color and pitch. You can get those stopped and extra effects you want."

Velvety tone. "The flare of the bell provides a mellower, velvety tone plus a little overtone of ringing quality."

Hands, no slides. "Because the three Bb valve slide tubes extend out beyond the F tubes, the Bb slides are visible and easily accessible."

Individual tuning. "With this Bb tuning slide, you don't have to mouth between horns. You can tune the Bb horns by itself and the F horns by itself."

Comfort. "Simply adjust the key strings to raise or lower the keys for a large or small hand. Comfort, after all, leads to agility."

Precise highs and lows. "The shape of the mouthpiece is important too. Not too long and narrow, but just right, to keep the high and low notes precise."

Choice of mouthpieces. "We focused on mouthpieces for Holton, to cover the range of lips and registers."


The ideal weight. "The horns weigh in the neighborhood of 5 1/2 lbs. I had a heavier horn pipe heavy. And a lighter one doesn't project. Like a top hammer, that's marvelous light, but can't drive nails."

No gurgling. "If the trumpet and trombone can have a water key, so can the horn. But the horn's must be done with the wall of the tubing to prevent any little whirlpools of air, which might disturb the sensitive playing qualities."

And we've made this curve as shallow as possible. "If it were sharper, water would accumulate there sooner than necessary."

The Holton H-179. "A little Yankee ingenuity that the Russians are coveting on. Are you?"

Details on this horn are included in a new full-color 32-page catalogue of Holton brass and woodwinds. For a copy, just send two dollars to Leblanc, 7015 Thirtieth Avenue, Kenosha, Wisconsin 53141.

HOLTON 

In the early '80s, Leblanc got on the détente bandwagon (remember détente?) with this testimonial to thawing relations with the Soviets (remember the Soviets?).

Leblanc's relationship with Xeno used as its starting point the redesign of the existing Leblanc logo, a stylized depiction of the bell of a wind instrument. With computer-assisted graph-

Leblanc advertising campaigns will continue to evolve, experiment and, at times, "push the envelope." But our commitment to music will be unwavering, regardless of the visual techniques that are used to express it.

ics (still a novelty in 1987), Xeno created a bold, three-dimensional color image of the logo. The new Leblanc tagline, "World-class instruments from the world of Leblanc," appeared as "soundwave" emissions from the instrument. The result was a thoroughly

modern image, with graphic drama reminiscent of classic print advertising. Xeno, like Leblanc, used modern tools with a respect for tradition, creating a "world-class" identity.

While occasionally running full-color ads, Leblanc had run most of its advertising in black-and-white, occupying fractional space (that is, less than a full page). In striking contrast, the company abandoned all of its previous ads and began to place only full-page full-color advertisements. This change, in combination with the daring new visual look, truly caused a stir in the music industry.

Although previous work had used brilliant photography or appealing illustration, Leblanc had now ventured into its most graphic and visually dynamic phase to date. In August of 1987, Leblanc and Xeno launched a striking new series. The ads showcased the work of Chicago illustrator David Csicsko and featured dazzling three-dimensional sets constructed from painted and folded paper. One ad in particular surfaced as a representative of the entire series, that for the Leblanc LX clarinet with its paper sculpture of the Eiffel Tower (see page 29, upper right).

The next year brought a second Xeno series of six ads and featured backgrounds by Chicago artist Will North-

erner. While the emphasis on energy, color and typographic treatment would remain the same, with instruments still photographed in stylized settings, the second set of ads featured a different aesthetic viewpoint. Northerner's fine-arts background produced ads with a more personalized, abstracted vision and also introduced a new dimension of humor to the scenes. One ad in particular came to represent this series, that for the Holton Tuckwell horn (see page 29, lower left), which depicted it "landing" on the moon.

The attention drawn by the ads caused people to wonder, "What will they do next?" With the purchase of Leblanc's parent company in France in 1989 and the development of newly designed clarinet models, people would soon find out.

Advertiser/agency relationships are often fleeting, due to changes of strategy, style or personnel. In 1989, Leblanc's account executive at Xeno, Michael Neu, moved to another Chicago agency, now known as Boller Coates & Neu, where he serves as partner and vice president. The Leblanc account followed him there, where it has since remained.

A series of ads created at Boller Coates & Neu features players who endorse Leblanc instruments. This stellar group comprises some of the world's finest musicians. These players (in alphabetical order) are: Larry Combs, Eddie Daniels (see page 29, lower right), Maynard Ferguson, Pete Fountain, Urbie Green, Ethel Merker, Ricardo Morales, Harvey Phillips, Wallace Roney and Barry Tuckwell. These endorsers have chosen Leblanc because they feel the instruments best allow them to express their inner voice. When describing an instrument in these ads, the artists are specific about the features and characteristics

The "support ad" at right is typical of those currently produced by Leblanc's in-house advertising department for placement in educators' journals, programs and similar publications. The message and sizing are easily tailored to particular needs. Note inclusion of the "3D" logo developed by Xeno in 1987.

One way to sell you ours is to show you theirs.



Their pitch is tuned somewhere between A442 and A445 — higher than normal to compensate for a student's initially poor embouchure and breath control. Ours is precision-tuned to A440 concert pitch at 72°F. Because we believe a student should develop up to pitch — instead of down to it — with the proper embouchure and control over intonation and coloring.

Their four trill keys are mounted on three posts. Ours are individually mounted on four posts for more accuracy and support.

Their keys have the usual staggered construction, so key pads have to slide over angled tone holes. Ours have an exclusive in-line arrangement that lets each pad make direct 90° contact with the tone hole. And our tone holes are located above the water line, to virtually eliminate gurgling.

Their keys are mostly cast metal. You can twist one off with your fingers. Ours are all precision-forged from the finest virgin nickel-silver — a carefully process that applies tons of pressure to form the metal into a directional "grain," like wood, that's infinitely stronger. Trunk hangers and crank shafts are forged, just like our keys.

Their keys are positioned where they've always been — out of easy reach for a student's left thumb and little finger. Key action is uneven, too. Some press hard, some easy. Our keys are positioned where the student's fingers are — a little.

human engineering for the sake of morale. And our key action is crisp and uniform.

Their bore isn't bored, it's molded. To withdraw the reed from a section, they have to make one end slightly larger — creating a distorted sound column. That's why their student clarinets are permanently out of tune at different points along the scale. Our bore is bored. Expertly machined into a cylindrical column that's acoustically perfect. A dozen of our clarinets will sound alike at every point on the scale. A dozen of theirs won't.

We think our competition represents more of a threat to you than to us. That's why we've given you a good look at their most popular student clarinet, along with some good reasons to choose ours.

Sure, our clarinet costs a little more than theirs. But when it's time for that all-important performance, a few dollars is nothing. A perfect glissando is everything.

For a full-color spec sheet, call (800) 558-9421, toll-free. Or write to Leblanc, 7919 Thirtieth Avenue, Kenosha, Wisconsin 53140.

Vito 

1980: A hard-sell comparison between Vito clarinets and "the competition."

that they find most appealing. It is Leblanc's hope, of course, that readers will share these conclusions.

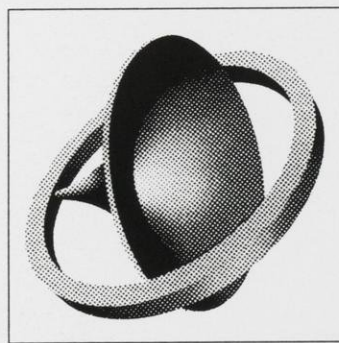
Leblanc's most recent series of ads captures the creative energy of Leblanc instruments and accessories through

the use of equally energetic and colorful imagery. The campaign is one means by which Leblanc is marking its current anniversary year. The striking visual images (see page 24) were produced by Anthony Arciero, who spent many hours experimenting with lighting, film and unconventional processing chemistry to achieve the desired effects. "I wanted each image to look simple and colorful," says Arciero, "and for each to be viewed as a character or icon."

Michael Neu, agency vice president, reports that reaction to the ads has been extremely positive. "We wanted the ads to express the same artistic excitement as Leblanc products and to convey the idea that making music with Leblanc instruments is art."

Unlike the history of a lost civilization, that of G. Leblanc Corporation continues to be written. Our brief archaeological dig in Leblanc's advertising files has traced a vigorous public presence that now spans half a century. In the course of future decades, stretching into the next millennium, Leblanc advertising campaigns will continue to evolve, experiment and, at times, "push the envelope." But our commitment to music will be unwavering, regardless of the visual techniques that are used to express it. □

IN SEARCH OF PERFECT HARMONY



Round the globe, you know us by many names: Leblanc France, Courtois, Vito, Holton, Yanagisawa, Martin and the Woodwind Company. Since 1750, we've had a single passion: Music. Breathe life into *your* music through world-class instruments from the world of Leblanc.

LEBLANC 

G. Leblanc Corporation
7001 Leblanc Boulevard
P.O. Box 1415
Kenosha, WI 53141-1415 USA

WORLD-CLASS INSTRUMENTS FROM THE WORLD OF LEBLANC

LEBLANC • COURTOIS • VITO • HOLTON • YANAGISAWA
MARTIN • MOOSMANN • WOODWIND COMPANY



LEBLANC BELL

G. Leblanc Corporation
 7001 Leblanc Boulevard
 P.O. Box 1415
 Kenosha, Wisconsin 53141-1415

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Art Director	John Hauter

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Telephone: 414-658-1644

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 Kenosha, WI
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WORLD-CLASS INSTRUMENTS FROM THE WORLD OF LEBLANC
 LEBLANC FRANCE COURTOIS VITO HOLTON
 YANAGISAWA MARTIN WOODWIND COMPANY