



# Harp

## Summer Programs

by Saul Davis

Summer vacation is a time to rest, relax, experience nature, play and explore — a time for recreation. For music students, summer should be a time to keep practicing and to experience and participate in performances. Many teachers find out every September just how much progress is lost by their students who take the summer off. Summer is an ideal time for an intensive program. A long-term in-depth program enables students to learn on a much deeper level, to develop their powers of concentration and to work on more demanding repertoire and technical achievements. Those who attend a music festival or camp gain the added benefits of music making with other students from all over, freedom from distractions and making lasting friendships. A music festival or camp is also a good place to meet students from schools one might want to attend and garner their recommendations.

Students who can't attend such programs can try to create a comparable experience at home. Here is an outline of ways to create an at-home program that will approximate the benefits of a summer camp:

- \* Take two private lessons a week, master classes, theory classes and music history.
- \* Tackle at least one major work, learning the notes so it can be polished throughout the year.
- \* Disconnect the computer and television. Read books, particularly biographies of composers or their memoirs.
- \* Set regular practice hours: 2–3 hours each morning, starting by 8:00 A.M. and another 2 hours each afternoon.
- \* Play chamber music.
- \* Join a local youth orchestra.
- \* Attend concerts every week — every

day if at all possible. Listen to radio concerts and read program notes.

- \* Explore music libraries.
- \* Take a dance class such as ballet or ballroom.

Based on my experience, there is nothing like an 8-week program. It takes 6 weeks to begin to feel real immersion and to have sufficient time to realize goals. There's also something about how the time divides. With a 6-week program, after you are there a month, it's almost over; with an 8-week program, after you're there a month, there's just as much yet to go. Less than 6 weeks is probably not going to be very productive, except for young students.

Before you go, try to ascertain if the program is well-organized, scheduled and run, and has acceptable food, accommodations and supervision. I taught at a music camp, thankfully now out of business, where all of the meals were reheated frozen or pre-cooked food. While it was fun to laugh about it, hard work needs good nutrition!

Here are some summer festivals and camps that are particularly good for harpists and orchestral training. Although the application deadline has passed for most of them, check them out this year and plan on attending next year.

Aspen Music School, 2 Music School Road, Aspen, CO 81611; 6/12–8/18; 970-925-3254, [www.school@aspenmusic.org](mailto:school@aspenmusic.org).

Birch Creek Music Performance Center, P.O. Box 230, 3821 County E, Egg Harbor, WI 54209-0230; 6/17–6/29; 920-868-3763, [www.birchcreek.org](http://www.birchcreek.org).

Breckenridge Music Festival / National Repertory Orchestra, P.O. Box 1254, Breckenridge, CO 80424; 6/17–8/12; 970-453-9142.

Brevard Music Festival, P.O. Box 312,

Brevard, NC 28712; 6/14–8/4; 828-884-2011, [www.brevardmusic.org](http://www.brevardmusic.org).

Chautauqua Institution, School of Music, P.O. Box 1098, Chautauqua, NY 14722; 6/22–8/13; 716-357-6294, [www.music.ciweb.org](http://www.music.ciweb.org).

Interlochen Arts Camp, P.O. Box 199, Interlochen, MI 49643; 6/16–8/12; 231-276-7472, [www.interlochen.org](http://www.interlochen.org).

Pierre Monteux School (Hancock, ME), P.O. Box 240, New York, NY 10024-0240; 6/15–7/30; 212-664-9705.

National High School Music Institute, Northwestern University School of Music, 711 Elgin Rd., Evanston, IL 60208-1200; 6/30–8/2; 847-491-3141, [www.northwestern.edu](http://www.northwestern.edu).

Rocky Mountain Summer Conservatory, 5149 Decatur St., Omaha, NE 68104; 7/14–8/4; 402-556-2411, [www.rockymountainisc.org](http://www.rockymountainisc.org).

Salzedo School (Camden, ME), c/o Alice Chalifoux, 35428 Appalachian Trail Rd., Round Hill, VA 20141; June–August.

Boston University Tanglewood Institute, 855 Commonwealth Ave., Boston, MA 02215; July–August; 617-353-3386, [www.bu.edu/sfa/music/tanglewood](http://www.bu.edu/sfa/music/tanglewood).

*Saul Davis performs and teaches in Philadelphia. He is a regular contributor to the American Harp Journal. Born in Minnesota, he studied at Macalester College and with Lucile Lawrence at Tanglewood and Manhattan School of Music. He performed at Chautauqua Institute and studied at the Salzedo School with Alice Chalifoux. He has received grants and scholarships from Macalester College, Tanglewood, Chautauqua Institute, the Pultusker Fund and the Presser Foundation. He composes, edits and arranges harp music. This year's columns are dedicated to the memory of Samuel Pultusker. ♪*