

Alternative Fingerings for Flute, a comprehensive handbook by Nestor Herszbaum. Available directly from the author at his website: www.herszbaum.com. Price: \$23.00 plus \$4.00 shipping and handling.

Argentine-born and University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music-trained, Nestor Herszbaum, who currently is principal flute of the Kansas City Symphony, has produced an extraordinary 133-page compendium of flute fingerings that is bound to become the standard reference work. The extensive alternative fingerings provided give the flutist a multitude of choices for meeting the technical, tonal, and intonation problems encountered with the regular fingerings. The spiral bound format and its graphic pictorial layout of the fingerings makes the charts very easy to understand and use. He also notes in the margins next to the fingerings the characteristic color and/or intonation tendencies of most alternate fingerings; and he tells whether or not the particular fingering will work on flutes with a C or B foot joint or if employed with flutes with extra keys, such as C# or G-A trills keys, left hand levers for low B or C, and the split E key.

After providing a quick reference chart for the basic fingerings and trill fingerings for the first three octaves, Herszbaum begins again with a much more detailed and comprehensive look at all the possible and practical alternative fingerings for each note. There are up to nine possible choices—even in the first octave—and as he progresses upward the choices given are even more profuse until he reaches the third octave where the D just above the staff is provided with a staggering 21 different fingerings... and then things really get complex as the charts ascend into the fourth octave. (Herszbaum shows chromatic fingering choices all the way up to the fourth octave G.) He also provides a host of trill fingerings as well as those for tremolos of minor third, major third, and perfect fourth intervals.

Clearly, this is a reference book and one to be dipped into as needed so that over time your “bag of tricks” grows and the selection of best tool to use for the particular musical situation of each note and passage become more flexible. As the author makes clear, these are not “fake” fingerings but legitimate and logical choices to be made, based on the mathematical and acoustical foundations of the flute’s harmonic series and according to the musical context encountered for each note. At his website you will also find some excellent sample fingerings and examples from musical works that he has generously posted on the Flutelist homepage and shared with various on-line flute discussion boards in the past few years. The website even has the “Fingering of the Month.” (While exploring his website be sure to click on the link to the transcript of an very interesting live, on-line “chat” where Herszbaum answered questions submitted to: www.MyAuditions.com, the new on-line source of news and information about finding and keeping an orchestral, playing or teaching position). (J.E.P.)