

Young, Jerry, A Lecture by Arnold Jacobs, T.U.B.A. JOURNAL, Aug, 1984, p.20

This review is written from the perspective of one who, like many of the readers, has had a teacher and many friends who have studied with the legendary Arnold Jacobs, but until the International Brass Congress has never had the opportunity to hear him speak. This reviewer was certainly not disappointed in what he heard or saw.

The session began with a special International Brass Congress award presentation to Mr. Jacobs for his many years of service to and influence on all brass choirs everywhere. The award was presented by Phillip Farkas, a long-time friend and colleague of Mr. Jacobs. In his responsory remarks, Mr. Jacobs expressed his gratitude to the Congress and announced that despite recent surgery and hospitalization, his health was better than it had been in some time and that he would be returning to his position as tubist in the Chicago Symphony shortly.

Those who have only read about or experienced Mr. Jacobs' ideas on brass playing may have been quite surprised at the content of his lecture. The technical expertise with regard to human physiology and respiratory function for which Mr. Jacobs is so famous was very much in evidence, however, the emphasis in his presentation was more on musical ideas than mechanical. He emphasized that in his teaching, all work on processes that do not deal directly with music are worked on away from the instrument. Proper respiratory function, mechanics of articulation, etc., are things that we must perform naturally in the process of making music. "We must program the brain to think about music." Our end, i. e., musical communication, must be the focus on our mental processes, not the means we are using to reach that end.

During the course of the lecture Mr. Jacobs used audience members and several devices to elucidate his ideas on respiratory function. For those of you who missed the name of the company which builds the device for working on breath inhalation/exhalation which Mr. Jacobs demonstrated, their name and address is:

Casino Enterprises

Attention: Howard Hanson

3111 South Valleyview Blvd.

Las Vegas, NV 89102

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The session concluded with a convincing playing demonstration by Mr. Jacobs. Perhaps we should all pay a visit to his surgeon!