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# PEN Trio- Biography

The **PEN Trio** was established in 2010 by Nora Lewis, Phillip O. Paglialonga, and Eric Van der Veer Varner to explore and expand the repertoire for the traditional *Trio d' Anches*. The ensemble has appeared throughout the United States and Canada, and has quickly become known for the quality and energy of their performances. The group has visited dozens of universities across North America, and has performed at numerous academic conferences, chamber music series, and private functions. Recent highlights include featured performances at the **College Music Society National Conference**, and the **International Double Reed Society Conference**, as well as featured performances on both **Michigan** and **Alabama Public Radio**.

The trio is passionate about the music of our time and has premiered new works by several distinguished composers. In 2011 the group premiered *In Threes* by composer M. Shawn Hundley and has since championed the work in recital. The 2013-4 season will include premieres by composers William Bradbury, Jenni Brandon, Allen Cohen, Peter James Learn and Aleks Sternfeld-Dunn. The trio has also recently partnered with **TrevCo Music Publishing** to create the **PEN Trio Collection**, which will feature critical editions of existing works as well as works written for the **PEN Trio**.



The **PEN Trio** will tailor the program to suit your specific needs, whether that is a program of audience friendly works, a program of all contemporary selections or a mix. Frequently the ensemble presents **PEN Trio & Friends** concerts in which the trio is joined by one or more additional instrument. Typically these concerts involve a piano, horn or flute in order to play masterworks by composers like Mozart or Beethoven.

# PEN Trio-Recent Appearances

*Partial list of some of the places the **PEN Trio** has performed recently:*



40th Annual International Double Reed Society (IDRS) Conference (Tempe, AZ)  
41st Annual international Double Reed Society (IDRS) Conference (Oxford, OH)  
54th Annual Conference of the College Music Society (Richmond, VA)  
55th Annual Conference of the College Music Society (San Diego, CA)  
Auburn University (Auburn, AL)  
Bethune-Cookman University (Daytona, FL)  
Bowling Green State University (Bowling Green, OH)  
California State University-Long Beach (Long Beach, CA)  
California State University-San Diego (San Diego, CA)  
California State University-San Marcos (San Marcos, CA)  
Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music (Cincinnati, OH)  
Cranbrook Music Guild (Bloomfield Hills, MI)  
Eastern Michigan University (Ypsilanti, MI)  
Florida State University (Tallahassee, FL)  
Furman University (Greenville, SC)  
George Mason University (Fairfax, VA)  
Grand Valley State University (Allendale, MI)  
Kansas State University (Manhattan, KS)  
Miami University (Oxford, OH)  
National Association of College Wind and Percussion Instructors 2012 Conference (San Diego CA)  
Oakland University (Rochester, MI)  
Ohio State University (Columbus, OH)  
Ohio University (Athens, OH)  
Radford University (Radford, VA)  
Shenandoah Conservatory of Music (Winchester, VA)  
South Carolina Governor's School for the Arts (Greenville, SC)  
Truman State University (Kirksville, MO)  
University of Central Florida (Orlando, FL)  
University of Florida (Gainesville, FL)  
University of Georgia (Athens, GA)  
University of Kansas (Lawrence, KS)  
University of Michigan (Ann Arbor, MI)  
University of Missouri (Columbia, MO)  
University of Missouri-Kansas City (Kansas City, MO)  
University of Nebraska (Lincoln, NE)  
University of South Carolina (Columbia, SC)  
University of Tampa (Tampa, FL)  
University of Windsor "Take 4" concert series (Windsor, Ontario-Canada)  
Virginia Tech University (Blacksburg, VA)  
Western Michigan University (Kalamazoo, MI)  
Wichita State University (Wichita, KS)  
Wright State University (Dayton, OH)

# Nora Lewis- Biography

Nora Lewis is Associate Professor of Music at **Kansas State University**, where she teaches oboe, music history, and chamber music. She is oboist in the **Konza Winds** faculty quintet at KSU and in the PEN Trio. For the past ten summers she has enjoyed teaching and performing at **Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp** in Michigan. Lewis has performed with the **Chicago Symphony Orchestra**, **Wichita Symphony Orchestra**, **Camerata Chicago**, **Boston Lyric Opera**, and **International Contemporary Ensemble** and has held positions in the **Elmhurst Symphony**, **Plymouth Philharmonic**, and was a founding member of **Ensemble dal Niente**. Lewis has performed or presented at the **Midwest Clinic** in Chicago, six **International Double Reed Society** conferences, the **College Music Society's** (CMS) International, National, and Regional conferences, at the National Conference for NACWPI (**National Association for College Woodwind and Percussion Instructors**), and **CBDNA's Southwest Regional Conference**. She has also presented at Music Educator's Association conferences in Kansas, Oklahoma, and Tennessee and has given master classes and performances at more than forty universities nationwide, as well as in the United Kingdom, Canada, and Haiti. Lewis has written articles for several publications including ***The Instrumentalist*** magazine, and she currently serves as a consulting editor for that publication. Lewis was honored to receive a Yale AlumniVentures Award to help support her work with **L'École de Musique Dessaix-Baptiste** in Jacmel, Haiti, a Big-12 Faculty Fellowship to collaborate with colleagues at the **University of Nebraska-Lincoln**, and distinguished membership in Sigma Alpha Iota, as a National Arts Associate. Lewis received a bachelor of music degree in performance and a bachelor of arts degree in philosophy from **Lawrence University**, a master of music degree from **Yale University**, and a doctor of music degree from **Northwestern University**. Nora Lewis is a **Buffet Group USA Performing Artist/Clinician** and plays Buffet Greenline oboes exclusively.



# Phillip O. Paglialonga- Biography

Clarinetist **Phillip O. Paglialonga** currently serves on the faculty at **Virginia Tech** in Blacksburg, Virginia. Previously he held positions with the **Sarasota Opera Orchestra** and **Haddonfield Symphony**, and has appeared with numerous orchestras including the **Sarasota Orchestra**, **Florida Orchestra**, **Fort Wayne Philharmonic**, **Kalamazoo Symphony**, **Windsor Symphony** in Ontario, and the **Walt Disney World Orchestra**. He has also performed at several summer festivals including the **National Repertory Orchestra**, the **Music Academy of the West**, and **Lake George Opera**. In the summer months Dr. Paglialonga is on the faculty at **Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp** in Michigan where he performs with the Festival Orchestra. Dr. Paglialonga has authored several articles for ***the Clarinet***, ***Keynotes Magazine*** and ***School Band & Orchestra*** which are available on his website ([www.thefirstgissilent.com](http://www.thefirstgissilent.com)). He did his undergraduate study at **DePaul University** as a student of Chicago Symphony principal clarinetist Larry Combs and earned a masters and a doctorate from the **University of Michigan** as a student of Fred Ormand and Daniel Gilbert. He is an avid sports fan and enjoys studying art history.





# Eric Van der Veer Varner- Biography

**Eric Van der Veer Varner** has enjoyed a particularly rich and varied musical career. He has been the principal bassoonist of the **Windsor Symphony Orchestra** since 2004, and has appeared with the orchestra as a soloist on numerous occasions, where his playing has been critically hailed as that “of ineffable liquid beauty”.

Varner has been on the faculty at **Miami (Ohio) University**, **Heidelberg University**, as well as the **University of Windsor**, and has held positions with the **Ann Arbor Symphony**, the **Michigan Opera Theater**, the **Sarasota Opera**, and the **Mannheim Chamber Orchestra** in Germany. He has also participated in numerous summer festivals, including the **Bellingham Festival of Music**, the **Michigan City Chamber Music Festival**, and the **Interlochen Center for the Arts**.

Varner is also the owner of **TrevCo-Varner Music**, the “world’s foremost purveyor of fine sheet music for double reeds”. In this role, he has fostered the commissioning of new works, has edited critical editions of forgotten gems, and has striven to aid all double-reed players to make their own music more accessible.

Dr. Varner holds a Doctor of Musical Arts from the **University of Michigan**, where he also earned a Bachelor of Music degree. Additionally, he has a degree in Artistic Education from the **Mannheim-Heidelberg Conservatory** in Germany. His primary teachers were Richard Beene, Alfred Rindespacher, Hugh Cooper, and Michael Dicker.

When he is not busy playing, teaching, or selling sheet music, he enjoys watching college football, reading, and playing with his dogs, Oscar and Lulu.



# PEN Trio-Reviews

The ensemble gave a stunning performance, with really remarkable blend, precision, and artistry. The students I talked with commented on how impressed they were with both the virtuosity of the ensemble playing as well as the solo lines.

**Bradley Wong, Professor of Clarinet and Coordinator of Graduate Studies,  
Western Michigan University**

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We asked [Price Rubin] to help us pull together a woodwind group to work with [pianist] Sandra Shen in ensemble. The PEN Trio was selected on the basis of their experience, fluidity and professionalism. They brought all of their considerable personality and ability into our concert to create a wonderfully moving and uplifting performance. The next time I am listening to them I will either be making or buying a recording!

**M. Ross Baldwin, Cranbrook Music Guild**

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The PEN Trio played a wonderful concert at the University of South Carolina. Their ensemble was tight, yet their freedom of musical expression was not at all stifled. Their musicality was extremely tasteful collectively and individually. Each member's tone was beautifully focused with resonance and their intonation and blend were impeccable. It was truly a pleasure to host the group and hear them perform!

**Joseph Eller, Associate Professor of Music, University of South Carolina**

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Although their visit was brief, I appreciate the impact [the] trio had on our students and musical community... The concert was terrific. Each member of the ensemble performed with great technical expertise and musical expression. There was a unified approach to tone and color. The pitch and blend of sounds was outstanding... [they] are always welcome at Oakland University.

**George Stoffan, Associate Professor of Clarinet, Oakland University**

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With a growing reputation as fine pedagogues as well as performers, the PEN Trio brings a new energy and fresh approach to the reed trio, playing with intelligence and scholarly insight.

**Nancy King, Professor of Oboe, University of Michigan**