

RJ Kelley

Horn

RJ Kelley is recognized as America's foremost player of horns of every historical era, from the hunting horn of the Baroque through today's super-mechanized triple horn. With a particular interest in the 'golden age' of the horn-- about 1750 to 1890-- Kelley has established an expertise of both technical and stylistic rarity.

As co-founder and artistic director of the unique ensemble Universal Piston, Kelley has restored to life the formerly extinct sound of the mid-19th century horn quartet. He has also performed the monumental Horn Trio of Johannes Brahms as invited recitalist of the International Horn Society, playing the valveless instrument of Brahms' intent. Schumann's ground-breaking Adagio and Allegro was presented at Albert Fuller's Helicon Society, on the early piston-valved horn for which it was conceived. And in Spring of '09, Kelley was presented in recital with pianist Seth Carlin, by the Kingsbury Consort of St. Louis. The program included both valved and 'natural' horns, in repertoire including Beethoven's Sonata in F, von Krufft's Sonata in E, and Schubert's stunningly poetic Auf dem Strom.

When not engaged in historical performance, Kelley is a regular guest with the New York Philharmonic, American Ballet Theater, Orchestra of St. Luke's, New York City Ballet, Mostly Mozart Festival, and many other top orchestras. He is also solo horn of Manhattan Brass, the Smithsonian Chamber Players, the Englewinds, Hora Decima, the Portland (OR) Baroque Orchestra, Mercury Baroque (Houston), the Texas Camarata (Ft. Worth).

His recording of Mozart's complete Concerti for Horn (with the Orchestra of the Old Fairfield Academy), performed on an Austro-Bohemian natural horn with hand-hammered sterling mouthpiece, has received high praise, and is but one of more than seventy CDs recorded by Kelley.

Education in the rich musical and cultural legacy of the horn is also a priority, as Kelley has presented lectures and demonstrations at Yale, Rutgers, the University of Montana, the International Horn Symposium, San Jose State University, as well as others. He has also provided pre-concert lectures at nearly every venue at which he has appeared, and which give the audience an instant understanding of the more mysterious techniques required, and their resultant aesthetic conclusions.

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