How did you choose the French horn?

My first choice was twins, but it was not offered so I started on trumpet, but was moved to the mellophone—a small French horn that uses a trumpet mouthpiece—and then to French horn. The horn seemed more interesting than the trumpet, and more horns were needed.

What was that like?

As a senior in high school, you were already playing French horn for the Portland Symphony—what was that like?

One reason I got in is because the principal horn was my teacher. I think there might have been one or two other high school students in the orchestra, but it was a very big thrill! I particularly remember playing a big Vaughan Williams cantata for chorus and soloists—the first time that I experienced the feeling of reality “playing out.”

You’re working for the Met and now you’re working on behalf of Chelsea Opera. What do you find similar—or dissimilar—between the two?

Due to the very high professional standards with which Chelsea Opera operates, in that way it is remarkably similar to the Met! Probably the largest dissimilarity is our lack of a dedicated “house,” which in our case includes no office or production space.

What exactly is a “titles caller”?

In brief, a caller is the person who tells the computer operator exactly when to reveal the title that the audience sees on the screen. As you can imagine, timing must be exact so it takes quite a bit of concentration.

As a titles caller and orchestra member, you’ve seen hundreds of performances. What makes a performance truly wonderful?

I think we achieve this rather consistently at Chelsea Opera! And, finally, what advice do you have for aspiring musicians?

Assiduously follow your heart and talents, work hard to develop both, and feel wonderful about working in the arts.

What is your favorite opera and why?

I enlisted in the Navy soon after Dec. 7, 1941. I had noted young gods who are bored and decide to amuse themselves at the expense of a human couple. It premiered in 2005 at the San Antonio Opera and was directed by a choreographer. I was thrilled.

What is your favorite opera and why?

I began playing the cello because the conductor didn’t have enough cellists. In my junior year I was made principal. In my graduation concert, I played the Lalo Cello Concerto as soloist with the orchestra.

I understood you played in a string quartet whilst in the Navy?

I don’t see why my family was musical, but we did have an upright piano. When I was seven, I started piano and my aunt was my first teacher, but I eventually took lessons in everything.

Tell us a bit about playing in your high school orchestra.

How did you choose to be a composer?

As soloist with the orchestra.

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As soloist with the orchestra.

What is your favorite opera and why?
Richard Wargo, a native of Jersey City, is a graduate of the Manhattan School of Music and is a two-time recipient of the Robert Arts Scholarship. He has received praise from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the NEA and the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, and served as composer-in-residence at the Skylight Opera Theatre in Milwaukee, where Baltimorewurfe premiered in 1999 and recorded for PBS. Richard’s A Chakked Trilobyte was premiered by Chaussonique Opera in 1991 and has received numerous performances, including productions of the trilogy’s third segment, “The Music Shop,” by the Judson School and by Opera National de Rhin in Colmar (FR). In 2010 the Wexford Festival presented the Irish premiere of Baltimorewurfe. Part One: Winners, This Fall; Part Two: Losers, will have its turn at Westford. During the summer months, Richard acts as artistic director of the Sombrero Opera Orchestra in Bolton Landing, Lake George, NY.

Chelsea Opera presented the Manhattan premiere of A Distant Love: Songs of John and Abigail Adams by Gary S. Fagin and Terry Quinn with Victoria Fraleigh as Abigail Adams and Peter Kendall Clark as John Adams on June 23rd. The concert was an outgrowth of “...to their love for each other and their mutual determination to see the birth of an independent nation. Those letters were a varied international career, from studio recordings with jazz musicians like Jacam Manricks to an appearance on TV’s “30 Rock.” As an orchestral musician, Mr. Ianco performs with the Santo Domingo Festival Orchestra, the Munich Symphony, and many NY area ensembles. Part chamber music collaborations include rock concert as Fred Zoller, Nina Berlina, Hunter Gonzales, Alex Marks, and Ricardo Cobo. Mr. Ianco has played in the Broadway pits of Evita and Phantom of the Opera. Additionally, he has been on the faculty of New York City University.

When did you start playing the violin and why?

I started to play at the age of 7 at public school #4 in Belleville NJ. One day the whole school was called down to an assembly. The woman who played the violin in the demonstration performed a piece we were singing in our general music class, “The Ghost of Jo...” The light bulb went off when I realized we can have all of the emotion and meaning in the music without the words. I was hooked!

Who is your favorite composer to play?

I love many composers, but my favorite one to play is Jack Beeson. Beeson took iconic American figures such as Lizzie Borden and Amy Semple McPherson and brought them to vivid life on stage—and could evoke even the most flvid vocal writing sound as natural as the spoken word.

What do you think makes your opera, Accessible to audiences?

It’s because of the enthusiasm of the audience. It’s obvious when the audience is engaged and interested in the music. That’s the mark of a good opera. It’s not just about the music, but about the audience’s relationship with it. And that’s what makes opera so special. It’s a live art form, with each performance being different. With Accessible to audiences, the audience is engaged and interested in the music. It’s a great way to connect with the audience and to share the experience of opera with others.