

# LAGNIAPPE WEEKLY



## Flautist Bohnet 'shocked' to win Best Classical Musician award

Posted by Kevin Lee | Jul 21, 2021 | Arts, Cover Story, Latest | 0 | ★★★★★

### Photo | Provided

Compared to some of her Mobile Symphony Orchestra colleagues, flautist Andra Bohnet was a latecomer to her instrument. Pianists and string players often begin training in preschool. Not so much for winds.

“I think with most wind instrument players we kind of come up through the band system,” Bohnet said. “I grew up in Waukegan, Illinois, and they started some kids as early as third grade on band instruments, but I didn’t start until fifth grade.”

The winner of the 2021 Nappie Award for Best Classical Musician noted size limitations at play. Preschool-sized fingers can tap piano keys and bow, but their short arms can’t handle the dimensions of many wind instruments.

Leaving Illinois, Bohnet’s family moved to the West Coast. She earned a bachelor’s degree at the University of California – Stockton, a master’s degree at the University of Southern California and a doctorate at Texas Tech University. In 1991, she began teaching at the University of South Alabama where she and her husband, Keith, work in the music department.

She also picked up other instruments along the way. Bohnet went through a detailed explanation of the differences between an orchestral harp and her beloved Celtic harp. Being the smaller of the two, the latter is easier to transport. It has technical advantages, too.

Then there’s her baritone saxophone. With six feet of pipe weighing about 11-20 pounds, it’s longer than Bohnet is tall.

“It’s perfect for me because I got a lot of air and no chops,” Bohnet said. “I like playing those low, funky notes.”

That versatility has earned her gigs. She played saxophone when Black Jacket Symphony performed “Sgt. Pepper’s” at Mobile’s Saenger Theatre. She has graced memorable ensembles like the Silverwood Quartet – “Not named after the street!” – and Second Breakfast.

Her work with popular Celtic specialists Mithril probably found most exposure in

### Recommended Stories

Arts events reemerge from missing list

By Kevin Lee

An ace on the Causeway

By Andy MacDonald

Fee, Fi, Fo, Fum — Giants winning again

By Rob Holbert

Diary of a temporarily insane woman on I-10

By Ashley Trice

REO Speedwagon rolls into town

By Stephen Centanni



Mobile. After gigging almost all of the last couple of decades, the band's violinist relocated to the inner South and priorities changed. Bohnet said they haven't played since St. Patrick's Day 2018. For now, another Celtic project, Liminal Duo, takes up that shamrock-shaped hole in Bohnet's heart.

She also boasted of what is likely the world's best chamber ensemble named after a medieval siege weapon, the Trebuchet Trio. The moniker is a coy play on the contrast between the lyrical name and the actual object.

With pandemic precaution, orchestras were shaved. Wind instruments were an expected casualty.

"I was very fortunate. I played every [Mobile] Symphony concert since the summer," Bohnet said.

Through Christmas, Prokofiev, "Carnival of Animals" and "Appalachian Spring," Bohnet was there.

"The very last one we played in June, I was the only wind player. I played one piece for five minutes and I was certainly grateful to be playing," Bohnet said.

Bohnet can't wait to get back to the Saenger, especially since a more finely tuned climate control system is being installed. She said symphony colleagues have measured temps as low as 60 degrees on stage in the past and her section often wears thermal underwear and fingerless mittens.

The flautist said the Nappie win was a "shock."

"People were telling me I was in there and I didn't even know I was nominated," Bohnet said.

SHARE:



RATE:



< PREVIOUS

[Eric Erdman takes home Nappie for Best Solo Musician](#)

NEXT >

[McGill-Toolen's Naman takes soccer to next level](#)

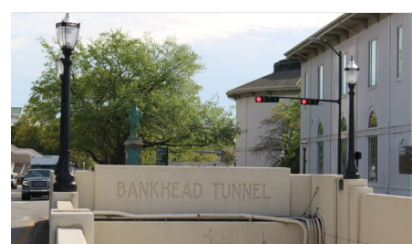
#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR



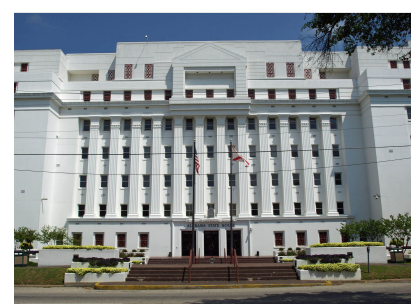
#### Kevin Lee

Kevin Lee has served as Lagniappe arts editor since 2003. He won Mobile Press Club awards for both Best Commentary Print and In-Depth Reporting for Non-Daily Newspaper in 2004 and 2005.

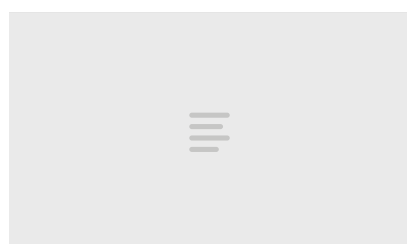
#### RELATED POSTS



**Let there be light: ALDOT replaces**



**Budget proposal puts**



**Stimpson names senior director of city**



**MASTER CLEANERS**  
Dry Cleaning & Laundry

6300 Grelot Rd. 634-1470  
720 Schillinger Rd. S 633-0183 • 5616 Three Notch Rd.. 666-3479  
14 S. Sage Ave. 471-1893 • 3429 St. Stephens Rd. 456-4186

MAIN OFFICE 456-4186 • M-F 7-6 • SAT 8-3  
WWW.MASTER-CLEANERS.COM

**THE SHOWER SHOP**  
CUSTOM SHOWER DOORS & MIRRORS

3510 Cottage Hill Road  
Mobile, AL 36609  
(251) 666-6615  
www.theshowershopinc.com

2020 Chevrolet  
**SILVERADO**  
Up to \$11,000 OFF

**Guaranteed Lifetime Powertrain Warranty**

*Jason Pilger*  
**CHEVROLET** FIND NEW ROADS<sup>SM</sup>  
SAVE MORE IN AT MORE

**LAS FLORIDITAS**  
CUBAN-STYLE SPEAKEASY  
DOWNTOWN MOBILE