

SCHERZO

Interviews with the notable musicians & fascinating personalities of our day

with WESLEY FERREIRA

STÉPHANE GENTIL

Clarinet Product Manager of Selmer Paris since 2003, Renaissance man, life of the party, and a friend to all, Stéphane Gentil is a trusted and knowledgeable associate and colleague to clarinetists everywhere. He sits down to answer some questions.

What's the best part of your job?

Working with musicians!

What's the hardest part of your job? Working with musicians!

What's the one thing that people would be surprised to find out about you?

I write songs.

What embarrasses you the most?

I'm not very good at playing the clarinet!

What really makes you laugh?

I laugh very easily, but my baby boy playing tricks on me totally cracks me up.

Is there a meeting you never miss?

ClarinetFest!

What do you love most about your job?

Meeting and working with people from different cultures. I usually find out that we all have more things in common than one would think. Art strengthens relationships between people.

What motivates you?

The possibility of developing and designing new instruments that will match the needs and desires of today's and tomorrow's musicians. Working with a great team of technicians and receiving input from great players.

What's the weirdest thing in your office?

A photo of some clarinetists dressed up as cowboys, but holding clarinets instead of rifles.

What is your favorite quote?

"I decided to be happy, because it is good for my health." VOLTAIRE

What is your favorite meal?

Veal paupiette.

What is your adult beverage of choice? Smoked single malt.

What other art form resonates with you the most?

Drawing, paintings.

If you could have dinner with anyone, dead or alive, who would it be and why?

I'd spend the afternoon of July 27th, 1890 with Vincent Van Gogh. I would hope to influence events and help him live a little longer so that we all might be able to enjoy more of his fantastic paintings!

If you had to be stuck on a 10-hour flight sitting next to anyone, who would it be and why?

Sting or Paul McCartney I'd love to talk songwriting with either of them.

What do you love most about your life right now?

Being able to enjoy my family, with two teens and a baby boy, and watching them interact, as well as witnessing the strong brotherhood and sisterhood developing.

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If you had a hammer...

I'd build bridges everywhere between people and cultures.

If you could sing a duet with any artist, living or dead, who would it be and what song?

Sting on *Englishman in New York* or Paul McCartney on *Let it Be*.

What's impressed you most about students these days?

I'm impressed by students who live in very difficult situations and who are studying music with dedication. These students have a different relation to music. Music is much more than an art for them to master. It is a passport for their future.

What would you recommend people see if they're in France?

Visit the Isle of Brehat in Birtanny. It's very small. No cars. On the south coast, facing Paimpol, the waters are calm and as blue as the Caribbean. In the north, facing the Atlantic Ocean, the water and the landscape are wild and rough.



Photo credit: Lucie Bigo

If you could cook one meal for a group of friends, what would it be?

Tajine... with veal meatballs, carrots, zucchini, almonds, raisins, and honey, and with all the good spices which give it flavor!

If you had to choose another first name other than your own, what would that be? Oscar.

If you joined the circus, what would you be doing? Juggling.

If you could speak to your father again, what would you say? Dad, Mum is well and you have incredible grandkids. They are becoming great human beings, you can rest peacefully, proud, and happy.