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And now... 25 things you didn't know about Robert Olivia, Seattle Symphony Assistant Librarian.

1. I was born and raised in Plainfield, New Jersey (Exit 137 off the Garden State Parkway).
2. My Mom, Eileen Olivia, is a retired librarian (a real one with a library degree) and my dad, Robert R. Olivia, was a clarinetist and elementary band director. Is it any wonder that I became a clarinetist and orchestra librarian?
3. I began my musical life playing trumpet, then switched to guitar, and then drums. The drums didn't meet with great approval due to the racket and I was banished to the basement. Finally, with my Dad as my teacher, I settled on clarinet.
4. After my Father's untimely passing at the age of 42, my Mom continued to take my sister and I into New York City to the MET Opera, New York City Ballet, MOMA, the Frick Collection, the 92nd Street Y, Mostly Mozart, Kool New- port Jazz Festival, and the Waterloo Festival. My first opera was *Il Tronatore* at the MET and, at the time, I remember thinking it would never end! I always looked forward to the MET's 2 or 3 inter- missions so I could order another Roy Rodgers. Now, as an adult, I appreciate and cherish those experiences.
5. During my summers in high school and college I worked full time as a machinist's apprentice. Af- ter a couple years I was good enough to read schematics and set up drill presses, lathes, and milling machines by myself. Somehow I managed not to disassociate any fingers from my hands.
6. While an undergraduate at Wilkes College in Pennsylvania I started going into to New York City for clarinet lessons with jazz great Bob Wilber. Bob was known as the protégé to the great Sidney Bechet. He became a mentor for me and we played together many times.
7. After graduating from college and getting re- jected by Juilliard, Manhattan School of Music, and New England Conservatory, I took a job as a bank teller.
8. During this period Bob Wilber sent me to study with his teacher, the great clarinet pedagogue, Leon Russianoff. I took weekly lessons at Mr. Russianoff's 52nd Street studio. This became one of the great friendships of my life.
9. During this time, I was also doing a lot of play- ing with jazz bands. I bought a tenor sax that Sonny Rollins had lying around in his closet and managed to find work on the road with some of the big bands and jazz greats I had long admired.
10. While on the road I continued my lessons with Mr. Russianoff whenever I was in New York City and finally earned a degree at Manhattan School of Music.
11. One year after I graduated, Mr. Russianoff passed away. It was the second time in my life I had experienced the loss of a great mentor and teacher. As a result, I decided to move to Bos- ton. This may seem an unnatural decision given that I had been life-long Mets fan, however I had given up on the Mets after the World Series when they defeated my now beloved Red Sox – and, days later, traded my hero and World Series MVP, Ray Knight.
12. In Boston, I started gigging around town and working part time in the cheese department of a gourmet grocery store. I started taking lessons with Tom Martin from the Boston Symphony and eventually was awarded a Fellowship to Tan- glewood, where I came under the influence of Marty Burlingame, Jon Perkel, and John Grande. Jon and John were librarians for the TMC and I had occasion to observe them attending to their various duties and the blizzard of requests from musicians. I found myself on the back deck of the Shed, chatting with Jon Perkel and uttering those now-embarrassing words, "So, Mr. Perkel, what exactly does an orchestra librarian do?" He marched me straight into the BSO library to meet Marty, and my fate was sealed.
13. For the rest of that Summer at Tanglewood, I spent as much time in the BSO library as I could. I'd never seen so much activity in one room aside from the machine shop.
14. About the same time, the long-time performance librarian at New England Conservatory, Betty Burnett, was preparing to retire and I thought that position might be preferable to working at the cheese department, despite my love of free



- food. I applied for the job and, my lack of experience notwithstanding, they offered it to me. But I had to turn it down. I had just won the *Artists' International Competition* and was awarded a year of concert management followed by a Carnegie Recital Hall concert. I would be on the road a lot, playing concertos and recitals. A month later they offered it to me again and I turned it down again. This went on month after month until December when, with my savings nearly exhausted, and after many talks with Tom Martin, and finally a phone call from Tom's kitchen over a Samuel Smith Oatmeal Stout to Marty, I decided to accept the job. The next day I called Marty to find out exactly what the heck I should do now that I was an orchestra librarian.
15. Fortunately for me, Betty agreed to stay on for some time to train me, and she taught me much about this profession. After working days at NEC, I would walk across the street to Symphony Hall, to "go to school" as it were. I would go to the library and ask countless dumb questions, make copies, get bagels and sandwiches, and generally learn tons. Some of my fondest memories are of times spent in the second and third floor BSO library. And, during Pops season it was truly like being back in the machine shop. Unless one has been there during a Pops season it is really impossible to imagine what a factory of music production it is.
 16. Boston in many ways is really my musical home. It is where I matured as a musician, where I learned a respect for tradition, and where I learned how to do what I do now both as a librarian and clarinetist.
 17. From Boston I went to other orchestras—too many, truth be told—including Oregon, Naples, Detroit, and finally to Hollywood to work for JoAnn Kane Music Service.
 18. My experience at JoAnn Kane's in Hollywood was one I would not trade for anything. While there I worked on over one hundred motion pictures and TV shows. Just like the Pops season in Boston, the pace was frantic. Mornings could begin at 6am with a production meeting and fresh manuscript from John Williams that would be recorded only hours later. These were some of the most talented musicians/librarians/copyists I'd ever worked with. One's work had to be perfect the first time since there were no second chances. I loved every minute of it and it led to another great friendship that I cherish today with JoAnn and Artie Kane who have a beautiful home close to me on Whidbey Island in Washington State.
 19. Shortly after finishing work on John Williams' score for *Memoirs of a Geisha*, I came to Seattle to begin my current and wonderfully-rewarding job working for the Seattle Symphony, with Gerard Schwarz and Pat Takahashi. In a way, it seemed my life was coming full circle. As a child my mother had taken me to many concerts conducted by Gerard Schwarz. At that time Pat Takahashi was Jerry's librarian. I could never have imagined that these people, whom I had seen only from the audience, would someday become such wonderful and supportive colleagues.
 20. My experiences in Seattle have been among my most challenging and satisfying. Almost as soon as I arrived, Maestro Schwarz began an ambitious project, commissioning original compositions and arrangements; two albums of pieces recorded by the orchestra put together with the skills I used at JKMS.
 21. I've also had the opportunity to work with some prominent publishers on new editions of pieces such as Schubert/Berg *Deutsche Tänze* with Universal and two obscure violin concerti and the Marcello *Oboe Concerto* with Ricordi. I am currently working on new publications of Bernstein's *Prelude Fugue and Riffs* for Clarinet, Vibes and Rhythm section, and the re-orchestration of the original film version of the *Artie Shaw Clarinet Concerto*.
 22. Doc Severinsen, Marvin Hamlisch, Frederica von Stade, and Sam Ramey have also used my arrangements on many of their concerts.
 23. With the support of Jerry and Pat, I've taken on the management of our current \$97,000 Mellon Grant that has enabled us to hire archivists from the University of Washington to inventory and catalogue our music collection, and to create an orchestra archive. So far this has led to an exhibit of treasures we have found to a DVD of that exhibit, together with a tour of the SSO Library. These will soon be accessible on-line at www.youtube.com/seattlesymphony and you can read about them in the new book by Russ Girsberger and Laurie Lake to be published in the spring.
 24. I've just finished construction of a personal website www.robortolivia.com.
 25. When not in the library I can be found in any Northwest river with a fly pole fishing for Steelhead and Salmon, enjoying a long drive in my 1964 Buick Wildcat 4-door hardtop or at Note Bene Winery where I work in my free time during pressing season.