

# THE HORNMAN

A documentary film about Bill Nemoyten's life and the far-reaching importance of public school music programs.



Bill Nemoyten has transformed thousands of lives with his passion and dedication to music and the arts. It all started over seventy years ago with a beat up old student trombone and free lessons from his public school. But with the devastating cuts in funding for arts education since then, what have our children, grandchildren and future generations already lost?

**PRODUCED AND DIRECTED BY JO NEMOYTEN**



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## BACKGROUND



Arts education significantly improves math, language, memory and motor skills. It also improves perseverance, the ability to learn new things and fosters lifelong creativity and healthy brain function.<sup>1</sup>

But despite solid research and strong public support, the arts remain on the margins of education, often the last to be added and the first to be dropped in times of strained budgets and shifting priorities.

Bill Nemoyten's life, which spans the past 85 years, clearly illustrates the magic of arts education in a child's life, the confidence, leadership skills and personal fulfillment that can come from that foundation, and the loss we continue to suffer with every child who hasn't had the chance to blow a horn or take a brush to canvas.

### ARTS RESEARCH FACTS:

- Playing a musical instrument can reverse stress at the molecular level.<sup>2</sup>
- Actively working with musical sounds enhances neuroplasticity, the brain's ability to adapt and change.<sup>3</sup>
- An analysis of 10 years of SAT data revealed that students who took four years of arts courses in high school earned the highest scores on both the verbal and math SAT.<sup>4</sup>

**The Hornman** is being written, produced and directed by Jo Nemoyten, Bill's oldest daughter, a writer, musician and performer herself. Having watched the highs and lows of her father's career and the decline of public school arts in her own life and the life of her son, she started filming her father's shows and appearances as well as filming him tell stories since 2003. She thought that someday "someone" should make a documentary about him, highlighting the importance of music education. In 2009, she and her filmmaker husband, Ian Carruthers, started the foolish tree media production company. It turns out that "someone" is her.

After editing Bill's memoirs and logging hundreds of photos and film clips, Jo realized that this is not an *issue-driven* film.

The issues are *included* in the larger mosaic of her father's life,

a personal history of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Besides being a musician, educator and arts administrator, Bill's life offers many other rich cultural and historical perspectives. He was born to eastern European Jewish immigrants and raised in a primarily Orthodox Jewish neighborhood in Cleveland, Ohio. Although he, his wife and four children led a typical suburban middle class life in the '50s, the '60s tested everything he stood for as his oldest son and daughter fully embraced the counterculture. He had the experience of losing his wife to breast cancer after 35 years of marriage. He's an adventurer who has travelled the U.S. and the world. He found out when he was 62 that his father wasn't really his father, finally making many things about his life clear. And now, at age 85, he still plays, educates and writes, maintaining a lust for life that inspires people of all ages.

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FROM FORMER STUDENTS:

*"Having led several units of men with two left feet, I am thankful for the example of a calmer, more rational form of leadership, and so, I might add, are several hundred U.S. soldiers. Since I started studying trombone in the third grade, I always had that kind of leadership and teaching style as an example in my life."*

~ Howard Grether, Major U.S. Army Retired, Pastor

*"I often think about you and the huge support that you gave us starting up in music. It is appreciated. It has stayed with me as a lifetime enjoyment."*

~ Paul Krusinski, Professor of Medicine at University of Vermont

*"Mr. Nemoyten was my Mr. Holland! He believed in me...I grew up on Grand Ole Opry—not Opera. Because of his encouragement and support, I graduated from Oberlin Conservatory and then won a Fullbright to sing Wagner in Germany. After many years of singing all over the country, I now teach voice, music appreciation and music history and love where my life has taken me."*

~ Rebecca Norberg, Professor of Fine Arts, North Central University, Minneapolis

*"It was mainly from you that I learned the value of discipline, hard work and tenacity. I haven't always put those values into practice as I should, but I always know that I am responsible for my own life and I so much appreciate your part in helping me form that value."*

~ Jay Detrow, Information Manager, Michelin Aircraft Tire

*"I don't know how you handled me but when you infected me with John Phillip Sousa, you changed my life!"*

~ Jim Klippert, professional New Orleans jazz trombonist

## SYNOPSIS

Bill Nemoyten has ignited a love and appreciation for the arts in thousands of people for over seventy years. And how did it all start? With a beat up old student trombone and free lessons at his Cleveland public school. That one opportunity showed him his calling and set him on the path he still travels in his eighties.

*The Hornman* film follows this path, revealing an inspirational and complex American story. Bill's own school music teachers had such a profound influence that he became one himself. By age 32 he had a wife, 4 children, a mortgage and a dog—the '50s American Dream. Then, in the late sixties, a series of chance events ushered him into the then fledgling field of Arts Administration, leading to prestigious and challenging positions in Illinois and the San Francisco Bay Area.

But this is not a film about everything always working out.

It's also about growing up during the Great Depression. It's about being the father of rebellious teenagers and a gay son, a husband who lost his wife of 35 years to cancer and a dedicated arts advocate who lost his job to California's Proposition 13.

But no matter what life throws his way, Bill keeps playing and inspiring. He spent his early sixties again teaching public school music. Then, in "retirement," he created **The Hornman** Show and became a serious writer of memoirs, essays and fiction.

Bill's students have passed his inspiration on to their children and grandchildren. How many generations, denied the proven benefits of an arts education, have already missed the opportunity to find their hidden talents and fulfilling life paths? This is the ultimate question of *The Hornman*.



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## MEDIA RESOURCES

Because of the filmmakers' unfettered access to family media and the willingness of friends, family and former students to wholeheartedly participate in this project, there is a treasure trove of media available for the film.

Bill's own words from interviews, lectures and from the audiobook of his autobiographical stories published in December of 2012, *It All Started with a Trombone*, ***The Hornman Memoirs***, will be used for the bulk of the narration.

A collection of over eighty hours of film will tell the visual story. Footage ranges from Bill's wedding in 1951 to family movies all through the years, to footage shot over the past 15 years in SD and HD of 24 Hornman shows and recent interviews with Bill, former students, friends and family members in California and around the country. We also have hundreds of photographs and newspaper clippings from Bill's childhood up to the present.

As to the musical score, besides being a music educator, Bill is also a composer. His Cuyahoga Valley Suite will work well as the film's main source for background music. Other music composed by Bill and by other immediate family members will also be used.

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## STYLE

Because most of the story will be told in Bill's own words and in his own voice, ***The Hornman*** is more a memoir on film rather than a documentary or biopic. Bill presents a larger than life personality and a gift for storytelling as well as a warmth and sense of humor. And his array of friends and loved ones is just as colorful. All of this will combine to create the experience of meeting up with a lively, interesting character and his cohorts, and after an evening of entertaining stories and good company, leaving as old friends. The issue of public school arts becomes more personal and tangible, ideally promoting more discussion and action.

Our plan is to make a 60-90 minute film, suitable for broadcast and as a fund-raising vehicle for arts organizations. As such, our goal is to have viewers walk away feeling uplifted, concerned and inspired to take action on behalf of current and future generations.

## TARGET AUDIENCE

Bill's story is relevant to a number of demographics:

- ***The Hornman*** has a broad international television audience with its inspirational and universal resonance. Outlets such as PBS, Showtime, Cinemax and Bravo will be approached for distribution.

Other more specific audiences include:

- Music Educators and organizations concerned with promoting public music and arts education
  - We would like to use the film to help raise money and awareness, partnering with organizations such as NAFME (National Association of Music Educators), CMEA (California Music Educators Association), AEP (Arts Education Partnership), The Music Achievement Council and ACB (The Association of Concert Bands)
  - These professional organizations exist on the district, state and national levels. Many of them have print and online advertising opportunities as well as opportunities for posting stories from Bill's book and using the book to promote the movie.

- Musicians and music students
  - Having written, played, and conducted music all of his life, Bill's story is of interest to anyone who has a passion for music of any variety.
  - It's also a historical perspective on how the role of the professional musician has changed and diminished since the 1940s.
- Jews and Jewish Film Festivals
  - Judaism has always been a central part of Bill's life and family. This will be mentioned, as appropriate, throughout the stories of the film. Bill's maternal grandfather was a Scribe, a holy man who hand-wrote Torahs and brought his family from Poland to Ellis Island in time to escape the concentration camps. Many Jews of his generation will find his story familiar and younger Jews will find the historical perspective and Bill's journey from Orthodox to Reform to Jewish Humanist an interesting one.
- Seniors and those involved with the Healthy Aging movement
  - Seniors and organizations involved with healthy aging will find Bill's story inspiring. He is a great example of someone who pursues what he loves and has continued to grow, create, teach and perform into his eighties.
  - Bill was featured in 2012 on the Growing Bolder television show, widely distributed through American Public Television. The show celebrates active aging, using stories about inspirational seniors. His segment on their website has received over 91,000 hits and has been broadcast all over the U.S. to thousands more.

## DISTRIBUTION AND MARKETING STRATEGY

*The Hornman* will be entered into major film festivals such as Sundance, Cannes, Berlin, San Francisco International and New York as well as special focus festivals featuring documentaries, the arts, music, education, Jewish film festivals, Senior festivals and Women's Film Festivals since the Writer/Director/Producer, Jo Nemoyten, is a woman. From there, the film will be submitted to American Public Television, National Education Telecommunications Association as well as cable outlets such as HBO, Showtime and Bravo.

The DVD package will have many extra features such as longer interviews with former students, family and friends, Bill's lecture at CSUEB and a complete Hornman Show using clips from various venues and audiences. We will be seeking Educational Distribution through organizations like "Women Make Movies," and will provide a study guide that targets all high school and college programs involving music and music education.

Broadcasts will be promoted using social media and **The Hornman** website as well as through partnerships with organizations and foundations which promote arts education. Print as well as online media targeting the audiences mentioned above will be employed.

Bill and the filmmakers will use the film as a vehicle for discussion and fundraising for organizations which promote public music education in our schools and communities. Focus will be on programs that help educate and employ superior music teachers as well as those that supply musical instruments to schools.

Former students and colleagues from around the globe have shown interest in Bill's book and film and many will be available to tell stories with Bill at local showings of the film. As health and energy allow, Bill will also be available for public or private lectures, readings of his book and Hornman Shows to promote the film as well as the book.

In our research looking at past films promoting music education, we found very few documentaries or narratives. *El Sistema* is a 2008 Venezuelan film about the remarkable music programs in that country's schools. *Kenbe La – Hold On* is a 2011 film about music education in Haiti. In the U.S. there was the 1996 documentary, *Small Wonders* and 1999 narrative version starring Meryl Streep, *Music of the Heart*, inspired by the true story of the Opus 118 Harlem School of Music's string program. And, of course, *Mr. Holland's Opus*, released in 1996, provided a large spike in awareness, activism and support for school music programs. But that effect faded long ago. Bill's story is unique in that it is the only one featuring an octogenarian's journey starting from his own public school music experience and featuring his students, now in their sixties and seventies, with stories of how music education enriched their lives and those of their children and grandchildren. This unique "case study" perspective is a major selling point for the film, both from a funding standpoint and for marketing the film and DVD.

## FUNDING PLAN

Funding for pre-production and production has been carried completely by the filmmakers. With the added opportunities afforded by a fiscal sponsorship, we will not only pursue grants from documentary film sources such as SFFS Documentary Film Fund, Sundance Documentary Fund and MacArthur Foundation, but also from foundations focused on music and arts education such as the National Endowment for the Arts, the California Council for the Humanities, the MacArthur Foundation, the Fledgling Fund and Cinereach.

Larger individual donations from people known to be interested in arts education and especially those who know Bill and his work will be pursued using house parties and other private events. Online crowd-sourcing campaigns for various aspects of the project will take advantage of Bill's extensive mailing list combined with the foolish tree list. There are also plans to hold benefit Hornman Shows and readings of his book.

On the corporate end, we will pursue funding from musical instrument manufacturers, music and instrument stores and other related businesses.

## CURRENT COMPLETION TIMELINE

The project is currently in the post-production phase with limited filming still to do. Once funding, a story consultant and editor are secured, we are budgeting for a 6 month timeline to film completion.

## KEY PERSONNEL

### JO NEMOYTEN – WRITER/DIRECTOR/PRODUCER

Jo is CEO and Co-owner of foolish tree, a media production company she owns and operates with her husband, camera person and filmmaker, Ian Carruthers. Although this material is personal to Jo, it is the first of many documentaries about important issues that she plans to produce and direct.

Jo played the violin starting at age six and attended public schools where she could be in the orchestra, band, choir and drama class and can't imagine getting through school without those outlets. She has an Associate Degree in Physics (a rebellious move on her part to prove she was not just good at artsy endeavors) and has worked as an electronics technician, an industrial programmer, a Rebirther, a Tarot Reader, a graphics and web designer and executive assistant at various non-

profits. She is also a published poet, a former classical and rock violinist, stand-up comic, comedy writer, singer/songwriter/guitar player and character actor.

In addition to doing most of the pre-production and production work on **The Hornman** film, she edited, designed and through foolish tree, published Bill's book, *It All Started with a Trombone*, **The Hornman Memoirs**, available at thehornman.com.

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#### DAVID L. BROWN – CONSULTING PRODUCER

David L. Brown ([www.dlbfilms.com](http://www.dlbfilms.com)) is a three-time Emmy Award-winning San Francisco documentary filmmaker who has, since 1971, produced, written and directed over 80 productions and 12 broadcast documentaries on social, nuclear, health, technology, peace and environmental issues. His documentaries have received over 80 international awards and have been broadcast on PBS and in 15 countries.

His 2005 documentary, *The Bridge So Far – A Suspense Story*, won two Emmys and *A Span in Time*, out in 2009, won another.

David's background as a sax player himself as well as his experience making films about musicians and seniors makes him a perfect choice as Consulting Producer. *Of Wind and Waves: The Life of Woody Brown*, a feature-length documentary about a 94-year old surfing, sailing and soaring, received an Emmy nomination for Best Documentary. And *Surfing for Life* is an inspirational documentary on older surfers as models of healthy and successful aging which won 15 international awards. David is presently working on *Keeper of the Beat*, a feature-length biographical documentary about the life and music of Barbara Borden, an extraordinary 67-year-old drummer, composer, teacher and peacemaker and *Third Rock*, a feature-length documentary on a youth rock and roll band.

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#### IAN CARRUTHERS - CAMERA

Ian is the other half of foolish tree and has been filming Bill since 2003. Ian has been making movies since he was a kid and decided to take it up professionally after being laid off from his fourth administrative "day job" in a row. Since starting foolish tree, Ian has shot and edited everything from live performances to weddings to cooking demonstrations and many promotional spots.

Like Jo, Ian has a long history in the arts. He has always been a writer and has written three novels and many short stories and screen plays. He is also a singer/songwriter/guitar player, a sketch artist and painter, actor and performer.

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#### BRIAN HAWLK – SOUND EDITING/MIXING

Brian Hawlk ([www.brianhawk.com](http://www.brianhawk.com)) owns and operates Blue Velvet Studios in Hollywood. Acquiring credits as a Composer, Sound Mixer, Sound Designer and Sound Recordist, Brian's sensibilities and diverse scope have allowed him to work on projects ranging from retro Film Noir, to super-natural dramas, to insightful documentaries such as *8 Broken Hearts* (2012), *Namaste Nepal* (2009) and 14 episodes of the Fox Movie Channel series, *Making a Scene*.

The filmmakers have known Brian for over 10 years and he recently did sound design and composition for Ian's short film, *Loaded Paradise*.

Footnotes:

1. From the report, *Critical Evidence: How the Arts Benefit Student Achievement*, commissioned by the Arts Education Partnership and The National Assembly of State Arts Agencies using a compendium of recent research studies.
2. Loma Linda University School of Medicine and Applied Biosystems published in Medical Science Monitor
3. Northwestern University study published in Nature Reviews Neuroscience
4. Vaughn et al., 2000

# THE HORNMAN BUDGET

## *Immediate Needs to Complete the Film*

This is all I will need to finish creating this important film so we can take it out into the world. Consider how many billions are spent every year on Hollywood movies, regardless of quality or message. If you care about investing in the future of music education, support a film that will have real impact and portray the life of a true national treasure like Bill Nemoyten. What better way to spend your tax-deductible dollars?

Producer/Director (Jo)	6 months	\$24,000
Video Editor/Story Consultant	6 months	\$40,000
2 Consulting Producers	20 hours each	\$2,000
Sound Editor/Mixer		\$6,000
Music arranging, recording		\$6,000
Color Correction		\$3000
Music and Photo Rights		\$5,000
Graphics and Titles		\$2,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$88,000</b>

### **What can your support accomplish?**

\$1000 Buys 20 hours with a top documentary producer

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\$2000 Buys all of our eye-catching graphics and titles

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\$5000 Buys the rights to all copyrighted music and photographs

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\$6,000 Pays our sound editor/mixer to do his magic

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\$10,000 Gives us an experienced editor for 6 solid weeks

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... and \$20 X only 1,200 people will pay for Jo to take the project to completion!

All donations are tax-deductible.

A more detailed budget including marketing and distribution costs is available upon request.

The Hornman is a fiscally sponsored project of the San Francisco Film Society.