

01:00:00

(Fade in, applause while Jens walks onto stage for Beethoven concert performance at Baruch College.)

01:00:08 JENS: (on camera and voice over) I think if Zeus came to life right now, this would be Beethoven. Big, and muscular and crude. Uncivilized and wondrous and idealistic and with mud on his boots. And, if Beethoven comes into your living room and you try to take the mud off his boots, you have cleaned him up but you’ve lost Beethoven.

01:00:39 (Coriolanus Overture begins.)

01:00:47 JENS: (on camera) I’ve never had a conducting lesson in my life.
(music continues)

01:00:52 JENS: I’ve been homeless, I’ve been in a mental institution, I lived on the edge of Harlem.
(music continues)

01:01:05 JENS: I elected to find whatever ray of sunlight there was. When I had that one percent of optimism, I built on it, and it grew.
(music continues)

01:01:22 JENS: I used to sit on the stoop there in Harlem and I dreamed at that time of having a great orchestra. And I’m almost there.
(music continues)

01:01:40 (Main Title up:
LIFE ON JUPITER – The Story of Jens Nygaard, Musician
Fade out tease.)

01:01:48 Fade in shot of subway station, then good Shepherd Church, then cut to Jens giving Karl Kramer a lesson on French horn in the church. (Jens begins voice-over, then on-camera.)

01:02:05 JENS: To create an ongoing atmosphere where people people want to come there day after day after day and, as I say colloquially, bust their butt. That is the greatest triumph of my life is to be able to create an atmosphere, a working atmosphere for the musicians.

01:02:25 Cut to Karl playing the French horn. He begins speaking voice over, then on camera.

Sub Title: **Karl Kramer, French horn**

01:02:30 KARL KRAMER: I was very surprised when I first got a chance to work with him to see what kind of quality we are dealing with. . . . And that it has actually turned out to be the great experience of my life to work with Jens Nygaard.

Sub-title: **Martin Bookspan, critic and commentator**

01:02:42 MARTIN BOOKSPAN: He is regarded by the musical cognoscenti as one of the great musicians of the twentieth century!

01:02:47 Cut to Mozart Piano Concerto No. 14 on camera, Ruth Laredo performing as piano soloist. (Ruth is voice-over and on-camera in the following passage.
Sub-titled as **Ruth Laredo, piano soloist**)

01:03:12 RUTH LAREDO: I have never, as a professional musician, been engaged to play somewhere where there wasn't a fee involved, because that's the professional arrangement. You play for a fee. An electrician gets paid, or a plumber gets paid, and a musician presumably gets paid for their work. But for Jens, this is something quite different, and you know that he is doing this on a shoestring. I know he doesn't get paid a thing for any of those concerts. It's his... his oxygen, those concerts. And it's a privilege to make music with him and I know that my colleagues feel the same way.

01:03:55 Cut to Harvey Pittel on camera performing soprano saxophone in BACH *Brandenburg Concerto, No. 2* .
(Sub-title: **Harvey Pittel, saxophone soloist** appears at 01:04:10)

01:03:56 HARVEY PITTEL: Playing with Jens is just a totally refreshing experience. I can do absolutely anything I want, as a soloist, and he's there. I hesitate to even use the word conductor, really, he's a teacher. He's the maestro. You know, le maitre.

01:04:18 Cut to Vadim Gluzman on violin, performing MENDELSSOHN *Violin Concerto in D Minor*, speaking voice-over and on-camera.
(Sub-title: **Vadim Gluzman, violin soloist**)

01:04:30 VADIM GLUZMAN: With Jens, unlike many, there is no barrier between him and music. And that barrier, most often, is conductor's ego. And with Jens, you never see it. And the second thing for me is level of trust. Once you step on stage and there are people in the hall, with Jens you feel like there is nothing that can go wrong. After the first rehearsal, I can play with him any piece.

(Vadim continues performance to end of movement.)

01:05:36 (Jens begins voice over, then cut to Jens on-camera at 01:05:40.)

JENS: I am really a throwback, I am an anachronism today because I am an old kappellmeister. I really belong in the eighteenth century. If you need a cantata written for Sunday, I write it. If you need somebody to play viola, I do it. In other words, I am not really of the twentieth century. I'm a throwback.

01:05:55 Jens performing on piano: BACH *Piano Concerto in A Major*..

(Jens continues voice over images.)

01:06:17 JENS: The three primary shaping voices in my life are the one and only Jasha Heifetz, Sir Donald Francis Tovey, the great English writer about music, and my father. That's a picture of my daddy as a sailor in the Danish Navy... And after the First World War, he was a musician on liners and he made 49 trips across the Atlantic.

(BACH *Piano Concerto* fades out.)

01:06:46 And he wound up in Omaha, Nebraska. And from there he was in vaudeville; he was the conductor for “Birth of a Nation.” He then joined the John Philip Sousa band where he played clarinet and also saxophone with a little entertainment group that Sousa pulled out. And then he settled in Longview, Texas, and he had this nightclub, called “Enjoy It Night Club,” and I was born in the night club. And then the depression came along, and it was no longer for my daddy to make a living with that.

01:07:20 (Fade in background music: BACH Violin Concerto in A Minor, with Dmitri Berlinsky, on violin.)

01:07:19 JENS: So then he began to teach music in the public schools. He organized one of the very first string programs in all of the State of Louisiana, and I was the first fiddler for it. My daddy taught me, but I really am the kind of person that just learns these things. I mean, ah, when I was nine or ten months old, there was a tuba in the middle of the floor, and I went there and I was trying to blow on the tuba. And by the time I was two and a half, I was already playing the little E-flat clarinet. I just have such a curiosity and such a love for everything that makes music, that I learned to play all the instruments in the orchestra.

01:08:02 (Cut to Dmitri Berlinsky playing in concert, then childhood image of Jens as music ends)

01:08:14 JENS: My father was the one who gave me access to French horns, and clarinets and tubas and I just absolutely devoured every one of those instruments. Ah, but my mother, in contradistinction, was different. I have great pressure from her. I've suffered from mental illness, profound mental illness, my whole lifetime. It runs in my

family. I get it from my mother. My mother had it, but didn't really know what it was. Ah, "Well if you have the blues, just snap out of it." A psychiatrist was a far away from my mother as the governor. I was very badly treated by her. I used to be looked up in closets. I mean that's terrifying. I was forced by my mother to practice. . . this is so perverse . . . then I would have to go to the bathroom, so I would go, and it would turn out that it would be 55 seconds, and I would notate this 55 seconds that I had not been practicing.

01:09:31 (Fade in Jens at piano, performing BACH *Piano Concerto in A Major*. Jens on-camera at piano intercut with Jens voice-over.)

01:09:36 JENS: So, for years I couldn't even face going to my mother's grave. Anytime I see child prodigies now, I really go and I tell the parents, "Go easy. Make sure that this person can be a child." Kids need to jump rope and they need to play basketball, and they need to go out and be kids. I was not. I was always a child prodigy. And it's a mixed blessing.

(Jens music practice comes to an end as voice over begins.)

01:10:15 JENS: Well, I had a checkered existence. Because I quit high school after the tenth grade, and had to take a number of examinations to get into Louisiana State University, and the band director had offered me a full scholarship there as a solo clarinetist of the band. I was a very troubled individual when I went off to college. . .

01:10:37 (Begin the Jens Nygaard solo piano background music. Composition unnamed, written by Jens Nygaard.)

01:10:38 . . . had a lot of wild oats to sow. Played pool a lot. Drank a lot of beer. And I had dance bands. When I was playing "Sweet Sue" and "Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree" and all these wonderful things, I thought that was the height of existence. I never intended to do anything to stay there and do that for the rest of my life. But as things evolved, I wanted a bigger horizon, so I came to New York. I came with my clarinet, my violin, some of my compositions. And, I tried to get into Juilliard and they said, "Well, the only thing you could do is to take the piano exam." And I was accepted as a pianist.

01:11:00 (Cut to Jens in a restaurant studying a score while eating; then cut to interior of car with Jens looking out at former Juilliard. Jens continues, voice over.)

01:11:20 And here's the present Manhattan School, the former Juilliard. It was a hell hole for me. It was an absolute hell hole for me.

(Jens piano composition comes to an end.)

01:11:30 They never even would consider my talent and part of it had to do with the fact that I’m gentle and I was a Southerner. I mean for you to think of somebody coming from a little town in Arkansas or Louisiana, they don’t expect a major talent to come from there. They expect it to come from Harvard Square or from Bryn Mawr. So I just got pushed aside. I remember, I wanted to study conducting, and they said, “Well, nope, all you can do is be in the piano slot.” So I was ground out like a meat grinder.

(Fade in Jens at piano, slow practice of the BACH *Piano Concerto in A Major*.)

01:12:14 Jens on-camera at piano intercut with Jens voice-over the practice session.)

01:12:01 JENS: And after a few years, I got the Bachelors and the Masters in Piano. Not that I’m a bad pianist, but that was too narrow for me. There were so many things that I wanted to do.

01:12:22 Luckily there were some teachers at Juilliard, especially the great Leonard Rose, cellist, who made me his studio accompanist. And I think I got 2.50 or 3.00 dollars an hour for accompanying his pupils in school. And that helped keep me in living expenses.

01:12:51 Then I really hit some hard times, eventually having a nervous breakdown. I’d have a time that I didn’t have any place to stay, and those were homeless nights. And other times, I had some friends at International House. I would go and sleep on the floor sometimes in there. I didn’t have the money. I had to save the money for food. That’s how these homeless periods were.

01:13:28 Genius and mental illness being connected, I can tell you for sure that’s true. Because the one is a door into the other.

01:13:49 There were times when my anguish was so great that I had to walk down onto the street because I thought that I might throw myself out the window. Ultimately, like a great crystal, I broke and shattered into a thousand pieces.

01:14:23 Through it all, I’ve also been creative. And there is, in my case and in Schumann’s case, my goodness, I just wish that he could come back and that I could share my Welbutrin with him. My God, I’d love that.

01:14:42 I’m a walking sick person, but I have a character of steel. I put it back together. Paradoxically, I put it back stronger than ever.

(Fade out piano practice music.)

01:14:53 Cut to Joel Krosnick.)

01:14:55 Sub-title: **Joel Krosnick, cello**
Juilliard String Quartet

01:14:53 JOEL KROSNICK: I knew him shortly after he had been homeless, on the street, and had a complete breakdown, and I used to hear of this shadowy figure, Jens Nygaard. I was maybe 20 years old, and I was a little taken aback, but he came over to me very warmly at International House and said, “Yo, my friend, I’m Jens Nygaard and I heard you the other day and I think you all are very talented. And I’d like to help.”

01:15:27 And, I thought, “Oh yeah, hmm.”

01:15:29 “And my friend you are very talented and, you know, but there are some things that if you all would think about them that would really improve the play.”

01:15:00 And there was a napkin there and he took out a pencil and he drew a diagram of how I was using the bow on the string. And he drew a diagram of what would be a much more economical and physically more viable way of doing it. And he explained it to me and all, and said, “You all can take this my friend and you all can try it. And if you are interested, you know, here is my number.”

And I went home and put that diagram and drew the bow a couple of times my way, then looked at his diagram, drew it his way, and drew maybe my first comfortable bow I had ever drawn in my life. And I tried a few things, practiced for about a half an hour, went over tot the phone and dialed the phone number.

01:16:23 Well, never, ever, was there anything that he ever told me, physically, technically, that was not absolutely a hundred percent (claps hands). There is just no question.

01:16:35 (Cut to cello lesson with Chagit Glaser and Jens.)

01:16:45 JENS: That’s right. Now that’s what I like. now for you . . . sounds very coarse, and gruff. But I am not interested in you playing for yourself. I am interested in you playing for Mrs. Jones out there. See? Gotta get used to it. that’s why, if you were close to Heifetz, that’s what you heard. You heard: (Jens makes scrunchy sounds)

(Cut to Jens on camera.)

01:17:10 It’s very simple what I do. I am able to X-ray in to see where the unnaturalness is. And when I undo the unnaturalness, then they play better.

01:17:21 (Cut to Chagit Glaser practicing cello.)

JENS: That peripheral kick on your turn around. You know, it’s just like a . . . shake, shake my hand. That’s too tenuous. I want an intimate . . . holding that . . . Hold that thing in your hands. Hold that thing. Take a hold of it.

(Sub-title **Chagit Glaser, cello**)

01:18:04 My dear, that is so much better. You can hear it. But I don’t want you to hear it. I want you to feel it. I never want you to judge anything by what it sounds like. Everything has to do with this. The immediacy of the muscles. Because if you judge it by sound, it’s too late. Everything has to be here, and you have to trust that what you do here is going to produce a certain sound out there. So, everything is technique. That’s all there is, is technique. That’s all there is. That’s all you ever need is technique.

01:18:45 (Cut to the shot of the elevated subway at Broadway and Tieman Streets, then the apartment where Jens used to live.)

01:18:50 JENS: I’ve lived on the edge of Harlem. Paid 46 dollars a month rent on a sixth floor walk up. I was home painting the ceiling of that 6D apartment at Tiemann Place and I got a call. He said, “Mr. Nygaard, can you come out to West Chester. Our conductor can’t be here this evening. Could you take the next train at 125th Street, and come and conduct our chorus?” So, I went out there and I conducted that big amateur chorus of about 150 and they asked me if I would please become their conductor.

01:19:20 (Music of chorus from Westchester fades in.)

01:19:27 I took the really good people and I founded the Westchester Chamber Chorus and Orchestra, which was absolutely a crack ensemble.

(Cut to Martin Bookspan.)

01:19:37 MARTIN BOOKSPAN: I went to one of those concerts and was bowled over. First of all by the musical intelligence that was manifest in that music making. Secondly by the sheer exuberance and the vitality of the music making. I went up to Jens after the concert and introduced myself, told him I had had a remarkable musical experience.

(Cut to a drawing of Jens with voice over of Florence Nygaard.) Sub-title after cut to Florence on camera at 01:20:11: **Florence Nygaard, former spouse**

01:19:59 FLORENCE NYGAARD: In classical music I think it’s harder to achieve commercial success. Jens could have made a fortune as an accompanist. he could have been the greatest accompanist of all time. He breathed with the musicians. Again, even as an accompanist, he brought out the best in them. They are still teasing Jens about business cards he had printed up and it said “Jens Nygaard” and in the middle of the card it said: Musician. And all his friends said you can’t say “Musician.” You have to

say, you are an accompanist, a cellist, you're a violinist, you're this that or the other thing. And . . . Jens couldn't understand why they couldn't understand that he was: musician. And it's true, he is and was. And it's so all encompassing, this talent of his, that I think that's part of the difficulty. I think that people can't grasp him.

01:20:49 (Cut to Mozart piano concerto rehearsal. Jens conducting.)

JENS: Been around New York for a long time. Knocking around trying to get things going. And I had done a lot of smaller things, but I just couldn't get anything to happen. I felt like a very healthy pea pod that had fallen on concrete. That fate had had fall on concrete. Was the pea pod healthy? Yes. Was the concrete able to give it any nourishment? No. In other words, I was blocked out. In 1970, I was just about to give up music. Not that I really didn't have musical talent to hang with it. I was just not going to stay here and become embittered. I would not do that.

01:20:40 (Cut to Jens conducting BEETHOVEN *Symphony No. 5 in C Minor*, Op. 67 at Baruch College.)

01:21:57 JENS: And then Yehudi Menuhin invited me to Vienna, and I went there and taught people from 57 countries from around the world. They asked some of us as teachers, at the beginning to give a lecture. So, what I did was, I said, "My friends, I want to take you into the world of conjecture. So, I took the Opus No. 1 String Quartet of Beethoven . . . (Jens sings melody.) And I wrote it the way Haydn might have written it, the way Mozart might have written it, the way Salieri might have written it, and I wrote it the way those motifs might have been developed by Beethoven in the middle period, and the late period. Right or wrong. That is a very audacious thing to do. But, I did it very well. And, at that point, I had everybody respecting me.

01:22:44 (Beethoven performance intercut with the following Jens passages.)

01:23:03 JENS: I came back here so absolutely thrilled with being alive, and I had found a place where I was respected, that the first thing I did was to play all of Mozart's 30 piano concertos. And over a period of two years I did that.

01:23:30 And then George Jellinek, who was at the time the music director of WQXR, he spoke to Mr. Schonberg about me, and said "Would you please meet with him." He's the big man in music of our age. So, I asked him, "Sir, if I can raise the money, would you sit in judgment on me?"

01:23:49 JENS: I flew to Little Rock. My kid sister picked me up. And we went to the bank the next morning. And my cousins, who are farmers and local people who work in the oil drilling business and various things . . . I said, "I have to leave here tomorrow

with 14,000 dollars would you put up the collateral?” And they did. And I came back and organized an orchestra.

01:25:01 We did a very good performance and I woke up and read this critique in the New York Times: “Jens Nygaard made of Beethoven’s Eighth Symphony a sparkling beautifully proportioned jewel. It must be a joy for musicians to play under a conductor of such expertise.” That was my career. Right there.

01:25:23 Mr. Schonberg was the only person who was powerful enough to overcome all the rejections that I had had.

01:25:32 (Music begins. Mozart Piano Concerto.)

01:25:40 JENS: The way it got the name Jupiter is that it suddenly struck me when NASA sent the wonderful, wonderful rocket up there and took the great pictures of Jupiter. The planet Jupiter is so gaseous that you can’t really get there and it’s like perfection. You can shoot for it but you really can’t get there. I clicked in my mind: Jupiter Symphony. So, I called NASA and I asked them if they would let us use that picture. And, either a phone call or a letter said, “We don’t want to see it appearing on string bean cans. We want you to use it as a logo for yourself.” So, at the point, it became the Jupiter Symphony. And we made our debut in Carnegie Hall.

01:26:28 I was an underground person, the darling of the Village Voice because they did all these kind of kooky, unusual things. But, to be presented by Carnegie Hall and for NASA to hand me that phenomenal picture, I could have sold four-day-old tomatoes, that was such a calling card. I would call up and say, “Do you have any tickets for the Jupiter?” “No, sorry, it’s sold out.” (Laughs.) And I was so proud. It was so shocking! That I would stand up against Cami Hall on the north side of 57th Street, and I’d watch people go over there and look at my sign. I could not believe it. See, I was living up in Harlem at the time. And this was a big event. This was big Carnegie Hall. Sold out.

01:27:20 Some people don’t like it when an outsider comes in and has a great success. After such a great year, I was deeply disappointed that we were not asked back. Then people were erroneously saying, “Well, Jens is a genius, but you can’t live with him. Nobody can deal with him. He just messes everything up. That’s not true. It never was true. So, we went to Tully Hall.

01:27:48 (Begin BEETHOVEN *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra in D Major, Op. 61*)

01:28:03 Sub-title: **Paul Rosenthal, violin soloist**

01:28:53 JENS: The Rockefeller Foundation had said, “O.K., we are going to give you money, not much, but they gave me 35,000 dollars, but we are going to force on you a board who didn’t do a damn thing. So, now I am very touchy about board. I won’t have people on there who just meet to tell me I can’t do Haydn’s Symphony 47, I can only do 104 because the audience knows that.

01:29:18 (Fade up BACH *Violin Concerto in A Minor*, played by Dmitri Berlinsky.)

01:29:33 JENS: I have never been eager to attain anything that meant that I had to momentarily compromise. Some people would say, “Well, you can whore a little bit and then when you get what you want you can clean it up.” I don’t believe that way. I had rather, as a matter of fact, die in a gutter, with my conscience clear, and my integrity intact, than to be a millionaire conducting the New York Philharmonic. That’s how brittle I am. But I am proud of that. I am profoundly proud of that. That’s me, that’s my religion. That’s my morality.

01:30:12 Sub-title: **Dmitri Berlinsky, violin**

01:30:24 JENS: After about a decade, we simply couldn’t afford to stay at Tully. We had to move.

01:30:33 JOEL KROSZNICK: He got red lights thrown at him in different ways, cause he didn’t fit into the green rooms and parlors of certain fancy places, with certain fancy images. But, Jens gave everything he had to give. And he will until the day he drops.

01:30:45 (Cut to Joel Krosnick.)

01:31:52 (Cut to the rehearsal of Mozart Piano Concerto, intercut with the following text.)

01:30:53 JENS: When you have in your soul the ability to give something, it’s the most glorious thing in the world.

01:31:12 I want to use music as a social tool. It’s a godly force of enormous strength. And I want to use music, i do, to break down barriers between people.

01:31:24 (Cut to Hebrew Union College Lunch Program.)

01:31:28 JENS: The other day when we went down to play in this lunch program there that the Hebrew Union College presents, and I saw how they were doing it. They were doing it with table cloths and with these wonderful people . . . They are not homeless. They are guests. They’re guests. They’ve got it right.

01:31:53 JENS: People don't listen to the music, but they knew that we were there for them. I am always looking for that.

01:32:01 When they had the earthquake in Kobe, I went there. We organized an orchestra, raised money for them, and played for the homeless.

01:32:11 When I went to Capetown South Africa, perhaps 15 years ago, I knew that if I got there, that I could make a difference. And I integrated the concerts.

01:32:20 JOEL KROSZNICK: To him, Nygaard, a concert in an old people's home, that is not less important than Carnegie Hall. Because the spirit of this music is alive and real.

01:32:33 JENS: Can, can I just go there one second? I'll be right back. Can I? When I went to this shelter, battered women's shelter, and I said, "Dear ladies, would you like to play Beethoven's Ninth Symphony?"

(Jens plays theme on piano.)

One, one, two, three, green chord. Three, three, four, five, five, four, three, two . . . Now these are people who have never, never played music and I said do you want to play Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. And it is one of these little kind of quick things, that you don't have to know anything. Just do three, three, four, five the way I have written it up there. The fingers fall into a pattern, and underneath there, if it's green, you play one note, and if it's red, you play the other note. And here they are, completely untutored, playing Beethoven's Ninth Symphony.

01:33:40 (Fade in sound of Jens playing Gershwin's Prelude.)

01:33:34 JENS: So when we go back there the next time, I had four or five of these gals, because they would be there for quite some time, "Oh, oh, let me show you! Oh. I want to play it! I want to play it!" And here they were. Playing.

01:33:48 (Cut to Jens playing Gershwin's "Prelude.")

01:34:10 I saw in the bottom part of the page of the New York Times a picture of the Gershwin home in Brooklyn. In the terrible slums of East New York. It said that they're going to bulldoze it down. Well, that activated me. Boy, Heidi! . . . So, I worked for months and months and months and months . . . and I was planning to have what we call summertime concerts in the front porch of George Gershwin's home. And I was actually planning to live there with a policeman. Because it was in hell. But I guess maybe it's my masochism coming to the fore. The fact that it was there was what interested me. I got a call in the middle of the night from the fire department telling me that the home had burned. Even though it's a tragedy, I feel triumphant about that. In failing, there is a certain nobility, if your goal is very high.

01:35:19 RUTH LAREDO: When Jens was forced to leave the Tully Hall concerts, he found this church which had been at Lincoln Center all along, the Church of the Good Shepherd. It’s beautiful. I mean the acoustics are incredible.

The intimacy of the setting where the orchestra is on the same floor with the audience. There is no boundary line like any other concert. It’s a little strange, at first, when you are a performer, because you feel as if you need the boundary line of the stage, and the back stage, and you cannot be seen by the audience, and you come out when it is your time to perform. But with Jens, he is there already when you walk into the church he’s chatting with the audience. There’s no difference. There is no line of demarcation. And when it’s time for the concert, it starts!

01:36:12 (Begin DOWLAND *Pavanes and Galliards*.)

01:36:15 And, suddenly, this miraculous even begins. There is something so extraordinary that happens every time.

01:36:26 JENS: When you do things, and you cut the pretension, when people sit almost in the orchestra – they really love that. It makes it a big family. And our thing is growing enormously . . .

01:36:45 A man – I don’t think I have even looked at it yet – but a man came here from ah . . . I guess I should, I should be more practical. A man came here from Nashville and gave me a check. I think it was 3,000 dollars. And, yeah, let’s see what this is. Yeah, look at that. (Martin in background says “You got it.”)

And we have a man who just moved to Australia, and he said, ah I’m going to send you 1,000 dollars for the rest of my life. Each year.

I need that money. Not for me. Not for soloists. But to stabilize my group. So that they don’t have to go and take other jobs. When there is an opportunity for them to take a job which pays much more, I’m the one who tells them, “Get out! You’ve got to go do that.” But it doesn’t take very much analysis to know that that is self defeating for the standard. But I am more moral than I am seeking the high standard. But, get enough money that they can pay rent and food from what they can earn in Jupiter, and then, very quickly, we are a great orchestra.

01:38:05 (Dowland ends. Applause begins.)

01:38:07 JENS: I have learned to be very tough. I am enormously tough. I’m kind of the wild one, ‘cause if I were to look in the bank beforehand, these things wouldn’t be occurring. I don’t wait for things to happen, for somebody to call. I get off my butt, so to speak, and get to work. And I sweep the floor, and I edit the music, I have no hierarchies like that. Whatever has to be done.

01:38:37 (Cut to Mei Ying.) Subtitle: **Mei Ying**, *orchestra manager*

01:38:37 MEI YING: We have no administrative costs—virtually. I mean, even things like printing. All our programs we do in house. Posters, flyers, tickets are produced in house. Jens takes virtually nothing for himself, or very little, and the rest of it goes for rent and things like advertising. Plus we also need to get the music prepared. Jens does all the bowings himself.

01:39:06 JENS: That’s telling all the string players whether they should go up, or they should go down. Whether they should have a little pause here, a little lift there. Whether the stroke should be long or short. They are very crucial if you want your interpretation to be totally integrated. To a degree it’s a mechanical thing that needs to be done. You can do it while you are doing something else. Like my people down home, they would shell peas and shuck corn or something, and still talk, see? This is very easy for me and I often do it on subways, it’s a mechanical thing. But it really pays off.

01:40:01 (Beethoven’s 5th performance intercut with Ruth’s statement.)

01:40:07 RUTH LAREDO: He is a self-taught kind of guy and he’s a natural talent and it’s rough hewn and it’s unique, you know he doesn’t use a baton, he uses a chopstick! I think he’s the only conductor I have ever seen who does that. I mean he is not interested in any kind of show at all. He is interested in the music.

01:40:33 JENS: You played beautifully today.

01:40:35 PERFORMER: Yesterday . . .

01:40:36 JENS: Aw, come on. We all do the best we can, and you’re wonderful and I’m proud of you.

01:40:40 RUTH LAREDO: You know after the concert all the chairs are moved by the members of the orchestra. There aren’t any stage hands. When the piano has to be moved, the bass player or one of the violinists will move it. They are happy to do it. It’s a real cooperative venture. It’s like a family. Everybody helps.

(When Charles Kiger comes on camera, super title).
Sub-titled at 01:41:03 **Charles Kiger, percussion**

01:41:01 CHARLES KIGER: We are all friends, we all have a great time outside of Jupiter. Jens looks for people who want to be a part of the family. People who want to be involved. Not just show up, get your check, and go home. It’s really not about that.

(Cut to Jens with Michael Volpert.)

01:41:12 JENS: . . . Wait. Wait a minute! Wear your seat belts. I love you. I care about you. The statistics say, “Wear them.”

01:41:19 MICHAEL VOLPERT: O.K., I will.

01:41:20 JENS: Now, please.

MICHAEL VOLPERT: I will. . . No, I will.

JENS: Please.

01:41:24 MARTIN BOOKSPAN: He digs into rare, rare corners of the repertory. He will do symphonies which nobody has done, aside from him. His mind is totally inquisitive, searching, delving, caring.

01:41:45 (Music fades into background: John Philip Sousa, High School Cadets March.)

01:41:40 JENS: I do a lot of music but I feel a moral responsibility to these great composers whose works have been overlooked. . . . The music of Chaminade, Ethelbert Nevin, a lot of the music of John Philip Sousa, and Ketelby, because that is something that my father and mother had played in vaudeville a lot. You would never find Juilliard doing this or the music schools. I mean, that’s beneath them, “That’s junior high school music; and you outgrow it.” I don’t think you outgrow anything that’s wonderful and a lot of fun.

01:42:22 (Cut to Snuff box music from Jupiter concert with Jens on the clarinet.)

(Cut to William Wolfram.)

01:42:45 WILLIAM WOLFRAM (voice over): As you grow up, there are people telling you what’s tasteful, what’s not. This is a classical approach. This is a romantic approach. This is that.

01:42:54 (Cut to William Wolfram. Sub-title: **William Wolfram, piano soloist**)

WILLIAM WOLFRAM: Jens, it’s as though he never heard any of this. He came down from another planet. And was never subjected to any of the rules and regulations and traditions and mores that we have pounded into us about music or anything else! He conducts and he plays everything in music with a great love for music. That is not shared among all musicians. He is never burnt out. Everything is almost for the first time. And glorious.

01:42:34 (Jens plays his own black key composition at the piano.)

JENS: It sounds very difficult but it's not. . . .

01:43:34 RUTH LAREDO: You know, Jens is a composer as well as a conductor and there are times when he has written extra movements in a piece, without crediting himself. Or he will stick in an extra piece by Rameau or somebody and you think it's them but it's Jens.

01:43:53 JENS: (Laughs) Well, I don't play what's there. I'm an old jazz musician, and I sort of play of the moment. . . . (finishes black key composition) . . . Really feel like you've played some Rachmaninoff.

01:43:07 (Cadenza for Mozart C Minor Concerto No. 491 begins, William Wolfram performing.)

01:43:34 WILLIAM WOLFRAM: I played Mozart's C Minor Concerto 491 with Jens, and there is a time when the orchestra stops playing and it's just the piano, just the solo effort — those are the cadenzas. Mozart sometimes wrote cadenzas and sometimes he just left them blank, for the performer to do as he wished, to improvise it or whatever. And I mentioned this to Jens. And he wrote me one. And it is a remarkable cadenza, extremely original, like nothing else. It was him in a cadenza.

01:45:03 JENS: I am not really a conductor. Somebody needs to be up there to lead. But I would just as soon play the cymbal and have just one crash. Most of these damn conductors — almost all of them — they need a psychiatrist.

01:45:19 (Cut to Jens in doctor's office, intercut with Mei Ying.) They need to go and work out their need to manipulate people. And then come to it for the right reason. . . . I do have this cancer.

01:45:32 MEI YING: From what I understand about multiple myeloma, there are no two cases that are alike. And he certainly would be an example of a person who does not get tired.

01:45:43 (Cut to Mei Ying.) He wears everyone else out. I mean, you can see him. He's indefatigable!

01:45:50 JENS: I've got seniority on him.

01:45:51 JOHN OLICHNEY: I love this man's music. I love his music, you know. It's a lot nicer than his bone marrow I must say, but that we are going to try to approach

01:45:58 JENS: Thank God I have gone through such adversity. It's prepared me for this. I know what I've got. But I am not going to shed tears and just bemoan this. I am

going to put a positive shine on it. And I do. You could say, “Well, that’s very dishonest to do that, you know you have a grave situation.” O.K. One part of me knows that. But I elect to be frivolous, I elect to tell my jokes, and . . . the hell with it.

01:46:34 JOHN OLICHNEY: I remember seeing Mr. Schonberg who was our great New York Times critic, and I asked him if he had ever heard a piece that Jens was playing by Ketelby that Jens was playing called, “In a Persian Market.”

01:46:45 (Sub-title: **John Olichney, M.D. Personal Physician**)

And Mr. Schonberg said to me, “You know, of course I have in dribs and drabs in every elevator in America” he says, “But I have never heard the whole thing and that’s why I am here today. Jens is the only one who can do this!” And it’s a great, great work and Jens . . . he liked it so much – it meant a lot to him in his childhood – and if you hear this, “In a Persian Market,” you will hear all the themes you ever heard in every Western movie, Indian movie . . . Everything about it is humorous and wonderful. And, at the end Jens says, “I liked this so much, I am going to play it again.” So he played it twice for the audience. And they all loved it.

01:47:10 (Performance of Ketelby’s “In a Persian Market.”)

01:47:32 JENS (voice over): I am going down in triumph . . . all guns going. I’ll fire every damn cannon I got. But, I am going to try to go down with a smile on my face. I bet you I do. I bet you I do.

01:47:59 (Cut to Jens in apartment. Mei Ying hands him the phone.)

01:48:01 JENS: Yeah, I have. I am going to do the “Trumpet Overture.” It’s typical of what I do. I have never done “Trumpet Overture.” I have only seen it in collected works. But, it has to be done. And if I were picking the top quality Mendelssohn, I would certainly pick some of the other overtures, “Beautiful Melusine” or “Midsummer Night’s Dream.” But that’s not my point. My point is to take my people on a wonderful journey through music history. Which means we are going to touch a lot of things that are not the sublime masterpieces, but typify an age. . . . Well, thank you. I am glad you see that, and it’s just enormously helpful. And thank you. Bye

01:48:52 Oh, good God! “You’re a . . . you’re a valuable, irreplaceable institution.” That’s the New Yorker.

01:49:02 (Cut to rehearsal.)

01:49:03 JENS: Come on, count! Buh, buh, buh bah! You’ve got to be counting in the bar before. . . . Let’s leave it for now, Gerry. . . . you’ve got to count! Buh, buh, buh bah! You

are part of a running eighth note. . . . One, two, one! . . . No. You're late! You cannot stop counting at that point. Bah pah bedda bap pah beeda pah pah pah. . . . Put a pen in your butt so you're there. Come on! No siesta.

01:49:38 (Cut to Jens' in apartment.)

01:49:36 JENS: Oh, you can hear a few expletives too, about that. Because, the ninth time they don't count. . . . I sometimes say "Well, if you're not gonna count, here's ten dollars just get out of my life."

01:49:51 There is something so phenomenally exciting when you hear the down beat and everybody, the concert master at six feet and the tympani player at thirty feet, comes exactly together!

01:50:01 (Cut back to rehearsal.)

01:50:11 JENS: Come on. It's too beautiful!

Sub-title: **Ariane Lallemand, cello**

01:50:16 ARIANNE LALLEMAND (voice over): I never realized

01:50:20 (Cut to Ariane on camera. Sub-title: **Ariane Lallemand, cello**)

how important it is for the music to be so precise with the way you actually count. It sound stupid if you hear him. He will say, "Count! Count!" O.K., we are counting but really counting and being incredibly precise, I think I learned a lot about this.

01:50:36 (Cut back to rehearsal.)

01:50:36 JENS: Count! Count! Count! Count! Count! . . . Count!

Overdo it. No prettiness. No prettiness with me. Please overdo it. Make it grotesque. Violent. Vulgar. Please. And, each note. (Scratch sound.) Heifetz! He knew what he was doing. Scratch! Leave prettiness for Juilliard. Please.

One. Two. One.

01:51:13 Come on!

01:51:22 Kill it!

01:51:23 (Cut to Desiree Halac. Sub-title: **Desirée Halac, mezzo-soprano**)

DESIREE HALAC: If he shouts at the musicians, it's because he's not happy with something. It's never something personal. It's just that he cares so much about the music.

01:51:34 (Cut back to the rehearsal.)

01:51:43 JENS: That’s not tight! Tight! Tight! . . . Ready!

(Rehearsal continues.)

01:51:55 JENS: Ready! . . .

01:52:06 Come on!

01:52:12 No retard! No retard! When you do it, you can take the retard. But not here.

01:52:17 (Cut to Joel Krosnick intercut with Jens at rehearsal.)

JOEL KROSNICK: The urgency of the way the music flows through Jens Nygaard. He must have it at this point in his life.

01:52:26 JENS: Come on, Beethoven is a great experience. Get with me.

01:52:28 JOEL KROSNICK: Don’t suavitize it. He didn’t want to be suavitized as a person, and he doesn’t like suavitized music making.

01:52:35 JENS: Don’t rush! O.K., Scratch! Come on, Larry, scratch!

01:52:53 And again.

01:53:07 Too soon on that G. That’s a full half quarter!

01:53:25 Now. Come on!

01:53:32 Kill It. Kill it.

01:53:39 O.K. You’ve got to kill it. Kill it. Kill it!

01:52:43 JOEL KROSNICK: Jens has the courage to do what is meant to be. To find out what is meant to be. To find the excellence to realize what is meant to be, and to do it. Whatever difficulties there are. Do it. And it’s that. It has something to do with music, and it has nothing to do with music.

01:52:04 (Cut to the Jupiter Symphony concert, with Jens performing Gershwin’s “Rhapsody in Blue”)

01:52:30 JENS (voice over): I’ve been on the sidelines. I’ve been kept out, for thirty, thirty-five years. And, now is my day.

01:52:36 (Cut to Jens on camera.) ... Now is my day to have the greatest orchestra in the world. I know exactly how to do it.

01:52:26 (Cut back to Gershwin’s “Rhapsody in Blue” performance on camera.)

01:52:27 Cut to black with text about Jens Nygaard’s death on screen: (TITLE TEXT)

Jens Nygaard died on
September 24, 2001.

(FADE UP SECOND TITLE UNDER ABOVE TEXT)

His spirit lives on through the
Jupiter Symphony Chamber Players
and the audiences who continue
to love him and his music.

01:52:34 (Music of Sousa’s “High School Cadets March” begins.)

01:52:40 (PRODUCTION CREDITS Roll Up))

Produced and Directed by

MARTIN SPINELLI

Edited by

LISA PALATTELLA

(BEGIN AT LEFT THIRD INFO, AS BELOW:)

For Video
Sales & Info:
lifeonjupiter.com
or call
1-866-LIFE ON J
(1-866-543-3665)

(CONTINUE LEFT THIRD INFO, THEN ROLL UP ON RIGHT, AS BELOW)

Camera
Paul Dokuchitz

Brian Kellman

Second Unit Camera
Michael Grenadier
Robert Guinn, Jr.

Sound
Rafael Agudelo
John McCormick
Kenneth Wentworth

Assistant Editors
Paul Manius
Bob D’Agostino

Lighting
Gil McDowell
Liberty Lighting

Associate Producer
Michael Grenadier

Still Animation
Ralph Petre
The Camera Stand

Jens Caricature
Nicky Zann
Planet Jupiter Photographs
NASA & NSSDC

On Line Editing
Scott Doniger
Full Circle Post

Sound Mixing
Dave Huber
Hotwax Recording, Inc.

Production Assistants
Robert Guinn
Brian Moriarty

Still Photography
Peter Schaff
Beryl Towbin

Naumberg Symphony Orchestra, Inc.

SPECIAL THANKS

Harold Schonberg
Music Critic

Baruch College

Harry Cannon

Brian Crowley

Andrew Daniels

Stan Goldberg
Wonderplay, Inc.

Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church

Hebrew Union College Lunch Program

Leighton Kerner
Village Voice

Tony Korner
Artforum

Juliette Redl
Lillian Redl

William Shaw, IV
MetroArts

Barry Sherman

Michael Volpert

Richard Weisman
Gerry Zieglerman
Duke and Company

Yamaha
is the official piano of
Jupiter Symphony.

An INTERACTION MEDIA Production

www.lifeonjupiter.com

© 2001 INTERACTION MEDIA

(FINAL TITLE)

It is not only that Jens Nygaard
is a complete musician Nygaard is unique.
Every one of his concerts is a musical adventure
of a kind so lacking in standard orchestral
concerts here and almost anywhere else.
May he thrive.

Harold C. Schonberg