Allen Vizzutti has never been in prison. He has never jumped out of a flying airplane. He has gone swimming with sharks in the South Seas, which prepared him for later life in Hollywood. He attended college at the Eastman School of Music, which proved to be a very positive springboard from which he dove into the weird and twisted world of professional music. It was there he met a marvelous and beautiful pianist named Laura who married him much later — after listening to 17 years of his begging.

Allen grew up in Montana, land of the grizzly bear, full-sized pickups, cattle, sheep, rednecks, watery beer, cowboy boots and the right to bear arms but not arm bears — and he still managed to become a musician. His dad did not own any guns, did not chew tobacco, and did not rope cows. He owned a music store and taught Allen to play trumpet. There were no beatings involved. Allen’s mom helped too, and if you had asked her, she would have told you Allen is the best trumpet player in the world.

Mr. Vizzutti has never really been employed. After the last note of the last piece of any given concert he is unemployed again. So he has learned to play some jazz and some classical and some other stuff that we don’t know how to describe, with the hopes of staying busy. Along with having written a few books and lots of confused music, he is almost successful enough to be deemed “successful.” Almost.

After hearing Mr. Vizzutti in concert, listeners in 60 countries and every state in the U.S. have asked the question, “What the heck was that?” His many CDs in varied styles have been ignored worldwide. He has performed on hundreds of movie soundtracks but not *Star Wars*. They recorded that in London so don’t ask him about it. *Motel Hell*? Now that’s another matter. He played on that. *Back to the Future*? Yup. His educational video called *Steps To Excellence* is now an out-of-print classic. An updated podcast version can be viewed at Yamaha.com.

Mr. Vizzutti is proud of and outclassed by his wife and collaborator, Laura. She plays music beautifully and is a lot better to look at than he is. They live in Seattle, have three pretty cool offspring and no current pets. Marcella the rabbit was choked by a dog, Fluffy the fish was found floating upside down and subsequently flushed, and Hobs the hamster, was smacked in the middle of the night by grandma, in her bedroom, with a shoe.

Though these artisans of handcrafted musical instruments are loath to admit it, Allen Vizzutti is a Yamaha performing artist.