

VOL. 49 NO. 3, October 2023

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 jpcastillo@guitarfoundation.org

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 mkagan@guitarfoundation.org

**Ebaa Khamas**, Operations Manager  
 ekhamas@guitarfoundation.org

**Natasha Khamas**, Publications Art Director  
 info@guitarfoundation.org

**Chuck Hulihan**, Education Director and Director of Guitar Summit  
 chulihan@guitarfoundation.org

**Jonathan Leathwood**, Editor of Soundboard Scholar  
 sbs@guitarfoundation.org

**Martha Masters**, Artistic Director,  
 International Concert Artist Competition  
 marthamasters@guitarfoundation.org

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# Soundboard

THE JOURNAL OF THE GUITAR FOUNDATION OF AMERICA

## Editorial Staff

**Editor-in-Chief:** Robert Ferguson | rferguson@guitarfoundation.org

### Art Director:

**Natasha Khamas** | tkhamas@guitarfoundation.org

### Associate Editors:

Rene Walterbos

### Contributing Editors:

Josinaldo Costa	Mark Small	Graham Wade
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### Reviews Editor (Publications):

Brad DeRoche | brderoch@delta.edu  
 910 South Drive | Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858

### Reviews Editor (CDs/DVDs):

Albert Kunze | afkunze@aol.com  
 769 NE 72 Terrace | Miami, FL 33138

**Article proposals:** rferguson@guitarfoundation.org

### Submit items for New Gear: Soundboard

P.O. Box 50749 | Los Angeles, CA 90050

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### Guitar Foundation of America

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# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

by Robert Ferguson



Robert Ferguson, *Soundboard* Editor-in-Chief.

In this fiftieth year of the Guitar Foundation of America, we present the fifth of our annual Guitar in Education editions of *Soundboard*, a series that began in the fall of 2019. In the pages that follow, that theme comes together with our 2023 golden jubilee observations as we highlight the education events that marked the GFA Convention and Competition in New York City this past June.

For the first time since 2019, this year's GFA convention included its teen academy for classical guitarists ages 11–18. From its inception in 2017 as Guitar Summit, the program reemerged in 2023, rebranded as the Bridge. Erin Young, youth academy counselor from its beginning, opens this *Soundboard* issue with a summary of the principal features and themes of The Bridge. Chuck Hulihan, GFA Education Director and also Bridge Director, supplements Erin's account with his compilation of personal recollections from three Bridge participants, Brady Davis, Sienna Morrison, and Miriam Davison, who recount their experience with the program and what it means in their lives going forward. Laura Meador, GFA Education Coordinator, completes our coverage of the GFA education-themed events that took place in New York with her report on the convention's Educator's Track Day. Here she details the questions posed to, and the answers given by, the roundtable panelists as well as supplementary responses by GFA president Martha Masters.

In addition to its educational features, the GFA fiftieth anniversary convention hosted, of course, the same wealth of performances and lectures we always count on. *Soundboard* recordings reviews editor, Al Kunze, contributes his assessment of the week's concerts, which this year demonstrated a wider range than usual of the guitar's artistic possibilities, while Cameron O'Connor recaps a selection of the week's dozen lectures, engaging subject matter as diverse as GFA competitor demographics and diversification efforts, sources of modern guitar literature, and Learning Science in guitar pedagogy.

In the first (March) *Soundboard* of 2023—as part of the GFA's fiftieth anniversary celebration—I began a four-part series of articles titled “GFA Founders” and have so far written brief biographies of seven such guitar figures active in the early 1970s. In this edition, I submit Part 3 of that series. My third installment profiles Frederick M. Noad, known by most classical players for the many method books, anthologies, and

performance editions he published over the decades but less recognized for the considerable role he played a half century ago in the formation of the GFA.

Beyond the GFA fiftieth, we also offer in this issue Juan Hernandez's insightful analysis of guitar performance as a manifestation of music and movement, an inquiry in which the author addresses neuroscience and philosophy in addition to playing technique. We follow with musicologist Dr. Annett Richter's in-depth interview of Ewa Jabłczyńska and Dariusz Kupiński, who have achieved eminence as the Kupiński Guitar Duo. The two discuss the ensemble's origins along with their approach to transcription, programming, technique, and other topics. We're also excited to premier a brilliant new guitar solo in these pages, *The Whisky Tales* by Kevin Callahan, composed for Stephanie Jones in 2020. The composer supplements his score with a brief description of each of its three movements and provides YouTube links where readers can hear Ms. Jones perform them.

In last quarter's news column Reverberations, we announced the untimely death of one of the classical guitar's master teachers, Bruce Holzman, who passed May 6, 2023. In this *Soundboard* edition, Adam Holzman, formidable guitarist and teacher in his own right, extends a personal tribute to his older brother. Early May also marked the passing of another significant figure in America's guitar community: Loris Chobanian, a founder of the Guitar Foundation of America and prolific composer of works for guitar as well as many other instrumental and vocal media. In the current Reverberations, Chris Ellicott offers a memorial to his late mentor and friend.

We conclude with our quarterly selection of publication and recordings reviews, overseen by department editors Brad DeRoche and the above-mentioned Al Kunze.



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## A RETROSPECTIVE ON THE BRIDGE 2023: Building a Youth Community at the GFA

By Erin Young



In many ways, this year's fiftieth anniversary GFA was a sensational event, but for those of us running the Bridge, GFA's teen academy, it was an extra special occasion. The most recent in-person iteration of GFA's teen academy, previously known as Guitar Summit, was in Miami in 2019. Since then I have felt the absence of convening with international friends and missed the inspiration I found working with the Bridge students each summer. This year was the joyful and long-awaited return for the Bridge and an excellent reminder of how having young guitarists at the convention breathes life into the atmosphere. One can't help but be affected by the excitement of twenty-five teen guitarists, many of whom have never been to a GFA before, being immersed in all things guitar for five days.

### Origins of the Bridge

Before 2017 there weren't many youth programming options available at the GFA convention. Teen students could compete and attend the convention just like anyone else, sign up for masterclasses, participate in guitar orchestra, and attend concerts and lectures. However, the options for socializing and engaging in a structured manner with other young guitarists were distinctly lacking. A short mixer, organized to introduce competitors to one another, was the only option available. While it was always an enjoyable event, it did not satisfy the need for a space where precollege guitarists could get to know one another in a noncompetitive atmosphere. GFA was in a particularly advantageous position to host a uniquely exciting workshop due to the plethora of events and artists at the convention

each year. The inaugural GFA teen academy launched at the 2017 Convention and Competition in Fullerton, California. For the Bridge staff, the goal was to create a positive, noncompetitive environment where students could learn from and bond with other driven young guitarists.

### The Bridge and GFA

The Bridge is conceived in parallel to the GFA so that it can share the benefits of the convention. This proximity allows students to engage with technique workshops, concerts, and often ensemble rehearsals throughout the day. They spend the other hours in private studio classes and sessions with guest artists at the convention. Consequently, no two years are the same, as each group of guest artists brings a different type of creativity to their workshop. Distilling an artistic idea into a digestible one-hour session for students ages 11 to 18 is no small feat, but over the years, we have seen a wonderful variety of topics, perspectives, philosophies, and methodologies. We have had everything from discussions and lectures to workshops about improvisation, technique, music production, movement, and interpretation. Topics this year ranged from a Sound Improvisation Workshop with Ben Verdery to a lecture on Arranging Popular Music for Guitar with Jason Vieaux. This year, the Bridge students wrote an article detailing their experiences. Check out their comments in this issue, pages 9–13, for more specifics about our sessions!

If I were to identify a thematic thread that connected the sessions this year, it would have to be "the artist's journey." Due to the sheer number of guests that visited the Bridge, one could not help but begin to see the parallels between stories they brought to the table. Weaving together numerous narratives from around the globe were the themes of mentorship, exploration, discipline, determination, artistic support, and companionship. Many discussed how mentors and peers shaped, supported, and guided them on their journey. It was great to see the students listening to that message surrounded by the people who will most likely become their professional community in years to come.





Edward Long

Whether they know it or not, the bonds they forge in spaces like the Bridge could easily lead to some of those same types of collaborations. Hearing an artist's story is always humanizing, and I believe many students left with a better understanding of how there are many different paths to, and definitions of, success.

### Students and community

One of the most crucial components of the Bridge is

encouraging students to engage with and learn from one another throughout the week. To that end, our studio classes are an impactful element of what makes the week successful for students. Here we ask them to perform and be ready to give feedback or reflections on fellow student performances. Once the shyness has worn off, the class becomes a space for students to recognize and acknowledge each other's strengths. Their attentive listening and thoughtful feedback vouch for their maturity and respect for each other as musicians. Director Chuck Hulihan shared, "What I enjoy most about the Bridge philosophy is that the students' own voices are held just as high as the master guitarists that come to work with them. Our studio class time together allows them to bond by playing for the class, really listening to each other, commenting in meaningful and productive ways, and both giving and receiving the support that young artists need."

This year was the first where students participating in the International Youth Competition (IYC) could join the Bridge, thanks to scheduling changes. Hulihan noted, "The impact of scheduling the IYC before the convention was enormous, in the amount of students taking advantage of both opportunities and the sheer fact that students no longer had to choose between competing or attending the summer academy. To me, this meant that students could fully engage with the convention and all it has to offer." Several students from the GFA Mentorship program also attended the Bridge this year. One of my fondest recollections of the week was hearing the raucous cheers whenever a mentee from the Bridge opened for a concert, reminding me how powerful it is to be surrounded by peers

who inspire each other. Incorporating competitors and mentees made it easy to cultivate a space where students could be encouraged, respected, and appreciated by others who shared their passion and dedication.

### A look to the future

I'm glad that the Bridge happens as a part of the GFA because it connects us across generations and brings a joyful perspective into the guitar community. When reflecting on our week in New York, Hulihan observed, "Working with these students reaffirms my thoughts for the bright future of the classical guitar. Seeing their passion for the repertoire, the players, the process, and the community surrounding the guitar is extremely satisfying and encouraging." Teachers, both at schools and teaching privately, are doing incredible work building youth guitar programs, giving students access to more resources, support, and communal spaces to grow. During the week we had the pleasure of engaging with a program doing just that, the Peabody-Levine ensemble, and it was wonderful to see even more young guitarists enjoying the convention together as a group throughout the week. We Bridge counselors are in the privileged position of getting to help remarkable students from some of these places connect and learn from one another.

Seeing firsthand what a motivating experience it is for students is an inspiring reminder of the impactful effect of efforts to bring young guitarists together. To see more diversity and growth within guitar communities, we need to provide students with access to experiences where they can learn what their future in music could look like, meet peers and mentors, envision their success, and gain a greater sense of belonging as musicians. I hope we continue to see the GFA and other organizations develop and expand on these sorts of transformative educational initiatives and community-building efforts.



Erin, Chuck Hulihan, Jérémy Jouve, and Mathias Duplessy with the Bridge students

**Conclusion**

The Bridge provides younger guitarists a window into what it is like to be part of the GFA community, a glimpse into the professional companionship that brings many of us back to the GFA each year. Working as a counselor these years has reinforced my assurance that there is a great benefit to providing noncompetitive spaces for young guitarists to get to know one another and cultivate a strong sense of fraternity. I hope we continue to encourage a more diverse network of supportive musicians who will show up for, challenge, and celebrate one another through thoughtful youth programming for guitar.



Erin Young is a classical guitarist based in Los Angeles, California. Whether onstage or in her work, she is a versatile and energetic leader committed to excellence. Erin is on the Guitar Faculty at the Colburn Community School of Performing Arts, where she teaches Suzuki Guitar. She is also Director of Elemental Guitar in Santa Monica, a Teaching Artist for the nonprofit Lead Guitar, and a Counselor for the annual Guitar Foundation of America teen academy, the Bridge.

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## VOICES FROM THE BRIDGE: The Student Perspective

By Chuck Hulihan

Contributions by Brady Davis, Sienna Morrison, and Miriam Davison



Chuck and Ben Verdery conduct the Bridge students in ensemble.

In 2017, the GFA began offering a fully immersive “camp” experience for young musicians, to take place during the annual convention. This was an opportunity to bring together aspiring classical guitarists for a week of learning and playing, and for these students to engage with world-class artists as well as with each other in a supportive, encouraging, and inspiring community. The 2017 GFA Guitar Summit in Fullerton, California was followed by successful weeks in Louisville (2018) and Miami (2019) before being impacted by the pandemic in 2020, held as a virtual event in 2021, and out on hiatus for 2022 to reimagine.

The rebranding and relaunch this past June 2023 in New York City for the organization’s fiftieth anniversary was a memorable and magical week of densely scheduled days that included studio class performances, guest artists workshops, impromptu visits, concerts, and brief periods of rest. Over six days, twenty-five guitarists ages 11–18 worked with Sérgio Assad, Ben Verdery, Antigoni Goni, Luca Isolani, Maarten Vandenbemden, Jérémy Jouve, Mathias Duplessy, Martha Masters, SoloDuo, Cavatina Duo, Kaki King, Rovshan Mamedkuliev, Jason Vieaux, and Tengyue (TY) Zhang, as well as enjoyed visits from René Izquierdo, William Kanengiser, and Jiji. The daily schedule included studio class performances, where students had the chance to

not only play for each other but to comment on and discuss each other’s presentations in a mutually respectful and genuinely appreciative way.

One of the missions of the Bridge is to shine a spotlight on the students’ voice and allow time and space to facilitate their learning experience by allowing them to learn from one another. In that spirit, we have made space in this issue of *Soundboard* for the voices from the Bridge students. The following are reports of sorts, directly from the source: three students in their own words. Their shared experiences this past summer at the Bridge can serve as motivation and inspiration for all of us who teach.

### **Brady Davis, Nevada**

I am Brady Davis, one of the guitarists who attended the Bridge program, and I am currently a rising senior at the Las Vegas Academy of the Arts. I heard about the Bridge while attending the Guitar Foundation of America’s National School Summit, which was held at my school in the spring. Also, when I found out that Chuck Hulihan was running it, I knew I would be in good hands. I knew Chuck because he conducted several important guitar events I was in. Some of the events were the guitar orchestra for Nevada All-State Guitar Ensemble, the annual (formerly) Guitar Summit, the NAFME All National Honors Guitar



Antigoni Goni with students

Ensemble, and others. I wanted to go because it would help me gain knowledge about things like repertoire, technique, guitarists, luthiers, and guitars.

In order to get there, I flew to New York City and rode in a taxi to the Manhattan School of Music from JFK airport. I have been to New York many times throughout my life and was very excited to go back. When we arrived, we checked into the dorms. I knew a couple of people already, but I was still eager to meet new people that I had not met before. Everyone seemed tired when they first arrived, but they became energetic over time. Many of the other counselors in charge of the event were also there, including Laura Meador, Erin Young, and Brian Cross. The counselors were kind and helpful to our whole group. The Bridge program consisted of approximately twenty-five students from across the country. The overall take of the week was that I felt very fortunate to be connecting with fellow guitar students, learning, and listening to masters of guitar.

We participated in technique workshops, studio performances, rehearsal observations, lectures, concerts, and other offerings. The daily schedule was pretty consistent, with technique workshops starting in the morning, where we were able to immerse ourselves in instruction from fabulous artists who showed us different exercises. Each class had exercises with different uses that were accessible to perform and focused on separate aspects of playing guitar like right-hand and left-hand execution, tone, improvisation, etc. The exercises helped us improve our speed, tone, coordination, and other aspects of playing the instrument. For example, Antigoni Goni gave us some

important stretching exercises that did not exactly involve playing guitar but were useful for preserving the physicality of guitar playing for long intervals of time. To sum it all up, the technique workshops allowed us to improve in many different areas.

The second part of our day generally included studio class performances or guest artist performances or lectures, but the schedule would vary depending on the day. The studio classes were beneficial and helped us get comfortable with playing around an audience and introducing ourselves through the repertoire we played. We would go up to the front of the room, introduce what we were playing, and then play a work-in-progress or something we had known for a long time. From the beginning to the end of the camp, all of us got to play a piece at least once. The guest artist performances or lectures were very interesting to watch and listen to. It was very interesting to listen to the stories of different guest artists, including where they were from, how they got to where they were, and other background information. For instance, TY's lecture was very interesting to think about. I found it very cool to think about how he grew up and ended up playing guitar at a high level. Other afternoon activities consisted of observing the guitar orchestra rehearsal with music by Sérgio Assad and Benjamin Verdery, going to the Luthier Showcase, checking out cool guitar gadgets at the Vendor Fair, watching concerts, or doing more studio classes.

My favorite part of the day was generally near its end, where we got to watch concerts with artists that play different styles of music, including the Cavatina Duo, TY Zhang, Jason Vieaux, Kaki King, Mathias Duplessy, Jérémy Jouve, Martha Masters, Rovshan Mamedkuliev, Judicaël Perroy, and others. Attending various concerts gave us a greater listening experience because we got to hear the guitar in its different settings, which allowed us as listeners to think about which performance or type of music appealed to us the most. Monday night's concert was titled "Love Letter to New York." A highlight of this concert was when Jason Vieaux performed "Road to the Sun." I always enjoy hearing pieces from different styles. Tuesday night's concert was titled "The Next 50 Years." My favorite part of this concert was watching Mathias Duplessy and Jérémy Jouve play together. The concert on Thursday was "The Walls/Scenes from Ellis Island." This evening included some of the coolest ensemble pieces I heard throughout the week. The final concert for Bridge students was the amazing Sharon Isbin. Her rendition of Leo Brouwer's *El Decameron Negro* was inspiring to watch, considering I recorded the piece a few months ago for NPR's *From the Top*.

Overall, the Bridge was an amazing experience, from attending motivating lectures, stimulating workshops, and insightful performances. I am thrilled for those who attended the Bridge. The Bridge has allowed me to find

the different things I enjoy about music. I would like to thank Chuck, Laura, Erin, Brian, and anyone else who was involved in the program.

**Sienna Morrison, Arizona**

The Bridge was a significant experience for everyone involved. We built a community by having discussions and playing together and for each other. I learned a lot during this time, not only from our guest artists but other students. Crafting a supportive, constructive community and learning from a diverse portfolio of artists left me inspired to continue my guitar studies and promote creativity in the guitar community.

One of the ways I learned more about my peers was through studio class performances. Since we were only able to perform once, my peers tended to choose pieces they were passionate about. Performing is a very vulnerable experience where you reveal your personality and give your heart to the audience. I felt that I learned as much about my peers through their piece selection and performance as I did through the conversations and class discussions.

Our administrators for the Bridge were especially skilled at facilitating discussions among students. We soon knew which artists people admired the most and why. Some of the questions we talked about were: Which artist was your favorite? What repertoire was most engaging? Whose stage presence was the most appropriate? We learned a lot from analyzing artists' performances that we were able to apply to our own playing.

Another way we learned a lot was through the diversity of people at the Bridge. There were both experienced guitar players and passionate beginners. This led to "mentorship" relationships among colleagues. The more experienced musicians fed into the beginners and answered all their questions. Every topic in the guitar world was addressed in the side conversations from nail care to technique and competitions to what composers were the best to play. These beneficial relationships built community among students and helped both mentee and mentor to learn.

Through the studio class environment, all students were able to practice giving constructive feedback. We learned how to look for both the good and things that could be improved in playing. Most of the comments focused on artistic concerns, which was part of our approach to being kind to others. Comments on artistic choices can be taken as suggestions instead of commands that might be given regarding technique. Being able to offer players both good and bad feedback in a balanced, kind, understandable way is essential to any area of life. I learned that anyone can give feedback, even if you are less experienced in the discipline.



Vivian Wang

We took away a lot from the Bridge, especially from studio class performances. My peers and I felt that having this dedicated time to play for each other was community-building, inspiring, and engaging. We were engaged by critical listening or playing. I was inspired by hearing all of the talented players and from the feedback on my performance. My peers were kind in giving feedback but also remained honest and told me what I needed to hear to improve. Thanks to the Bridge, I received helpful feedback that I can use to improve my playing in time for next year's program.

**Miriam Davison, California**

2:37 PM - My very first arrival in "The Big Apple."

4:23 PM - One turbulent, *classic* NYC taxi cab ride later, my very first arrival in the Manhattan School of Music.

5:00 PM - My very first arrival in Pforzheimer Hall, my home away from home for the week.



Sérgio Assad with students

## VOICES FROM THE BRIDGE (cont.)

I would continue to document the rest of the week, but to be honest, far too much happened for me to accurately recall. Here are the highlights.

Imagine spending a week with some of the greatest names in the classical guitar world, meeting with them personally along with a group of like-minded students, hidden away in an unsuspecting hall on the seventh floor of the Manhattan School of Music campus. It doesn't sound real, does it? Imagine this in the midst of one of the biggest classical guitar festivals and competitions in the country, waking up each morning to a classic New York view from the MSM dorms, freshly-cooked waffles and pancakes from a team of MSM chefs, a technique workshop with the likes of TY Zhang, Antigoni Goni, and Rovshan Mamedkuliev, and a day packed with studio classes, private performances, and guest artist interactions. This can't be possible, can it? Imagine mid-June 2023 on Claremont Avenue in Morningside Heights, New York City.

The GFA convention and Bridge program 2023 was really my first time dipping my toes into the greater world of classical guitar, a completely different world from the one I'd experienced back in Los Angeles—flying coast to coast for a weeklong convention in a city I'd never visited

before, to meet people I'd only heard of on paper before, to play in front of students I'd never spoken to before. I was intimidated, to say the least. Upon arriving in my new home for the next five days, becoming acquainted with my new roommate, admiring the New York view, catching up with old friends and making new ones, and finally getting the inside scoop of the magic that would happen in Pforzheimer Hall all the way up on the seventh floor, everything finally felt . . . normal?

I walked into the main lobby of MSM overwhelmed by everyone already there, by how impossibly good at playing guitar they were, by everything to unpack and to keep track of, and most of all, by the atrocious New York traffic we encountered on the way. Thank God for taxi cabs. All of a sudden, the week flew by, and unexpectedly, I began feeling at home. This was due to a number of factors, among those, the freshly-cooked pancake, waffle, or French toast breakfasts waiting for us each morning. A buffet spread available at our fingertips, made possible by a team of dedicated and often overlooked chefs and cooks, who worked to accommodate each and every student's dietary needs. Furthermore, what amazed me was that throughout a total of only three main rooms, Pforzheimer Hall, Ades Performance Space, and Neidorff-Karpati Hall, we learned



Chuck, and Jiji on his immediate left, with the Bridge students

about and took in a multitude of styles, techniques, experiences, and *stories*. Everyone had a story to tell.

One of the most striking impressions from the week was the diversity. I don't know where I want to go in life. I don't know exactly what I want to do. I haven't won competitions or performed concerts in front of hundreds. And yet, despite the overwhelming consensus I'd received previously that emphasized winning and winning and winning, I learned about life beyond competitions. Kaki King introduced the possibility of success that defied the traditional guitarist pathway. You can be a successful, passionate, and inspiring musician without winning competitions.

Beyond the individual classical guitar, artists pioneered diversity and shared it with Bridge students up on the coveted seventh floor. Cavatina Duo embraced diversity in instruments and style, combining guitar and flute in versatile repertoire to produce new sounds, colors, and musical expression. Jérémy Jouve and Matthias Deplussy adopted percussive and vocal styles that expanded upon traditional plucking upon nylon strings and made use of the guitar in its entirety.

The connections I made, and the ones we all made, throughout the week were priceless. Hearing each artist's story, and hearing each other's stories, was eye-opening. Being able to engage with teachers, students, performers, and mentors, ask questions and get actual answers was invaluable. We learned about TY Zhang's journey from Beijing to the Juilliard School, about Martha Masters' experience as president of the GFA, and memorably, how many Bridge students (plus their guitars) could fit into a single elevator. Without guitars, we managed about fourteen people. With guitars, it was an entirely different story. No guitars were harmed in determining the capacity.

Surprise sessions appeared a number of times throughout the week as well. Bill Kanengiser of the Grammy award-winning Los Angeles Guitar Quartet stepped in to provide words of wisdom during our mini studio class. Jiji Kim made time for a private Q&A to talk about her journey as a guitarist and educator. René Izquierdo gave an impromptu masterclass on tremolo in Tárrega's *Recuerdos de la Alhambra*, working one-on-one with a student to improve technique.

Not one, not two, not three, but four ensemble groups graced the room, each introducing similar ideas, though each through a new lens. The aforementioned Cavatina Duo mixed instruments to uncover new sounds and techniques. SoloDuo opened up about the joys and sorrows of ensemble playing. Antigoni Goni, Maarten Vandembemben, and Luca Isolani put on a private performance and engaged in a personal Q&A to follow their technique workshop

from earlier that morning. Finally, in a combination of percussive, vocal, and strumming elements, Jérémy Jouve and Mathias Duplessy performed and spoke about performer collaborations and style.

All of this . . . while having fun? Everything so far seems like some sort of specialized summer school, which would frankly seem unbearable for a group of teenagers on summer break in the biggest city in the country. I can assure you, we did manage to go outside and enjoy quintessential New York weather, attend nightly concerts from some of the best the world has to offer (not many people get to hear Sharon Isbin, Martha Masters, and TY Zhang in one week!), and spend far too much money at the Vendor Fair. Come on, how can anyone resist a brand-new collection of Sor etudes, an exquisite Strings by Mail nail file, and best of all, free Savarez goodie bags?

It was a week of friendship, community, learning, and thriving, and I'm ever grateful to Chuck and the rest of the GFA family for everything.

*The Bridge will return to Fullerton, California, in 2024 for a week of intense learning, inspiration, community building, and memories.*



Chuck Hulihan is the Education Director and Director of the Bridge with the Guitar Foundation of America. He is also Guitar Program Director and Academic Program Director for Music at Glendale Community College, where he has served since 1999. Chuck is considered one of the most prominent and prolific guitar ensemble conductors. When he is not directing a rehearsal or coaching an ensemble, he can be found chasing a coffee or a new pair of sneakers.

## PERSPECTIVES ON THE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE OF GUITAR EDUCATION: Educator Track Day 2023

By *Laura Meador*

*Contributions by Chuck Hulihan, Jayson Martinez, Martha Masters, Jim McCutcheon, Zoë Johnstone Stewart, and Kevin Vigil.*

GFA has been a pillar in the guitar community for fifty years, inspiring guitarists at all stages of career, life, and artistic development. One could argue that GFA is wholly educational in nature, providing routine opportunities for growth through periodicals and the annual convention and competition. Targeted educational offerings have been the focus in recent years in the form of youth summer camps and regional symposiums, programs for pre-college educators, quarterly educator hours, *Soundboard* publications, and our conventions' Educator Track Day. This is not an exhaustive list; it does not capture all of the individuals that have donated their time to the organization, nor ideas canvassed by the GFA staff, education committee, and invested community members, aimed to understand and imagine the future of GFA education.

A significant juncture in our learning journey took place during the virtual convention's Educator Track Day 2021, with the emergence of conversations centered on defining what it means to be a guitar educator of the twenty-first century, an inquiry both personal and communal. Guitar pedagogy as a practice intersected with topics such as the use of technology, inclusive instruction, visibility and representation of the global guitar community, youth agency and creativity, stylistic disciplines of guitar, advocacy for school guitar programs, and the overall sense of being dichotomous about the guitar's history and possibilities during our unique time in history.

This probation served as a source of inspiration for 2023's Educator Track Day event, informing the questions we asked panelists, those individuals cited above plus Paul Nielsen and Michael Quantz, with the bonus inclusion of GFA president, Martha Masters. As we move forward negotiating what the future can look like for GFA education, we encourage you to reflect upon your past, present, and future within our shared ecosystem. Please enjoy the following anecdotes. A special thank you to all who have generously donated their time to GFA's education efforts over the years. We know who you are

and appreciate you.

### I. Past

**Chuck Hulihan** GFA Education Director; GFA Bridge Director; Guitar Program Director and Academic Program Director for Music, Glendale Community College, Glendale, CA.

*What led you to a career in guitar?*



**Chuck Hulihan**

From the moment I picked a guitar up, I knew it was what I was most passionate about and what I wanted to do forever. In terms of teaching, all of my mentors and role models were deeply invested in teaching as a major part of their identity:

John McCarthy at the Rockhouse Method, Mark M. Davis at the University of Connecticut (UCONN), and Frank Koonce at Arizona State University (ASU). As soon as I learned my first chords, riffs, and tunes as a teenager, I developed the strong desire to show others, share my learning, and pass it along. It's always been a deeply rewarding and satisfying feeling as well as something I simply enjoy, with the bonus that early on I realized it was also a wonderful secret, the fine art of teaching others and the positive impact it has on your own learning and playing.

*What are some early lessons that informed your teaching practice?*



Sitting with John McCarthy and realizing he could listen to, transcribe, and write down for me all the Judas Priest tunes I wanted to learn. Hearing my first classical teacher, Mark M. Davis, in concert and instantly looking up the requirements to audition as a music major. Performing in a masterclass for David Tanenbaum at the National Guitar Summer Workshop and having Frank Koonce stand up in the audience and mention to David a wrong note that had slipped past us both while I wondered, “Who is this guy?” before meeting him, hearing him play, and flying to Arizona that next year to visit ASU and make the decision to relocate to what would become my forever home and where I’ve made my career.

When I first auditioned at UCONN for Mark Davis, I showed up with very few skills and little relevant experience for the college program I was trying to enter. But Mark listened to me, was kind and encouraging, and let me know there were simply no available openings at the time in his studio (wink wink). He suggested I do a few things that summer to progress. I showed up at the beginning of that next semester, wanting to share my progress, and it just so happened that he suddenly had an opening and was able to allow me in the studio. That grace, the open door, and the second chance not only changed my life, but it meant I’d believe in anyone who knocked on my door, and I’d always believe in people. It’s a large part of why I love teaching at a no-audition, open-entry community college.

**Jayson Martinez** Director of Guitar Studies, Arts High School, Newark, NJ; Chairman for Guitar Education, New Jersey Music Educators Association; NAFME Eastern Division Representative for Council of Guitar Education; adjunct at Kean University.



Jayson Martinez

*What led you to a career in guitar?*

As a student, my music teachers were my inspiration who motivated me to pursue a career in music education. My earlier teachers, Jose Serrano and Lou Melchor, encouraged me to begin teaching private lessons at a

local music store while I was still in high school. This early experience prepared me to continue my advancement into higher education, where I gained more knowledge about the profession.

*What are some early lessons that informed your teaching practice?*

There are many moments along my teaching journey that have inspired me to grow as a teacher including the first time I noticed that my instruction enlightened a student. Perhaps my most recent inspirational moment came as an invitation for my students to perform for Miguel Cardona, US Secretary of Education, in DC. Those students were ecstatic to showcase their talents at the Department of Education Building for the annual Hispanic Heritage event.

**Martha Masters** President of the GFA; Assistant Professor, School of Music, Dance and Theatre, University of Arizona, Tempe.



Martha Masters

*What led you to a career in guitar?*

My first teacher (Jim McCutcheon—how lucky am I!?) just simply made me fall in love with it. I absolutely would not have stuck with it without him sharing his

love. As for the career part, once I was in love with it, there was hardly a moment of looking back; from age 6, I rarely doubted it. There were moments of “maybe this would be interesting and/or lucrative instead,” as well as one moment of real doubt whether I was good enough. But honestly, it was simply always the dream.

*What are some early lessons that informed your teaching practice?*

Jim McCutcheon teaching me “Hot Cross Buns.” Scott Tennant at the National Guitar Workshop in the 1980s, trying out exercises for what would become his *Pumping Nylon* and he later reminding me of my love for the guitar after a lot of stress. Manuel Barrueco teaching me about refinement at a level I couldn’t imagine. Pepe Romero

talking about music with words from his heart, with poetry. Paul Galbraith showing me from the stage how to phrase. Watching the New Mexico All-State Guitar Ensemble a decade ago—my first experience—and thinking of how far we've come with pre-college guitar education, and how lucky these kids are.

At one point my family moved to a small town with no classical guitar teacher, after I had already been playing for a few years. We lived there for three years, and the only teacher around was a fingerstyle guy. He realized that I probably already knew more than him about sound production and lots of other things with classical guitar. But he kept pulling books off the shelf at the music store and putting harder things in front of me, and he'd help me figure them out. And then he started taking me on his gigs with him, which felt like an honor. He taught me a lot—it perhaps wasn't refinement—but it was about hard work, curiosity, and sharing the gift of music with others.

**Jim McCutcheon** Proprietor of McCutcheon Music in Dayton, OH; Lecturer in Guitar at University of Dayton; adjunct at Wright State University and Miami University of Ohio.



Jim McCutcheon

*What led you to a career in guitar?*

Having role models as a child. For me, it was the Kingston Trio—I was 8! Next it was having supportive parents (even though they made me wait three years before they'd get me a guitar)! Next it

was an inspirational teacher, Bunyan Webb, who came through the Midwest annually on his tours and gave me a marathon lesson once a year for four years while I was a physics major.

*What are some early lessons that informed your teaching practice?*

When Bunyan Webb told me, after four frustrating years in high school of making zero progress in my playing, that

I only had two problems: my left hand and my right hand. Fifty years ago in the Midwest there were not teachers who really understood classical guitar technique, and there was no internet, so information was scarce, and this man really knew how to teach. Just hearing him play was inspirational.

My early teachers were nice people and at least didn't make me hate music. But they didn't know classical technique nor did they have their students perform at recitals and other juried events, such as the National Federation of Music Clubs Festivals. I learned a lot about how NOT to teach from my early lessons. Sixty years ago guitar pedagogy in the Midwest was rudimentary, despite what the music stores said about their teachers.

**Zoë Johnstone Stewart** Guitar Department Chair of the Preparatory Division of the Peabody Institute, Baltimore, MD; member of the GFA board of trustees.



Zoë Johnstone Stewart

*What led you to a career in guitar?*

I started the guitar as a 14-year-old in a guitar class at my public high school in Staten Island, New York City. Our program consisted of guitar classes during the day and an audition-only class held after

school three times a week. This formative experience really demonstrated the value of students playing together and created a love of performing and teaching ensemble music that is with me today. I'm certain that the current emphasis I place on group and ensemble playing in my program at Peabody was shaped by that positive experience of making music with my peers. Additionally, this was a program that caught the eye of Benjamin Verdery, who agreed to take on a few students from our high school, including me, as private students. Having the opportunity to work with such a luminary as a young person was incredibly inspiring to me.

*What are some early lessons that informed your teaching practice?*

As a guitarist, I also remember some truly extraordinary concerts I attended as a young person that inspired me to pursue guitar professionally. Two that come to mind are seeing the Gray Pearl Duo at the Yale Guitar Extravaganza and the Los Angeles Guitar Quartet at the 92<sup>nd</sup> Street Y. Teenage me was deeply inspired by the tightness, precision, and deep musicality of both these ensembles; it seemed like magic. As a teacher, I recall when I first learned about the Suzuki method of learning in my undergrad guitar pedagogy class. The emphasis on positive reinforcement, group playing, and building comprehensive technique in a way that's developmentally appropriate for children deeply resonated with my own values and desired approach to teaching music. I received my first Suzuki guitar Book 1 training in between my third and fourth year of undergrad. Since then it's been a guiding force in my teaching and program building.

A few things I realized as I left school and started my professional teaching career: Stay in growth mode. You will learn the most from the experiences and opportunities that make you a little uncomfortable. Invest time in creating connections with students and families as well as in creating a community, and it'll pay off in a higher quality experience for you as a teacher. The extra phone call to a student's parent or the extra time spent planning that special class can really go a long way in yielding a teaching experience that inspires you and your students. Even if it doesn't result in the short-term change you're looking for, the process of engaging with your own teaching ideas will strengthen your skills as well as inspire your students.

**Kevin Vigil** President of Virginia Guitar Directors Association; Southern Division Representative for NAFME Council for Guitar Education; member of the GFA Education Committee.

*What led you to a career in guitar?*

When I was 18, my dad took me to see John Stover perform the Villa-Lobos *Concerto* with the Germantown Symphony (TN). After the concerto, Stover was given an encore. He played Bach's Prelude to BWV1006. This was the first time I had experienced classical guitar. From that point on, I knew the path that I wanted to take.

*What are some early lessons that informed your teaching practice?*



**Kevin Vigil**

I met John Graham in 1990. John was the guitar teacher at Lake Braddock Secondary School in Fairfax County (recently retired). John would invite me to play for and work with his students from time to time. He even invited me to travel with his students to New York,

Boston, and Toronto. It was because of John that I was familiar with guitar programs in public education. Fast forward to 2004—my daughter was three years old and my wife, Barbara, said, “You know that when Bonnie starts school, you will not see her much with your current schedule.” She was right. I was teaching and performing in the evenings and weekends. If I had a “day job” like John, I would have more time for my daughter. It was at that point that I decided to teach in the school system.

## II. Present

### **Chuck Huliban**

*What challenges are you experiencing as a guitar educator and how are you addressing them?*

My current challenges are a combination of the cost of higher education, ever-changing public opinion on getting a higher education, the amount of stress and challenges current students carry with them each day, and the fact that college has somewhat shifted (or maybe entirely shifted) from a place to learn and grow to a place to receive job training and start your career. The modern student is aware of the struggle an artist will likely face; they tend to balance work, life, and school; and they often struggle with grit and perseverance. I enjoy a good challenge though.

*What new strategies, approaches, or tools are you experimenting with?*

The pandemic forced me to embrace online learning and explore all the benefits and advantages it can offer over in-person. I am extremely optimistic, perhaps to a fault at times, and accepted the monumental challenge of learning to direct virtual ensembles, run rehearsals remotely, create asynchronous content, and everything else most

of us either learned to do or continued doing. I learned the value of having your classroom and presence extend beyond those boundaries and have continued to nurture the positive attributes.

*How are you maintaining and growing your own artistry as a guitarist?*

I love to take deep dives into styles. Over my career I've explored not only classical and metal but the music of Django Reinhardt and what's often called jazz manouche (gypsy jazz), I constantly circle back to flamenco; always enjoy teaching myself bluegrass or bossa nova; and most importantly, find ways to infuse those styles into my teaching as well as my own exploration. I'm currently enjoying playing electric guitar for personal satisfaction and therapy improvisation, and have been taking a deep dive after a long time away from amps and pedals. Professionally my main public identity is currently as a guitar ensemble conductor, which I'm deeply passionate about, and I'm blessed to work with many composers I look up to.

### **Jayson Martinez**

*What challenges are you experiencing as a guitar educator and how are you addressing them?*

One challenge is to figure out just what material will reach and bring out the best in my students. In Arts High School, I divide our four cycles in a school year into classical, jazz and blues, flamenco, and modern rock. These different genres allow students to explore a myriad of styles and concepts in order to become well-rounded musicians.

*What new strategies, approaches, or tools are you experimenting with?*

As I plan my materials for the upcoming school year, my strategies and approaches are centered on key concepts that include teaching rhythm, technique, theory, practicing, interpretation, and performance. For my beginners, I utilize the Yousician App, which allows the student to learn the fingerboard while learning to play in tempo. Then I move into note reading using various curricula, including the Sagreras, Carcassi, and Austin Classical materials. For my intermediate and advanced students, I choose our repertoire from a variety of approaches, depending on the genre. These include the Leavitt and Galbraith jazz series, and the Active Melody Blues website.

*How are you maintaining and growing your own artistry as a guitarist?*

In order to captivate my students in the classroom while gaining their respect as a musician, it's imperative for me to be able to constantly demonstrate a high level of performance. Before COVID, performing with the New York Guitar Orchestra had helped me grow as a musician. Currently, I continue to maintain my own artistry by conducting the NJMEA [New Jersey Music Educators Association] Honors Guitar Orchestra and the NJGO [New Jersey Guitar Orchestra].

### **Martha Masters**

*What challenges are you experiencing as a guitar educator and how are you addressing them?*

At the college level, it seems so hard for students to organize and prioritize practicing. Sometimes it's a skill set that they haven't developed yet, so it's about mentoring. Sometimes it's financial; they have to work too much at a job, which doesn't leave enough time for practice. Time management is one of the biggest tools they need to learn and that I need to help them with. Also learning *how* to practice well. Working on this is a big part of what I continue to do. I like to get other students modeling good work and use peer support, sometimes more effective than the teacher saying it!

*What new strategies, approaches, or tools are you experimenting with?*

Peer support is probably my biggest tool I'm experimenting with. How can students motivate and inspire one another? How can I provide more opportunities for that and encourage that engagement?

*How are you maintaining and growing your own artistry as a guitarist?*

My playing comes in and out of season as I get occupied with the job of teaching! I'm making a goal to make it more regular this year, as I think part of being a great teacher is having that personal inspiration from my own music making.

### **Jim McCutcheon**

*What challenges are you experiencing as a guitar educator and how are you addressing them?*

My biggest competitor is not the guitar teacher down the street. It's *soccer*! At the university level, it's been a

challenge convincing music education departments that *all* music education majors should be required to take at least one semester of guitar class taught by a competent guitarist. I've been beating on their doors for forty years.

*What new strategies, approaches, or tools are you experimenting with?*

Classroom management in non-major beginning guitar classes.

*How are you maintaining and growing your own artistry as a guitarist?*

I keep practicing and have a concert ready at any time. I also compose. I just finished a concerto for guitar and strings.

**Zoë Johnstone Stewart**

*What challenges are you experiencing as a guitar educator and how are you addressing them?*

A lot of little challenges come up day to day, but I generally feel extremely fortunate to work at Peabody. We have wonderful resources, I have a brilliant faculty team I'm lucky to work with, and I love my students. The challenge I see is a broader one: I wish our current American classical music culture valued the excellent teaching of children as much as the excellent teaching of collegiate and professional students. Starting young students from scratch and building their technique from the beginning, all while building their knowledge of music, maintaining their interest through the teen years, and so on, is a task that requires a great amount of skill, experience, knowledge, and commitment—a necessary one for the future of classical guitar.

*What new strategies, approaches, or tools are you experimenting with?*

I've started sharing my goals for students with them in a very direct way, working with them to create a step-by-step plan we can accomplish over a semester or year. We write the goals down and keep track of small steps we achieve over the prescribed time period. It's a great way to see how the small steps come together, it keeps students accountable for their progress, and it's a good non-musical lesson on how small steps over time can achieve big results. These are lessons they can apply to their future success no matter what endeavor they pursue.

*How are you maintaining and growing your own artistry as a guitarist?*

My performance career is mostly with my group Atlantic Guitar Quartet, though I do occasionally play with other musicians and ensembles. AGQ is dedicated to the music of living composers. We perform concerts in various parts of the United States, commission new works, and currently have a few recording projects in development.

**Kevin Vigil**

*What challenges are you experiencing as a guitar educator and how are you addressing them?*

At its peak, my program had approximately 160 students. About eight years ago, the guitar teacher at the middle school transferred to another school. While there were enough students for a full-time guitar teacher, the choir and orchestra teachers had low enrollment. In order to keep these teachers full-time, they were assigned the guitar classes. From that point on, the number of students signing up for guitar in my high school diminished year by year to the point that this year, only four students from the middle school enrolled in the high school program. For the last several years, I've reached out to offer my assistance and have advocated for a guitar specialist to teach at the middle school. My advocacy finally paid off. This year I'll be teaching the seventh-grade guitar classes. The idea is to get the students excited and build a strong foundation. The orchestra teacher will be able to conduct these students, and in the meantime students will know that they'll get to work with me when they're in ninth grade.

As a very important side note, there are some amazing non-guitarist guitar educators in the field. These are people who fell in love with guitar and put the needs of their students first. These teachers work to improve their understanding of guitar and how to engage their students with it. Unfortunately, there are many non-guitar specialists that are assigned to teach guitar with no pre-service experience and may only teach it for a year or two. Such was the case with my feeder program. There were four such teachers who taught guitar over the last eight years.

*How are you maintaining and growing your own artistry as a guitarist?*

I continue to perform on occasion as a soloist and play chamber music with my family and friends. Mostly, I spend a lot of time in my studio making rehearsal recordings for my students. Every once in a while I do

recording projects for composers. I'm currently writing student pieces for a method book that I'm co-writing with my friend John Graham.

### III. Future

#### **Chuck Hulihan**

*How are you preparing yourself to be a guitar educator of the future?*

By always surrounding myself with young people and listening to them and what they're listening to. I try to stay hip to current trends, keep an eye and ear on what people I admire are doing, and take the time to shine lights and elevate those people. As you get further into your career and realize you have nothing to prove to anyone, it gets really empowering to lift others up and help others achieve and get their time in the spotlight. So I'm making time to do just that as much as possible in every avenue I have access to. My students of the past thirty years are doing so many interesting and amazing things—my colleagues and friends as well—so I stay current and look to the future by lifting up others and finding inspiration.

*How are you preparing your students to be guitarists of the future?*

By helping them navigate the crazy world out there in every way possible; informing, encouraging, and enlightening them when possible. Talking to them about cutting their own paths rather than following someone else's path. Working with them to develop and refine what makes them stand out among the crowd. Empowering them with my own story of persistence and perseverance. And mostly by being someone who believes in them and the power of setting a goal and putting one's entire mind, body, and soul into pursuing your dream.

#### **Jayson Martinez**

*How are you preparing yourself to be a guitar educator of the future?*

In order for me to be a good educator in the future, I must continue to learn about all aspects of teaching. This includes, but is not limited to, attending conventions, learning about students' self efficacy, along with philosophies and critical issues in music education.

*How are you preparing your students to be guitarists of the future?*

It's different for every student and depends upon the student's attitude, level of dedication, and aptitude. Some

guitar students seem to have a natural talent for the guitar and progress at a faster rate than others. Regardless of aptitude, all good students realize that it takes time to develop competency with guitar.

Teaching the guitar, along with all subjects, is not an easy endeavor, and it requires hours of work with patience and focus. Proficiency can definitely be achieved with a love for guitar and good work habits. Remember that a good working relationship is a two-way street between teacher and student. Guitar students must not only put in the effort, but teachers must do their best to impart knowledge and encouragement to prospective guitarists.

#### **Martha Masters**

*How are you preparing yourself to be a guitar educator of the future?*

I think it's important that I continue to attend festivals and concerts, keep seeking new repertoire, and not become too comfortable with the pieces I've "always used" for a certain technique, etc.

*How are you preparing your students to be guitarists of the future?*

Keep listening to what they want and paying attention to the opportunities that are developing in the job world for them.

#### **Jim McCutcheon**

*How are you preparing yourself to be a guitar educator of the future?*

I attend the GFA conventions whenever possible. I keep learning new repertoire both in the classical and popular genres.

*How are you preparing your students to be guitarists of the future?*

In addition to musicality, I teach versatility.

#### **Zoë Johnstone Stewart**

*How are you preparing yourself to be a guitar educator of the future?*

It's important to keep in mind what is intrinsically motivating to the kids and teens I work with as well as what the life of a young person is like in our current time. A family's life today is very different from the one I experienced growing up, and I try to listen and respond



2023 Educator Track Day panel, from left: Chuck Hulihan, Zoë Johnstone Stewart, Jim McCutcheon, Paul Nielsen, Kevin Vigil, Jayson Martinez, Michael Quantz

to the needs of individual students to maintain their inspiration and motivation for guitar.

**Kevin Vigil**

*How are you preparing yourself to be a guitar educator of the future?*

I'm involved in leadership positions to advocate and support the future of guitar education. I currently serve as president of the Virginia Guitar Directors Association, chair-elect for the NAFME Council for Guitar Education,

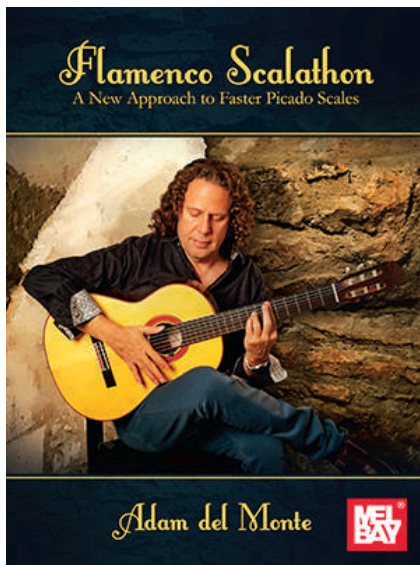
and as a member of the GFA Education Committee. In these roles, I hope to contribute toward the growth of robust guitar programs nationwide.

*How are you preparing your students to be guitarists of the future?*

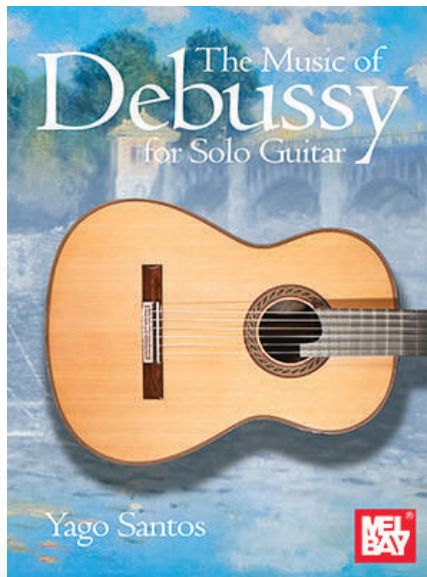
For students who are planning to pursue a degree in music, I recommend that they consider a music education degree with guitar as their primary instrument. I also encourage them to have a secondary instrument (band, orchestra, or choir). This will make them more marketable to administrators. The more licensed guitar specialists in the field, the healthier guitar programs will be. For those who do not plan to pursue a degree in music, I encourage them to stay engaged by being lifelong learners, consumers, and advocates of music.



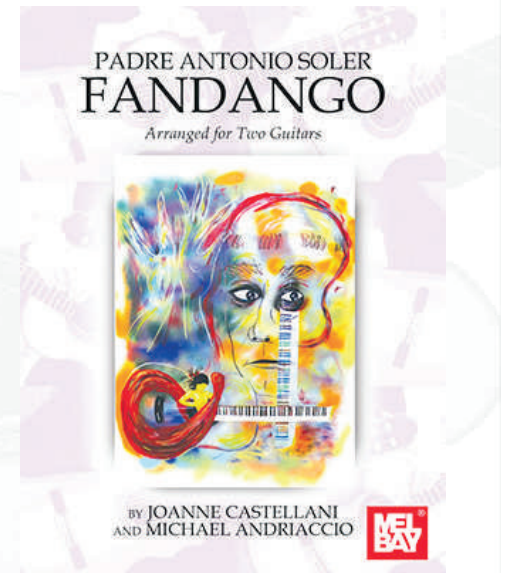
Laura Meador is the Education Coordinator with the Guitar Foundation of America. Additionally, she is Guitar Faculty at Phoenix College and a certified Instrumental Music Teacher with the Phoenix Elementary School District. Laura earned two master's degrees from the Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts at Arizona State University, Guitar Performance: Pedagogy and Music Education.



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## THE GFA AT FIFTY: A Half Century of Gems

By Al Kunze



Al Kunze

Half a century of the GFA. It's hard to take in. Can anyone say where the world of guitar would be without the Guitar Foundation of America? It's impossible to quantify, but both in the US and the world, one can safely say that our guitar community would be smaller and far less well-evolved than it is now. Though a mere

forty years old, the competitions alone have certainly raised the state of the art for soloists and ensembles worldwide. Anyone interested in the fascinating early years of the GFA, including the visionary leaders who set us on the course commemorated in New York would do well to read Robert Ferguson's articles on these subjects in *Soundboard* 49, nos. 1 and 2, as well as in the present issue (page 29).

Celebrating fifty years of the GFA clearly deserved a very special event. This need was met by the bold decision of having the festival in New York City. I am not privy to all of the mental and physical exertions that Martha Masters, Brian Head, convention manager Brian Geary, and all of the rest of the GFA staff must have undertaken, but the result was spectacular. Held in the wonderful spaces of the Manhattan School of Music on the city's upper west side, it would be hard to top the myriad venues for lectures, competition rounds, classes, and, of course, a beautiful concert hall for the major performance.

And what a series of performances were on offer! Almost all of the concerts featured winners of the GFA's concert artist competitions, so the level of playing was uniformly exceptional. Other concerts featured ensembles and world-class artists as composers and performers.

### *Tuesday concerts*

The 2022 International Concert Artist Competition (ICAC) winner Lovro Peretić started the cornucopia of concerts. A highlight for me was Andrea Clearfield's *Reflections on the Dranyen*. With passages sometimes dissonant and sometimes mellifluous, it displayed a comprehensive knowledge of the guitar's resources.

A beautiful Brahms *Intermezzo* preceded a work by a composer I had never heard of: K.A. Craeyvanger. The work was a theme and variations based on a theme of Weber, and provided an opportunity for Peretić to unleash cascades of notes in a virtuosic showpiece.

The second half of the afternoon concert was Marcin Dylla (ICAC 2007). His performance of Weiss's *Sonata* no. 34 was a demonstration of elegant music making. And although I love the music of Piazzolla, his *Cinco piezas* has never struck me as a strong piece. But Dylla's playing of the second movement, "Romantico," was notably lyrical and exceptionally fluent, lifting the music to its highest level.



Marcin Dylla

Tuesday evening's concert was described as a "Love Letter to New York." And it was impossible not to love a concert that began with the New York Classical Guitar Society Orchestra playing *Chorale* by Fred Hand and then featured powerhouse performers TY Zhang (2017); the flute/guitar Cavatina Duo, consisting of Denis Azabagic (1988) and Eugenia Moliner; and finishing with Jason Vieaux (1992). TY played some beautiful Piazzolla, "El sueño de la Razón Produce Monstruos" from *Caprichos de Goya* by Castelnuovo-Tedesco, and dazzled the crowd with "Clown Down" from *Sonata Trianella* by Roland Dyens.



Cavatina Duo is arguably the finest guitar/flute duo in existence. Their program consisted of two major works for their ensemble by David Leisner, who is on the Manhattan School of Music faculty. These works, *Dances in the Madhouse* and *Acrobats*, are pieces on the very highest level of composition and received state-of-the-art performances. No more need be said.

I have not been convinced by some of Pat Metheny's ventures into classical composition. But the *Four Paths of Light* seem to me breakthrough works. They explore very different moods, compositional techniques, and timbral variety. Vieaux's performance was a miracle of an almost palpable musicality allied with glorious richness of tone. It was a wonderful conclusion to an unforgettable evening.

### **Wednesday concerts**

The afternoon concert was another triptych of GFA winners. First to play was Rovshan Mamedkuliev (2012). He began with *Six Miniatures* by Fikret Amirov. Each of the mostly brief movements was attractive, but I particularly enjoyed the romp around the guitar of "On Hunting" and the lyrical beauty of the "Nocturne," reminiscent of the berceuse by Tansman. Also of particular note was



Judicaël Perroy

Štěpán Rak's powerful but beautiful *Hommage à Tárrega*. GFA president Martha Masters (2000) was next, playing a beautifully thought out (I would say "curated," but the overuse of that term is horribly annoying) program that included Olga Amelkina-Vera's *Ka Ao, Ka Ao, Ka Awatea* (the title cut on the composer's wonderful CD anthology that I reviewed recently in *Soundboard*) and two lovely

works by Ida Presti. Judicaël Perroy closed the afternoon with an uneven performance that nonetheless had a number of fine moments including much of Mertz's *Fantaisie Hongroise* and several movements of the Bach *Lute Suite*, BWV 995. Many were puzzled by his playing as encores the first two movements of the *Prelude, Fugue and Allegro*.

The evening concert was billed as "The Next Fifty Years," although I assume that indicated no comprehensive prediction of the direction of guitar music. It was, however, a fascinating concert of almost entirely unexpected music. First was an unusual chamber trio of Jérémy Jouve (2003), composer/guitarist Mathias Duplessy, and tabla virtuoso Amit Kavthekar. There was no printed program, but I gather that the music constitutes the "Cavalcade Project." *Cavalcade* is the name of Jouve and Duplessy's album together, which includes many of the pieces heard in the concert. I found the eclecticism very appealing and the dedication and energy of the performers was noteworthy.

Next, as might have been identified in *Monty Python's Flying Circus* as "something completely different," was steel-string virtuoso Kaki King. Ms. King is a great favorite with aficionados of steel-string acoustic playing, and her program demonstrated why that is so. She used her Ovation guitar as a sort of launching pad for pieces that also brought in many cutting-edge technologies for the music and also numerous visual effects. She had loopers and a laptop controlling various effects actuated by pedals. But she also employed a mystifying visual effect in which the front of the guitar served as a projection screen for a strategically placed digital projector. I was not alone in approaching the stage to find out how it was all done. "Completely different" indeed.

### **Thursday concerts**

Thursday evening's concert was a most impressive assemblage of new(ish) music. The GFA's own guitar orchestra—which included several professional players—joined cellist David Eggar for a wonderful performance of Sérgio Assad's *The Walls*, with the composer conducting. The music referred stylistically to various walls, including Hadrian's Wall, the Great Wall of China, and the Berlin Wall. Eggar's performance of the cello part—standing up—was dazzling.

*The Walls* connected almost organically to Benjamin Verdery's *Scenes from Ellis Island*. On a CD of Verdery's music, I found the piece to be very powerful. But in live performance the effect was overwhelming, with the orchestra, several soloists, and Verdery himself conducting and playing electric guitar, allied with a slide presentation sometimes touching and sometimes maddening in

## THE GFA AT FIFTY (cont.)

illuminating how immigrants have been treated over the years. Bravo to all involved.

The more avant-garde sounds of Orianna Webb and Louis Andriessen were brought to life by the group Flexible Music, headed by guitarist Daniel Lippel. Their performance was astonishingly well coordinated, including a canon in Andriessen's *Hout* in which the voices were separated by just a sixteenth note. Just thinking about doing that made my synapses ache for some time. (On Thursday, the evening concert was the only one of the day, which included the ICAC semifinals.)

### *Friday concerts*

The afternoon presented another triptych, this time Gabriel Bianco (2008), Margarita Escarpa (1994), and Fabio Zanon (1997). Bianco gave us a very well-executed performance of the *Sonata* by Antonio José in a version informed by his



Margarita Escarpa

study of the manuscript. ICAC winner Thomas Viloteau did not perform at the convention, but his *A Night in Bastille* was given its world premiere by Bianco. Inspired by memories of “partying hard” (I’m sure there is a story there!), it made good use of extended techniques and layered textures. I would like to hear it again. For an encore Bianco was joined by honey-voiced mezzo Marina Viotti for Carlos Eleta Almarán’s song “Historia de un amor.” Lovely.

Fabio Zanon played a beautiful and substantial program. I was elated that he included the beautiful *Piezas características* by Torroba. This work, in six movements, is a favorite of mine, and is not heard nearly enough. And

although I would have loved to hear Zanon’s performances of the two Turina works listed in the program, he replaced them with two studies by Francisco Mignone taken from the Brazilian composer’s set of twelve, included on a wonderful CD by Mr. Zanon.

The evening concert was just one artist: soon-to-be Hall of Famer Sharon Isbin. Sharon was never an ICAC winner since her career was already well established before the GFA competition began. But it is interesting to note that she won the first of the legendary competitions sponsored by the guitar society in Toronto as part of Guitar ’75. (The remainder of the final field was none too shabby: Manuel Barrueco, David Leisner, and Eliot Fisk.) An unusual juxtaposition, if not a true pairing, was Brouwer’s *La espiral eterna* (one of my favorites from his modernist phase) and Tárrega’s *Capricho Árabe*. Somehow it worked. The second half began with Tan Dun’s *Seven Desires*, a major work written for Ms. Isbin. Beautifully played Barrios concluded the second half of the concert. But there were two delicious encores. First was Isaías Sávio’s *Batucada*, played in tribute to Sharon’s friend the late Carlos Barbosa-Lima, followed by the haunting song “Yerushalayim Shel Zahav” (“Jerusalem of Gold”) by Naomi Shemer. It was gorgeous.

### *Saturday concerts*

There was only one concert on the Saturday schedule, since the day also included the final round of four contestants in the ICAC, preceded by the finals of the International Ensemble Competition. But this sole concert was a very fine one. Simply invoking the name SoloDuo, consisting of Lorenzo Micheli (1999) and Matteo Mela, portends



SoloDuo

a concert of state-of-the-art duo playing. And they did not disappoint. Everything was a gem: the Debussy *Petite Suite*, Piazzolla *Tango Suite*, and their miraculous version of Beethoven’s *Sonata Pathétique*. A handful of other duos are on this level now, but none are better.



Antigoni Goni

The second part of the concert featured Antigoni Goni as soloist in sets of very Spanish pieces by Tárrega and Llobet. For the bulk of the program she was joined by Luca Isolani and Maarten Vandenbenden, constituting the Volterra Project Guitar Trio. (Your time would be profitably spent researching the Volterra Project, a fine component in the world of European guitar workshops.) The trio's playing was gorgeous both in Ravel's *Ma mère l'Oye* and Granados's *Valses poéticas*. Both pieces were performed in arrangements by Mr. Vandenbenden.

The final act of the convention was two-fold: announcing the winners of the GFA's International Concert Artists Competition and the formal induction of Sharon Isbin into the Hall of Fame as recipient of the 2023 Artistic Achievement Award. Saturday evening's ceremony accomplished these tasks with poise and celebratory recognitions.

### Special mention

Robert's Rules of Order allows for what is referred to as a "point of personal privilege." My articles about the GFA conventions have the purpose of celebrating the best moments in the concerts by the artists populating the formal concerts of the event. But I can't help but celebrate one of the most amazing performances of the whole week, that of the winners of the International Ensemble Competition, England's Mēla Guitar Quartet. Their program opened with an impressive performance of the "Bacchanale" from Saint-Saëns opera *Samson and Delilah*. (Who saw that coming?) And the last piece listed was the overture from Mikhail Glinka's opera *Ruslan and Lyudmila*. When I first saw it, I thought it was sure to be either very slow, or a train wreck. It was neither but instead what one

of the judges described to me later as "wizardry." Indeed. A stunning display of virtuosity. And I will add that their performance of the first *Arabesque* by Debussy may have included the most ravishingly beautiful sounds of the entire convention. This was revelatory music making.

To recapitulate last issue's reporting, the finalists of all three GFA competitions this year were:

### GFA International Concert Artist Competition

Rose Augustine Grand Prize Winner: Marko Topchii, Ukraine

2nd Place: Kevin Loh, Singapore

3rd Place: XuKun Alan Lui, Canada

4th Place: Florent Aillaud, France

### GFA International Ensemble Competition

1st Place: Mēla Guitar Quartet, UK

2nd Place: Cicchillitti-Cowan Duo, Canada

3rd Place: Duo StriAgo, Italy

4th Place: MoNo Guitar Duo, Italy/Poland

### GFA International Youth Competition

#### Senior Division

1st Place: Muxin Li, China

2nd Place: Hwanhee Cha, South Korea

3rd Place: Penelope Shvarts, USA

4th Place: Flavius Wagner, Germany

#### Junior Division

1st Place: Hilbert Chen, USA

2nd Place: Preston Hong, USA

3rd Place: Tae Kim, USA

4th Place: Justin Chen, USA

### In memoriam

Two sad passings preceded the festival. Hall of Fame member Bruce Holzman, the legendary teacher at Florida State University, died in a tragic automobile accident a few weeks before the festival. Bruce had completed fifty years of teaching (I was a student during his first year), but many of us hoped he would be teaching for many more. His younger brother Adam played a brief but touching video on the opening night of the event (see also Adam's tribute to his brother on page 55 of this issue). And mere days before the convention opening, Colleen Gates, Art Director for all of GFA's publications, passed away, shortly after her teenage son died. Our thoughts are with her family as they are with Bruce's wife, Michelle.

As we got the news that next year's festival will be held in the Los Angeles area, we must be ready to pack up our things and head to the left coast for year fifty-one of the GFA. See you there!

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2023 CONVENTION LECTURES

By Cameron O'Connor



Cameron O'Connor

The 2023 Convention hosted a number of renowned scholars and performers, presenting a range of topics covering all aspects of the modern guitar. Here are a few highlights.

### Luigi Attademo

Guitarist and scholar Luigi Attademo's talk, "Listening to a Sound," focused on the prolific

composing career of his mentor Angel Gilardino (1941–2022). Gilardino's early encounter with the French virtuoso Ida Presti sparked his imagination and led him to guitar; in the sixties, composition studies with Giuseppe Rosetta and later Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco led to his first published work, *Canzone Notturna* (1965). Though initially unable to focus on developing his compositional style due to his own performing and teaching career, other early works, *Ocrum* and *Tenebrae factae sunt* (both 1973), show a strong sense of organization and thematic unity while highlighting Gilardino's diverse musical interests. These at times explore vigorous atonality, lushly tonal renaissance-inspired polyphony, and even a *habanera* (indeed, Attademo mentions that these titles posit music as a reflection of all human knowledge).



Luigi Attademo

After his performance career was sidelined by an injury in 1981, Gilardino dove into composition, and it is from this period that his most famous collection, the sixty *Studies of Virtuosity*

and *Transcendence*, date. The extravagant title, Attademo explained, was meant to reinforce the idea of a study as a "workshop" for original ways in which to use the instrument while "Transcendence"—a word not uncommon in the realm of etudes—implies that which is discovered upon reaching the end of conventional technique. In achieving this, Gilardino explored influences outside of music, dedicating etudes not only to other composers (the first to Castelnuovo-Tedesco) but also painters and poets (Goya, Juan Ramón Jiménez, Jean-Antoine Watteau).

Translating the spirit of visual art into music is itself an act of transcendence, and Attademo pointed out that these homages evoke the memory, rather than the style, of other artists.

As with other works, there is no single aesthetic to which Gilardino adheres. The *Studies* are at different times modal, atonal, and minimalist (all categories with which the composer took issue). Perhaps the influence of his teacher Rosetta, an organist, is evident in the rich counterpoint of some studies or the use of passacaglia in others. After this enormous output of solo repertoire, Gilardino shifted to multi-guitar works and concerti, with later works often dedicated to renowned guitarists and inspired by natural beauty. His last work, *Contemplatio in Caligine* (2021), showcases a late contemplative streak, summarized in the composer's words: "Listen to the silence: enjoy it. It is the peace you never knew in your lifetime. Look, there is your home for eternity."

### Matthew Slotkin

Dr. Matthew Slotkin's lecture provided an overview of the published work of the archive of the Andrés Segovia Foundation (known by most as the "Segovia Archive"). Directed and edited by Angelo Gilardino from 1997–2005, the archive houses the mountain of works—often by significant composers—written for (and left unpublished by) Andrés Segovia during the guitarist's lifetime. It furthermore contains various additional manuscripts, correspondence, and other Segovian collectanea. As the archive prohibits reproduction of its materials, its published editions remain the only path to examining its treasures without a trip to Linares.

The presence of such a collection, amassed by Segovia throughout his long career (and which accompanied him through his travels) raises plenty of questions; as Luigi Attademo asked in his catalog of the archive's contents in *Roseta* (2008): "But then, why didn't Segovia play these works? And why did he keep them with him? . . . We can only formulate a hypothesis." Partial insight comes from Segovia himself, writing in a letter to Henri Collet (whose music is represented in the archive): "I spent my life asking everyone for pieces for my guitar; rejecting them is something that causes me real pain." Slotkin points to the example of Frank Martin's brilliant *Quatre pièces brèves* (1933) as representing rejected music outside of Segovia's romantic "comfort zone." Martin wrote no more guitar music, and we are left to wonder what could have been if Segovia cultivated his relationship with this composer as he



Matthew Slotkin

had with Ponce, Moreno-Torroba, Castelnuovo-Tedesco, and others.

Slotkin gave an overview of the Segovia Archive, ranging from Gilardino’s initial sorting of the twelve cases of

materials left in Segovia’s Madrid studio to the selection process for the thirty-three beautiful volumes published by Bèrben. These editions, complete with copies of the handwritten manuscripts as well as scholarly/editorial introductions to the works, often shed light on Segovia’s relationship with the music. For example, Slotkin mentions Segovia’s re-voicing of harmonies written on the manuscript of Cyril Scott’s *Sonatina* (1927, one of the focuses of Slotkin’s talk).

One clear benefit in including the manuscripts is that the editorial process is democratized—voicings and transpositions chosen by one editor can be changed by another. Such a step opens up even more questions about authorial “authenticity” in our own age and of performance practice as well. As composers’ techniques and practices evolve over decades, so does the approach of guitarist-editors. Slotkin points to a few of Gilardino’s representative editorial decisions. One piece (Jaume Pahissa’s *Cançó en el mar*), written on a grand staff and specified as “for piano or guitar,” is transposed a fourth; another (Gaspar Cassadó’s *Dos cantos populares finlandeses*) has its ending omitted entirely in the edited version. These are major changes by comparison with the majority, but as Slotkin points out, even octave transpositions can drastically change the affect of a passage. The lecture culminated in a thoughtful and sensitive performance by Slotkin, a strong incentive for guitarists to investigate the wealth of the archive.

**Anna F. Porcaro**

“Diversifying the Classical Guitar Community: 2020 and Beyond,” presented by musicologist, guitarist, and lutenist Dr. Anna F. Porcaro, focused on the demographics of GFA competitors and their repertoire (gender, nationality) as well as on the GFA’s recent efforts at diversifying the classical guitar. Porcaro’s data illustrate prominent trends among GFA adult competitors, such as the increase of East Asian participants over the past decade and the dominance of European (French) competitors. Like all such efforts at categorizing humans, details—specific ancestry of Canadians, Americans who studied in France, or socioeconomic status—are harder to come by.

The demographics of the International Youth Competition vary: there is greater female representation, and more guitarists from both the United States (thirty-eight percent) and China (twenty-five percent). When confronted with the dearth of GFA competitors from the southern hemisphere, Porcaro’s statement that “the guitar tends to be a European export, and because of that, it tends to go where colonialism went, and sometimes it’s rejected and sometimes it’s accepted. . . . Classical guitar as a whole . . . has not taken root in the entire world” elicited a few points from the audience, such as potential biases impacting those data pertaining to South America, like visa requirements and economic conditions, for example.

In analyzing the demographics of composers whose music has been performed by GFA competition winners, Porcaro mentioned that only two female composers are represented on the post-competition Naxos albums; the supermajority of pieces represent the music of “white dead men.” Porcaro also presented a breakdown taking specific nationalities into consideration. Many compositions are recorded again and again, which Porcaro sees as a missed opportunity to present works outside what is posited as a narrow band of humanity. Female representation among composers of the competition set pieces since 2001 is similarly low: one composer, Andrea Clearfield, in 2022. However, the data from 1983–2000 paints a slightly different picture, with greater gender and nationality representation.



Anna F. Porcaro

The presentation pivoted to a consideration of recent efforts to combat the above lack of diversity, citing “blind” initial rounds of competitions as a way of reducing bias. Such a practice had major ramifications in the orchestral

world when it was introduced in the late twentieth century, leading to greater female representation. The GFA recently spearheaded their Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access (IDEA) Initiative during the pandemic, which yielded both a Mentorship Program for guitarists aged 13 to 25, and their Spotlight Series, which commissions new works and arrangements from composers of color.

Porcaro’s stimulating presentation inspires other questions: What would socioeconomic data reveal about the guitar community? Do guitar competitions homogenize repertoire choices? Is it easier to assign a point value to

## CONVENTION LECTURES: (cont.)

the performance of familiar pieces? How does repertoire diversity in the classical guitar community differ from that of other instruments—piano, violin . . . lute?

### Duilio Meucci

Duilio Meucci evaluated the style and prolific output—some seventy works including the guitar—of one of the twentieth century’s most distinguished voices, British composer Reginald Smith-Brindle. The composer divided his output into three distinct periods: tonality (to 1951), serialism (until 1957), and finally a blended style (1970–96). Meucci’s presentation focused on the latter two.

Initial tonal efforts for guitar (*Nocturne, Etruscan Preludes*) were characterized by an “almost jazzy impressionism” while later serialist works originated in studies with the great Italian modernist Luigi Dallapiccola. The most representative of these works is also—thanks to Julian Bream’s recording—his most famous guitar composition, *El Polifemo de Oro (The Golden Polyphemus, 1956)*. According to the composer, twelve-tone music evoked “mysterious, complex sound with an intangible, enigmatic harmony which I found intensely beautiful.” Meucci points out that while the middle-period works are atonal, they are also characterized by “tonal grammar” and the idiomatic expression of someone thoroughly familiar with the guitar and its repertoire, for example, specific tone color indications (“clarinet tone”) or repeated left-hand shapes, shifted up or down a half-step, from which much of the harmonic interest of Villa-Lobos’s *Etudes* and *Preludes* is also derived. As a result, Smith-Brindle differs from some of his dodecaphonic peers in that his guitar work seems to have naturally originated upon the instrument, rather than being musically distinct from its identity. As Julian Bream put it in his forward to one of Smith-Brindle’s works, “The guitar in a solo capacity has never happily adapted itself to serial disciplines.”

An infatuation with the poetry of Federico García Lorca, in whose sound-descriptions of flamenco’s *cante jondo* Smith-Brindle heard “intense color and emotion, but expressed with a very limited variety of material,” proved a formative inspiration for many of his guitar works (*El Polifemo de Oro, Memento, Romance de la Pena Negra, Five Sketches for Violin and Guitar*). This blending of outward expression with the “certain rational discipline” of serial technique characterizes much of the composer’s output, with the *Four Poems of García Lorca* serving as a particularly vivid example.

Meucci concluded with an analysis of Smith-Brindle’s *Guitarcosmos* (1978), a large didactic exploration of the guitar using atonal language, determinative strategies, and aleatoric techniques. Much of the first volume consists of small study pieces (single-line melodies, arpeggios, interval studies) and provides a late twentieth-century pedagogical alternative. Meucci summarized Smith-Brindle’s pieces

neatly: “Despite being perfectly adapted to the guitar . . . they go far beyond so-called ‘music written for the fingers.’” Meucci demonstrated this with a live performance, appetizer for his recent excellent recording of Smith-Brindle’s music for Naxos.

### Andrew Marino

Dr. Andrew Marino, guitarist and educator, shared some ideas about how Learning Science can be applied to guitar pedagogy in his “Six Cognitive Learning Strategies for Effective Guitar Pedagogy.” The benefits of cognitive learning, a field of psychological research dedicated to improving efficiency and mastery in learning, has been slow to trickle down into curricula. Marino defined and gave guitar-specific examples of how each of the six strategies might be accommodated by teachers.

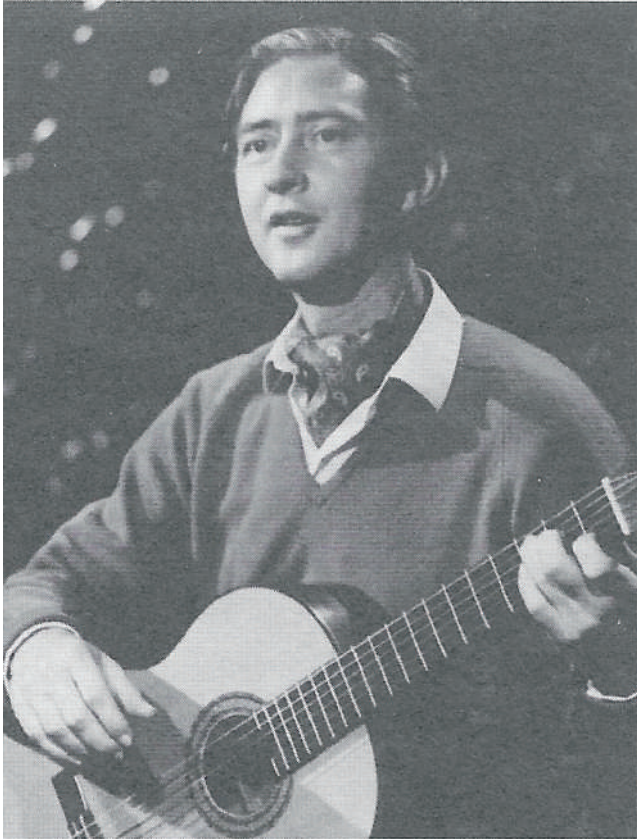
“Retrieval Practice” describes methods for turning short-term memory into long-term by connecting new information to that already known. When it comes to forming strong memories, *using* new information is as important as *inputting* new information. Frequent re-creation of memories during its use strengthens the durability and retrievability of knowledge. Marino outlined a few flash-card style applications specific to music learning, which prioritize “frequent, low-stakes performance opportunities,” for example, the creation of a six-by-six matrix of squares in which specific difficulties within a piece are written down, like “m. 4, beats 2 & 3.” Students play something like a bingo board of difficult passages, streamlining the learning process.

“Spaced Practice” is the opposite of cramming, designed to strengthen long-term retention—planning practice over longer periods of time, for example, leading up to a public performance, planning a series of performance checkpoints in the month before a concert rather than playing a piece ten times the night before. Underlying much of Marino’s presentation is the idea of planning: organizing the “what and how” of practice by specifying intention for each piece and day of the week. “Interleaving” involves the frequent alternation between pieces or sections of pieces, for example, ten-minute chunks on several selections rather than an hour of crammed practice on one tricky passage. “Dual Coding” involves diversifying informational inputs including varied multimedia—images, words, listening—as components of practice.

Marino gave a tour of his interactive program dedicated to Benjamin Britten’s *Nocturnal*, with different pages including information on the history and form of the work, an interview with Julian Bream, and even a quiz. Many of these strategies codify approaches to practice that become intuitive to guitarists only after years of study (and struggle!). Propagating these strategies in young students through modeling in lessons can lead to a richer, more rewarding relationship with the guitar.

## GFA FOUNDERS, PART 3: Frederick M. Noad

By Robert Ferguson



Frederick Noad, early '60s

Frederick McNeill Noad was born in August of 1929 in Blankenburg, Belgium, while his parents were vacationing in that country. He was raised in Eversley, Berkshire, England. In his teens he took up guitar as a hobby with a particular interest in flamenco. Following graduation from nearby Wellington College and a two-year stint in the British Army's Royal Corps of Signals, Noad entered Brasenose College, Oxford University, where in 1957 he earned an M.A. in Jurisprudence. Soon after, he found employment in London with the J. Arthur Rank Organisation, Britain's largest

film company of the day.<sup>1</sup> He also moonlighted on guitar in the city, performing with a flamenco group in nightspots like the Spanish Cellars Club, as the following notice in *B.M.G.* magazine attests:

The Spanish Cellars Club in Fulham Road [London] now boasts a regular Flamenco group, consisting of guitarist Freddy Noade, dancer "Cora" and flamenco singer "Pepe."<sup>2</sup>

In April 1957, when Rank was in the process of opening an office in Hollywood, California, Noad was transferred there. However, financial setbacks forced closure of Rank's US branch shortly after Noad's arrival, leaving him jobless. To cushion the blow, he secured a performing engagement at the Chef's Inn in Newport Beach.<sup>3</sup> He later recalled:

I found my salary for doing that was the same that I had been earning with J. Arthur Rank, so the appeal of working 2 hours a day and having some time to study was tremendous. I never did, in fact, go back to working again (laughs).<sup>4</sup>

When the Romero family arrived in Southern California in the late fifties, Noad began study with Celedonio. In 1962 he participated in Segovia's masterclass at Santiago de Compostela in Spain and in 1964 attended a Bream masterclass at the University of Oregon. And in that same period, he received instruction in composition and theory from Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco in Beverly Hills.<sup>5</sup>

On June 8, 1960, Noad married Marilyn Clay Stuart of San Diego. Modeling Len Williams' Spanish Guitar Centre in London, they together founded their own Spanish Guitar Center in Hollywood. There they imported and sold fine Spanish instruments, and Fred operated a private instruction studio.<sup>6</sup> About the latter, he stated:

<sup>1</sup> Edward Flower, "A Tribute to Frederick M. Noad, August 8, 1929–September 13, 2001," *Soundboard* 28, nos. 2 & 3 (Fall/Winter, 2001–02): 47.

<sup>2</sup> "By the Way," *B.M.G.* 54, no. 620 (Dec 1956): 88.

<sup>3</sup> Frederick McNeill Noad, Petition for Naturalization, no. 298363, US Immigration and Naturalization Service, Jun 24, 1968, Ancestry.com; Ron Payne, "Frederick Noad from TV to PC," *Australian Guitar Journal* 2, no. 3 (1991): 146 (also available at [guitarteacher.com.au/interview/frederick-noad-from-tv-to-pc](http://guitarteacher.com.au/interview/frederick-noad-from-tv-to-pc)); Flower, 47.

<sup>4</sup> Payne, 146.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 146–47; "Julian Bream, O.B.E.," *Guitar News* no. 78 (Jul-Aug 1964): 25.

<sup>6</sup> Flower, 48; Frederick McNeill Noad, Washington, US, Marriage Records, 1854–2013, Ancestry.com.

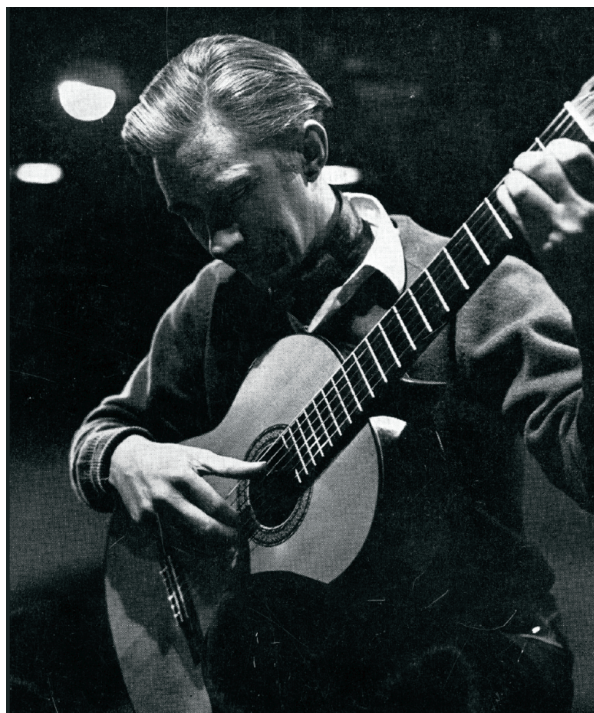
The teaching that I am interested in is for the person who is doing it for personal enrichment. . . . who has got maybe 1/2 an hour per day that he can give to the instrument and for whom it's just a great source of pleasure and change from his working life. And those are the people I really write for; those are the people I teach for. I have taught at the university level in a number of places but I don't do it now because, partially, I have a problem with the fact that they all want a career as soloist with the guitar, and I don't think that there are places available for them.<sup>7</sup>

In July 1968 Noad was granted US citizenship.<sup>8</sup>

In the academic sphere, Noad established guitar programs at the University of Redlands in 1964 and the University of California at Irvine in 1973. In addition, he served at one time or another on the faculties of Mount St. Mary's College and the California Institute of the Arts, and taught for the University of California's Idyllwild School of Music and the Arts summer programs.<sup>9</sup>

Noad performed in formal settings on occasion. When playing solo in live concerts (he also performed regularly on his television show; see below), he often shared the program with one or more other musicians, and he played in a guitar duo with Howard Heitmeyer as well. In the seventies, Noad began performing on lute and theorbo. Joining Hayden Blanchard, tenor, and Ruth Adams, viola da gamba, he played lute on the LP *John Dowland, Songs and Dances* (Orion ORS 72102, 1972). Noad also played theorbo with the Early Music ensemble Musica Pacifica on their recording *La Daphne* (ABC Records AB-67012/2, 1976). In that decade he performed duets with fellow guitarist Edward Flower as well, including arrangements for lute and guitar.<sup>10</sup>

Noad reached the widest public through books and television, which is to say, not so much as a performer but as a teacher. The early sixties witnessed an



From the cover of *Guitar News* 107 (Jan-Mar 1970)

explosion of interest in guitar playing worldwide, and with a deficit of books on the subject at the time, publisher Collier-Macmillan commissioned him to write *The Collier Quick and Easy Guide to Playing the Guitar*, issued in 1963. Later editions (1972, 1982) were simply titled *Playing the Guitar*. Noad said of this book:

It went out in a series that died called the quick and easy guide system, and it was horrifying to me because I didn't know this. The title is only chosen right at the end just before it's published. So it came out originally as the Collier Quick and Easy Guide to Playing the Guitar. It had an appalling cover on it with a centre piece like, "Amaze Your Friends and Earn Extra Money" . . . But for whatever the reason it sold in the hundreds of thousands during that period. In some ways, of course, it was a source of great regret to me because I had written it as a writer-for-hire for a couple of thousand bucks. The publishers have done very nicely out of it since.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Payne, 148.

<sup>8</sup> Frederick McNeill Noad, U.S., Naturalization Record Indexes, 1791-1992, Ancestry.com.

<sup>9</sup> Flower, 48; "St. Mary's to Present Recital," *Los Angeles Evening Citizen News*, Oct 21, 1965, 6; "LBCC Programs Herald the Approaching Holidays," *Independent (Long Beach, CA)*, Dec 9, 1973, 80; "Classical Guitar Class Scheduled at Idyllwild," *Desert Sun (Palm Springs, CA)*, Jun 20, 1970, 6; "Music Workshops Set for Idyllwild Campus," *Desert Sun*, May 20, 1977, 6

<sup>10</sup> Flower, 48; *Discogs*, [discogs.com/release/11569220](https://discogs.com/release/11569220), [discogs.com/release/3423978](https://discogs.com/release/3423978); "Count Basie Concert," *Marengo (IL) Beacon/Republican-News*, Nov 29, 1978, 9; "Lute and Guitar Duets," *Boston Globe*, Feb 8, 1979, 87.

<sup>11</sup> Payne, 147-48. The cover of this book is viewable online at [www.guitarfoundation.org/page/copublished\\_Noad](http://www.guitarfoundation.org/page/copublished_Noad).



## GFA FOUNDERS: PART 3: (cont.)

In 1964 Noad approached National Educational Television affiliate KCET in Los Angeles about presenting a series of TV guitar lessons. The result was a twenty-six-week run titled *Playing the Guitar with Frederick Noad*, which was extended an additional thirteen weeks. The program was first broadcast in the Los Angeles area in March 1966 but soon blanketed the nation. Rebroadcasts continued into the early seventies. In 1981 Noad created a new series, which was still in syndication at the time of his death in 2001.<sup>12</sup>



Noad with Andrés Segovia

songbooks; and individual sheet music editions. See his list of publications at the end of this article.

Frederick Noad was a central figure in the creation of the Guitar Foundation of America. He attended the inaugural Santa Barbara meeting in late summer 1973, signed the Articles of

Incorporation, and served as one of the original three members of the Board of Directors. He continued on the board until the end of 1977, serving for a time as chairman.<sup>15</sup> In 1991 he spoke about the GFA's early years, *Soundboard*, and his role in the organization:

I have to give credit to Thomas Heck at this point and Peter Danner who are both scholars and were both very anxious to have a Journal going. Their interest was more on the academic side and in some ways I was tending to try and be more of a popularist. I was trying to fight for the ordinary player. I didn't want it to become too much like the *American Journal of Musicology*. So I was perhaps in a slightly different camp to them. Although over the years I've welcomed the contributions of scholarship. . . . [w]e tried to keep a balance in that area and not make it entirely just a university outlet.<sup>16</sup>

Noad's original TV program included an accompanying book, *The Guitar with Frederick Noad*, most of which found its way into his next and most successful book, *Solo Guitar Playing* (1968, with new editions in 1976, 1994, and 2009). Noad's above-mentioned duet partner and biographer Ed Flower aptly called this method "the cornerstone of his life's work."<sup>13</sup> Its second volume appeared in 1977. Noad summarized *Solo Guitar Playing* this way:

It's really a distillation of what I was able to acquire from various sources [and] undoubtedly a reflection of what I'd learned from Celedonio Romero. . . . In the other methods I knew at the time, the person who wrote the method had tended to write all the music. I chose instead to give even beginning students a sense of the repertoire.<sup>14</sup>

Noad published many additional books and music editions, including anthologies of renaissance, baroque, classical, and romantic literature; other methods;

To this he added, "In some ways I still consider myself as an amateur—somebody who really enjoys the guitar—a lover of it as it were."<sup>17</sup> So Frederick Noad found common ground with another GFA founder, J. George Gregory (see Part 1 of this article, *Soundboard* 49, no. 1, 17–18), who also sought to bring a broader cross-section of classical guitarists into the ranks of the GFA. That early influence remains with the Foundation to this day.

<sup>12</sup> Flower, 48. Mr. Flower states that Noad's PBS series ran from 1964 to 1968. However, the earliest notice of the program's broadcast that I could find appeared in the "TV Highlights" column of *The San Bernardino County Sun* for March 2, 1966 (p. 28). It reported that on that day "Frederick Noad, classical guitarist, starts a 26-week series on how to play the guitar." As late as 1973 the *McComb (MS) Enterprise-Journal* (Aug 7, 1973, p. 57) reported that Noad's "Playing the Guitar," a series of half-hour programs, is now being broadcast over ETV [Educational Television]."

<sup>13</sup> Flower, 48.

<sup>14</sup> Stephen Dick, "Interview with Frederick Noad," *Classical Guitar* 12, no. 3 (Nov 1993): 30.

<sup>15</sup> John C. Tanno, "Report on the National Guitar Convention," *American String Teacher* 24, no. 1 (Feb 1974): 37; Robert Ferguson, "The Guitar Foundation of America: Origins and Early Years," *Soundboard* 49, no. 1 (Mar 2023): 11–12.

<sup>16</sup> Payne, 149.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 147.



Frederick Noad, 1990s

## List of Publications by Frederick M. Noad

### *Method books*

Playing the Guitar | 1<sup>st</sup> ed., Collier, 1963, reiss. 1966 | Schirmer, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1972; , 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 1981, reiss. 1995

The Guitar with Frederick Noad | n.p., 1966

Guitar II with Frederick Noad | Collier, 1968

Solo Guitar Playing I | Collier, 1<sup>st</sup> ed., 1968 | Schirmer, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1976; 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 1994 | Amsco, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., 2009

Solo Guitar Playing II | Schirmer, Amsco, 1977 | reiss. Amsco, Music Sales, 1999

The First Book for the Guitar | 3 vols. | Schirmer, I: 1978, II: 1979, III: 1981; complete text: 1981

The Complete Idiot's Guide to Playing the Guitar | Alpha, 1<sup>st</sup> ed., 1998; 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 2002

The Guitar with Frederick Noad: TV Workbook | 2 vols. | KLCS TV 58, I: 1981, II: 1982

### *Anthologies*

Mauro Giuliani: Selected Works for the Guitar | Thomas F. Heck, coeditor | Shattinger, 1973 | reiss. Golden Music Press, 1976

The Renaissance Guitar | Ariel, 1974 | Amsco, 1974, reiss. 1984, 2000

The Baroque Guitar | Ariel, 1974 | Amsco, 1974, reiss. 1984, 2000

Francisco Tárrega: Music for the Guitar | Clifford Essex, 1975 | reiss. Amsco, 1976

The Classical Guitar | Ariel, 1976 | Amsco, 1976, reiss. 2000, 2002

Matteo Carcassi: Selected Works for the Guitar | Shattinger, 1976

Fernando Sor: Op. 1–20 | Shattinger, 1976 | reiss. Golden Music Press, 1976

Matteo Carcassi: 25 Melodic and Progressive Studies, Op. 60 | Ariel, 1977

John Dowland: Selected Works for One and Two Lutes | Ariel, 1977

Mauro Giuliani: Twenty-Five Etudes | Ariel, 1977

George Frideric Handel: Selected Solos and Duets | Ariel, 1977

Giovanni Battista Marella: Selected Works for Two Guitars | Ariel, 1977

Popular Elizabethan Tunes for Recorder and Guitar | Ariel, 1977

Michael Praetorius: Dances of the Late Renaissance from “Terpsichore” | Ariel, 1977

Fernando Sor: Collected Etudes | Ariel, 1977

100 Graded Classical Guitar Studies | Amsco, 1985, reiss. 2016

The Romantic Guitar | Amsco, 1986, reiss. 2000

Heitor Villa-Lobos: Collected Works for Solo Guitar | Max Eschig, 1990, reiss. 1997, 2004, 2011, 2015 | Ariel, 1990

Classical Guitar Treasury | Chester, 1998

My Favorite Hymns | Howard Heitmeyer, coeditor | D & H Sales (North Hollywood, CA), 2002

### *Songbooks*

The Guitar Songbook | Collier-Macmillan, 1969 | reiss. Wise, 1969; Amsco, 1969, 1973

The New Guitar Songbook | rev. of The Guitar Songbook | Collier-Macmillan, Amsco, 1969

The New Guitar Songbook | rev. ed. | Collier-Macmillan, 1985 | reiss. Amsco, 1987; Music Sales, 1997

Absolute Beginners Guitar Songbook | Amsco, 2010

### *Performance editions*

Matteo Carcassi: Three Sonatinas, Op. 1 | Ariel, 1977

Ferdinando Carulli: Grand Variations for Two Guitars from the Opera “Aline,” Op. 219 | Ariel, 1977

Mauro Giuliani: Grand Duo Concertante, Op. 85, for flute or violin and guitar | Ariel, 1977

Mauro Giuliani: Sonata in C major, Op. 15 | Ariel, 1977

Fernando Sor: Elegiac Fantasy, Op. 59 | Ariel, 1977

Fernando Sor: Introduction and Variations on the Air “Marlborough,” Op. 28 | Ariel, 1977

Fernando Sor: L'encouragement, Op. 34, for two guitars | Ariel, 1978

Fernando Sor: Variations on a Theme of Mozart, Op. 9; Sonata in C major, Op. 15, No. 2 | Ariel, 1977

Robert de Visée: Suite in G minor | Ariel, 1977

George Frideric Handel, Christoph Willibald Gluck: Two Baroque Favorites | G. Schirmer, 1981

### *Miscellaneous*

The Virtual Guitarist: Hardware, Software, and Websites for the Guitar | Schirmer Books, 1998

Source: *Worldcat*, [worldcat.org/search?slug=6818718&q=au%3AFrederick+M.+Noad](http://worldcat.org/search?slug=6818718&q=au%3AFrederick+M.+Noad)

Robert Ferguson is the editor of *Soundboard*.



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## MUSIC AS MOVEMENT

By Juan Hernandez

Music and movement will always be intertwined. Our brain connects the auditory system to motor and premotor sections and thus is programmed to move our body when it hears certain sounds. Loud sudden noises, for instance, can invoke us to run, crouch, or freeze, evolved from early man, alerting us of possible danger such as the presence of a wild animal. Sound can also allow us to partake in the abstract embodying of our environment, as in mimicking rhythm or beat with our body. In this article I inquire further into music and movement, focusing especially on our ability to perceive that relationship and harness it in order to enrich musical performance. In doing so, I rely on several fields of research including neuroscience, philosophy, and guitar performance technique.

### Mirror neurons

Since the discovery of mirror neurons, that is, neurons that activate not only when an action is performed but when it is merely observed, research linking perception and action continues to develop. The Mirror Neuron System is a proposed brain structure with neurons found in the premotor cortex and parietal lobes. These allow a percipient to “understand the meaning and intention of a communicative signal by evoking a representation of that signal in the perceiver’s own brain.”<sup>1</sup> To put it another way, our brain provides meaning to a motion by mirroring it, identifying with it, and consequently interpreting its intention.

The neuroscientific proposal “Music and Mirror Neurons: From Motion to ‘E’motion” by Istvan Molnar-Szakacs and Katie Overy posits that some mirror neurons actually have audiovisual properties, which allow conceptualization of movement not only by sight but also by sound. These audiovisual components enable us to identify the sequence of a heard melody as action, as movement, as something that can be represented or embodied. Presumably, the brain regions that activate when we observe a singer

or drummer are the same that respond when we actually sing or drum ourselves.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, we do not distinguish movement passively. Instead, we embody it without necessarily acting on it. We invoke an intention to action.

### Musical space and movement

Musical motion is conceptualized within an imaginary or metaphorical plane of space. We sense that a melody rises or descends, that it diminishes or swells. Such gestures give it life and meaning, bestow upon it extramusical referents based on our capacity of Gestalt association (our ability to categorize and group individual items into wholes or patterns). Andrew Kania, in his article “An Imaginative Theory of Musical Space and Movement,” states: “Consider a circle of lights of different colours turned on and off in such a way that they generate an illusion of movement around the circle. We seem to perceive a re-identifiable thing moving around the circle, which has a different colour property in each position; yet there is no such object.”<sup>3</sup> This is an apt analog to the metaphorical way we experience the motion of music, knowing full well such motion is nonexistent. In Kania’s example, every light turning on after the previous one gives the illusion of a stream moving through each light. Similarly, notes played in succession at different frequencies gives the impression of a stream of sound moving up or down. We imagine that a melody rises, or, as in the appoggiatura in **Figure 1** (Guitar 1, m. 2, beat 4), the musical line *springboards*, as the late David Grimes of the Orange County Guitar Orchestra referred to it,<sup>4</sup> from the lower note (B<sub>3</sub>) to the highest (B<sub>4</sub>), only to *land* on the following note in a *stepwise downward* motion (A#<sub>4</sub>).

A further example of motion perception in music involves sections of the posterior parietal cortex, a brain region associated with visuospatial mental transformation such as rotating items in our mind.

<sup>1</sup> Istvan Molnar-Szakacs and Katie Overy, “Music and Mirror Neurons: From Motion to ‘E’motion,” *Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience* 1, no. 3 (Dec 2006): 235, doi.org/10.1093/scan/nsl029.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 235–36.

<sup>3</sup> Andrew Kania, “An Imaginative Theory of Musical Space and Movement,” *British Journal of Aesthetics* 55, no. 2 (Apr 2015): 168, doi.org/10.1093/aesthj/ayu100.

<sup>4</sup> David Grimes (conductor) during Orange County Guitar Orchestra rehearsals, May 2017.

The image shows a musical score for four guitars, labeled 'Guitar 1' through 'Guitar 4'. The score is in 4/4 time and marked 'Allegro'. It features complex rhythmic patterns with triplets and slurs. Dynamics include 'f' (forte) and 'f energico'. Performance instructions include 'simile' and 'energico'.

Figure 1: *Song of Clouds* by Hirokazu Sato, mm. 1–4.<sup>5</sup>

The same area is employed in relative pitch perception, specifically the mental transposition of melody.<sup>6</sup> This makes sense to us, especially when we think of the transposition of a musical phrase as *moving* it up or down. It might likewise explain why, when music modulates, it feels as if the sound *shifts* to another level. Therefore, if we recruit a brain area that identifies phenomena in visuospatial terms when we mentally transpose melodies, it is natural to perceive this transposition as movement and to regard movement as an integral part of music perception.

### Body movement

At the practical level, allowing the springboard allegory to guide our performance, we play the first notes at the requested forte level, then push on the specific note (B<sub>3</sub>) to give it a heftier sound by using *apoyando*, before returning to forte. (The same process would apply to m. 3, beat 3.) But we can further express and accent the pertinent note with body movement. If we slightly lean forward during the suggested *apoyando*,<sup>7</sup> the stream of sound will seem as if catapulted to its octave. At this point we have ceased to simply play notes; we are now embodying the musical motive and expressing it wholly. Consequently, music movement perception tends to assure that we are not passive listeners. Instead, we create lively experiences that gravitate toward the interactive, where the motion we perceive is harnessed, embodied, and utilized to attain a

higher degree of artistic expression. By mirroring the movement perceived in music with a bit of physical motion, we render it tangible and accessible for further experimentation. We transfer it from the mental to the physical plane.

### Feedforward and feedback

According to the review “When the Brain Plays Music: Auditory-Motor Interactions in Music Perception and Production” by Robert Zatorre, Joyce Chen, and Virginia Penhune, “the interaction between auditory and motor systems is of particular interest, because each action in a performance produces sound, which influences each subsequent action, leading to remarkable sensory-motor interplay.” The review delineates interactions called “feedforward” and “feedback,” two methods of auditory-motor communication. The former is a music-dominated interaction, such as when we hear a beat and tap our foot or move our body to it; the latter, fundamental in music performance, is a symbiotic interplay, the control we have while singing or playing an instrument and the manner in which we must adjust the notes to the desired sound.<sup>8</sup> The music bestows us with sound information to which we must give feedback by realizing it with our fingers or voice and fine-tuning it in accord with the musical aesthetic we envision. In short, we impact the music by modifying it, affecting the course it will take. A little physical body movement

<sup>5</sup> Hirokazu Sato, *Song of Clouds for Four Guitars or Guitar Ensemble* (Tokyo: HOMA Dream, 2009).

<sup>6</sup> Nicholas E.V. Foster, Andrea Halpern and Robert J. Zatorre, “Common Parietal Activation in Musical Mental Transformations across Pitch and Time,” *NeuroImage* 75 (2013): 27, 33, [core.ac.uk/download/pdf/216952752.pdf](http://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/216952752.pdf).

<sup>7</sup> Grimes, May 2017 (see note 4).

<sup>8</sup> Robert J. Zatorre, Joyce L. Chen and Virginia B. Penhune, “When the Brain Plays Music: Auditory-Motor Interactions in Music Perception and Production,” *Nature Reviews Neuroscience* 8 (Jul 2007): 547, 550, [researchgate.net/publication/6252666](http://researchgate.net/publication/6252666).

can significantly increase the dynamic spectrum and wholly direct (and control) the music by internalizing it in a more encompassing manner.

### *Identity in the making*

In the same vein, philosopher and conductor Eleanor Stubley believed that in performance the instrumentalist doesn't merely play notes but finds who he/she is through the music's movement and the body's motion experienced as one. Performing is thus, Stubley maintains, "an on-going tuning process in which the self is experienced as an identity in the making."<sup>9</sup> In this way, there is a field of free play or experimentation, a certain autonomy of the intellect and senses, which melds the music and the performing body into a new possibility of expression. This outcome is similar to what I believe nineteenth-century philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel described in his dialectics, including his theory of sublation. The concept is sometimes associated with the thesis-antithesis-synthesis model, whereby a claim is juxtaposed with an opposing one, the second countering the first, resulting in a new claim that preserves the identity of the first two.<sup>10</sup> In the present case, Stubley's experience of identity in the making represents the fusion of a composition (thesis) and the corporeal vessel that is the performer (antithesis), which together produce a fully realized work of art (synthesis). The slight movements that constitute performers' bodily reactions to the music they are playing provide ground for self-expression and self-identity, giving them greater freedom to discover the best projection of their inner selves.

### **Movement and ensemble**

Movement in musical performance can be intuitive and liberated by the player alone. However, in the case of an orchestra, it can be suggested and shaped by a conductor in order to unleash some free play from the ensemble. David Grimes did just that while directing the Orange County Guitar Orchestra. In performing Derek Cornett's *Los Jinetes Enmascarados* (Figure 2), for instance, Grimes suggested that the Guitar 2 section sway back and forth on each measure in order to bring more expressive nuance to a too-stagnant passage.<sup>11</sup> Beyond this, Grimes asked his ensemble to add diminuendo and crescendo dynamics, as shown in Figure 3, to push the energy significantly.<sup>12</sup> These, along

Figure 2: Derek Cornett, *Los Jinetes Enmascarados*, mm. 1–5.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Wayne D. Bowman, *Philosophical Perspectives on Music* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1998), 293–94.

<sup>10</sup> Andrew Bowie, *Introduction to German Philosophy: From Kant to Habermas* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2003), 84–85.

<sup>11</sup> David Grimes during guitar orchestra rehearsals, Sep 2016.

<sup>12</sup> Grimes, Sep 2016 (see note 11).

<sup>13</sup> Derek Cornett, *Los Jinetes Enmascarados*. Unpublished; used with permission.



Figure 3: Cornett, *Los Jinetes Enmascarados*, Guitar 2, mm. 6–11.

with the swaying, exaggerated the effect of the musical phrase. Yet, it was important to do so in order for the orchestra to realize its potential and overcome its stasis. The whole section now felt as if waves of motion were fluctuating, allowing the phrase to breathe, analogous to inhaling and exhaling. The slight leaning forward and back provided an effective antidote to stagnation.

A key phenomenon that envelops a group of musical performers is this: As the ensemble internalizes the motion of the music and conveys it to listeners, a true sense of community arises, community in the sense philosopher Robert Brandom describes—of sapient as opposed to sentient beings—that is, a group wherein an individual not only comprehends every word (expression) of other group members but is also fully conscious of him/herself and the others as part of the group.<sup>14</sup> In such a state of collective awareness, empathy develops via the perception, appreciation, and embodiment of another’s expression.

### Conclusion

Understanding how and why we perceive music as motion, be it that of the Mirror Neuron System, Imaginative Theory of Musical Space, or visuospatial transposition of melody and key, can give musicians new insight into their interpretive capabilities. The same movement we perceive in sound seems already intended to be acted upon, according to the Mirror Neuron System, and can ultimately be unleashed and utilized by our bodies, as Grimes proposed, through a sort of carefree (but not careless!) approach that leads, as believed by Stubley, to discovery of new identities within each artist alongside techniques to achieve different expressive and interpretive ends. Similarly, in a large ensemble setting, every performer perceives and reacts to the motion of the music but is also subject to the conductor’s guidance, to which the musicians

must adjust to continue this interaction: an unfolding interplay of music and motion in a community of mutual sensibility and understanding.<sup>15</sup>



Juan Hernandez received his MM degree in performance from Cal State Los Angeles under the tutelage of Matthew Elgart. He taught Medieval Music History and Music Philosophy at the University of Philosophical Research. He was on the classical guitar faculty of 88 Keys Music Academy. His areas of music research include aesthetics, history, philosophy, psychology, and guitar technique. He has written music articles for the *PRS (Philosophical Research Society) Journal* and the Orange County Guitar Orchestra, with which he performed and participated in the release of the album *Toccata*. Additionally, he holds associate degrees in Psychology, Social and Behavioral Science, Literature, and Humanities.

<sup>14</sup> Jules Gleeson, “Robert Brandom, a Philosopher’s Philosopher,” *JSTOR Daily* (Jan 2020), [daily.jstor.org/robert-brandom-a-philosophers-philosopher](https://daily.jstor.org/robert-brandom-a-philosophers-philosopher), accessed Mar 21, 2020; Jeremy Wanderer, *Robert Brandom* (London: Routledge, 2014), 8, [google.com/books/edition/Robert\\_Brandom/IqngBQAAQBAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1](https://google.com/books/edition/Robert_Brandom/IqngBQAAQBAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1), accessed Jun 2, 2020.

<sup>15</sup> Here, the conductor also employs the feedback auditory-motor communication method. As the conductor directs the motion of the music, the orchestra reacts to his/her gestures. The conductor likewise responds to the sound the orchestra bestows and reciprocally must adjust it to his/her interpretation.

## THE KUPIŃSKI GUITAR DUO: An Interview

By Annett Richter



Photo by Annett Richter

Last year I had the opportunity to hear the Kupiński Guitar Duo ([kupinskiguitar duo.com](http://kupinskiguitar duo.com)) in concert for the first time. Classical guitarists Ewa Jabłczyńska and Dariusz Kupiński, husband-and-wife duo from Poland, made their Minnesota debut in April 2022 as part of the Minnesota Guitar Society's International Artist Series on the stage of Sundin Hall at Hamline University in St. Paul. Their performance—a varied program of music by Sérgio Assad, Frédéric Chopin, George Gershwin, Felix Mendelssohn, and Fernando Sor, both original and in arrangements for two guitars—was nothing short of brilliant. Flawless technique, solid musicianship, and exquisite balance coupled with clear sound, musical grace and elegance, and subtle colors as well as infectious energy turned their concert into a delight for the ear and eye.

A few weeks later, I had the chance to catch up with the Kupiński Guitar Duo and learned more from them about what they do. They have to their credit prestigious awards and scholarships for their artistic achievements, including the “Young Poland” Scholarship, the Polish Minister of Culture and National Heritage Scholarship, and an award from the German Academic Exchange Service. Besides having performed in Poland, they have appeared in concert not only across Europe but also in China, Japan, Mexico, and the United States. This is the Kupiński Duo's first interview in an American guitar magazine, and I am delighted to give them the opportunity to share their story with us here.

**Annett Richter (AR):** *Welcome, Ewa and Dariusz. It's a great pleasure to have you with us today. You are one of the most renowned guitar duos in Europe, and you have done inspiring work in recent years. We are excited to hear more from you about your past and current guitar-related activities, travels, and experiences as artists wearing many hats through performing, arranging, recording, and teaching. Thank you for being here for this conversation.*

*To give the reader a sense of the scope of your creativity, give us a small glimpse of your recent achievements in the world of the classical guitar. When and where did you two meet and decide to start a duo? Were you active as soloists before? What brought you together?*

**Ewa Jabłczyńska (EJ):** We founded the Kupiński Guitar Duo in 2011. We met during our studies at the Karol Szymanowski Academy of Music in Katowice in Poland. It was a very interesting time in our lives and in our relationship. When we got married in 2009, we had not played as a duo yet, but we used to take part in the same competitions as soloists. For a very long time, we were hesitant to play together because we thought that it might not be a good idea to connect our private and professional lives.



**Dariusz Kupiński (DK):** One winter evening, we decided to try to play duets and found that it was a great idea! From the very first moment, we felt that playing together came easily and naturally to us and that we should go for it!

**AR:** *What a special and seminal moment for you. How did you both come to the guitar? What made you decide to pursue it? Were guitar programs readily available in Poland when you started studying guitar? Who were your teachers?*

**EJ:** My musical path was very traditional. I started to play the guitar at the age of 7. My parents, who are not musicians, noticed my musical ability and decided that I should go to a music elementary school. I attended a First- and Second-Degree State Music School in Koszalin. Professional music training in Poland is free of charge and quite accessible.

**DK:** My story is quite different and exceptional because my fascination with the guitar began when I was 17! It was love at first sight. I worked very hard, and after a few months of playing the guitar, I passed the entrance exams for a music school and later the Academy of Music in Katowice. My path is a great example that it is never too late to start a musical journey. Ewa and I graduated with master's degrees from the Academy of Music, where we studied with Professors Wanda Palacz and Alina Gruszka. Then we continued our education in Germany in the guitar class of Professor Thomas Müller-Pering at the Hochschule für Musik Franz Liszt in Weimar. Returning to Poland after our stay at Weimar, we both received our doctoral degrees in guitar performance from Katowice.

**AR:** *Your recent concert in Minnesota was a memorable performance in every way, and your varied program was engaging. In your arrangements of Chopin's piano pieces (Mazurka, op. 17, no. 4; Waltzes, op. 64, no. 2; and op. 69, no. 2), for example, you captured the character and texture of his music with much expressivity. You both sounded like one instrument, which made your rendition particularly captivating for the listener. Why did you choose these particular pieces by Chopin? Did they lend themselves well to be arranged for guitar?*

**EJ:** First of all, we really love those particular pieces. We wanted to have a set of Chopin's pieces that would work as a set that features contrasts in tempo and character. Besides that, we have always wanted to create an interesting narrative on a smaller and a larger level to maintain the audience's attention and engagement.

**DK:** Our Minnesota program contained mostly arrangements of music originally composed for piano or for orchestra. Our main goal is to expand the repertoire for guitar duo by making transcriptions of works that we love and that, in our opinion, work on two guitars. Transcribing draws on your imagination and your inner sense of hearing the music. Playing in a duo is more exciting and interesting because Ewa and I have different personalities and because each of us can bring various individual temperaments to our interpretations and performances. Playing in duo is a type of conversation; it's like a dialogue between two people, a never-ending quest of interaction.

**AR:** *Very much so. This conversation that takes place between the instruments is a unique aspect of chamber music.*

**EJ:** Of course, not every piece is suitable for guitar duo. Certainly, Chopin's miniatures, such as his waltzes, mazurkas, and nocturnes are perfect for two guitars, but I cannot imagine transcribing successfully his piano sonatas or ballades!

**AR:** *Regarding Chopin, how did you decide on including his music in your repertoire? Is it your shared connection with Poland (you have also arranged music by other Polish composers) or a choice based on the music itself (e.g., the Mazurka being a Polish dance), or perhaps both?*

**EJ:** The magic of Chopin's music is still as powerful as ever. His works have such intimacy, with the delicate interplay of melody and accompaniment so carefully arranged. Chopin's music represents Polish culture worldwide. While we regret that he didn't compose anything for guitar or guitar duo, we do know that Chopin appreciated the sound of the guitar and hope that he would have approved of our arrangements.

**DK:** Obviously, Chopin is the most outstanding composer for Polish audiences and a significant part of our heritage. Polish yet European, homely yet universal, emotional yet artistically perfect—Chopin's music may be understood in many ways. It remains the best showcase of our Polish culture, and we would love to keep sharing it with the rest of the world.

**AR:** *What inspired you to arrange Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue for two guitars? What were some of the challenges in arranging this piece from a larger ensemble setting? Did you work on the arrangement together? Your use of various timbres on the guitar to evoke the sounds of the piano and of the orchestra's instruments was very effective (readers can listen at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=YB-j\\_pvidq4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YB-j_pvidq4)). Which version of the*

*Rhapsody did you work from—the one for solo piano and jazz orchestra or the one for piano and full symphony orchestra?*

**EJ:** When I heard the Assad Brothers' performance of *Rhapsody in Blue* for the first time, I couldn't believe that it's possible to play this piece on two guitars! Their arrangement is simply brilliant and, of course, was a great inspiration for us.

**DK:** Working on this transcription was quite a challenge. I usually make the primary version of the arrangement, but we put the finishing touches and decide on the final effect together. While arranging a piece, you must grasp the composer's intention and at the same time cater to the strengths and weaknesses of the guitar duo. I always look for every possible version of the piece and try to find the best solutions for two guitars.

**AR:** *What brought you to Fernando Sor's Fantaisie, op. 54? Your rendition was a pleasure to hear (listen at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=x1wfXUaZGs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x1wfXUaZGs)); I felt as though I was taken back to the early nineteenth century. Your phrasing, use of rubato, colors, contrasts, articulation, and dynamics, as well as the sheer grace and passion with which you performed this*

*music, made it immensely engaging. You mentioned from the stage that you added ornaments and cadenzas to make this piece more challenging for yourselves. Could you tell us more about the kind of embellishments you added and how you arrived at the choices you made here?*

**EJ:** To be honest, in the beginning I wasn't very enthusiastic about playing this piece. I didn't find it very exciting. The original score looks like it is written for teacher and student.

**AR:** *I see. It is interesting to experience how our relationship with a piece of music evolves over time. We can learn so much through this process.*

**DK:** Fortunately, I managed to convince Ewa that it could be interesting if we added some of our own ideas to this piece. So the fun began! We spent much time on improvising cadenzas, adding ornaments and articulation, as well as varying the rhythm in the accompaniment.

**EJ:** On the most basic level, the signs in the score indicate aspects of sound. The score needs the instrument and the performer as a link between sign and sound. Our goal was to add new elements to existing music so that the listener



Photo by Lukasz Rajchert

cannot decide by ear whether the music is being improvised or not.

**AR:** *An interesting perspective on reworking music of the past. Sor's L'Encouragement, op. 34, is another guitar duet that can be played either in a setting for student (thematic and melodic material) and teacher (accompaniment) or in a version in which themes and accompaniment are present in both parts equally; editions exist for both, and it's insightful to compare them.*

*You performed your Minnesota program without intermission. With your encore, you played for somewhere around seventy-five to eighty minutes. I am curious as to how you sustain strength and focus for this amount of time without a break, and how you build up your physical and mental stamina for this length of a performance. In our fast-paced lives, these aspects of what we do as musicians and performers have become ever more important to be mindful of.*

**EJ:** Being able to play does not necessarily mean that you're able to perform. Performance involves specific skills and requires practice. It's important to practice playing in front of others as often as you can and use every performance as a learning experience for the next one. Performance preparation should be an essential part of practicing. This involves mental exercises—when one imagines the performance situation itself (including warm-up time)—and real situations such as performances for friends or recording the program.

**DK:** We take a lot of care of ourselves in our everyday life. We try to stay healthy and include strength and endurance exercises in our daily routine, like yoga and jogging. Ewa looks after our diet and prepares us delicious meals.

**AR:** *It is wonderful that you are dedicated to taking care of each other. Watching out for each other undoubtedly benefits both partners and encourages mutual inspiration in your lives. Thank you for sharing these insights.*

*What kind of guitars do you play? Were they made for you and by whom? What about your instruments do you like especially?*

**DK:** We have been playing Philip Woodfield's guitars since 2011 ([facebook.com/WoodfieldGuitars](https://www.facebook.com/WoodfieldGuitars)). He is a wonderful guitar maker from the UK, and we love his instruments for everything—their sound, balance, and timbre. What is very important to us is that he always makes guitars that suit our individual personalities and that work together as a duo.

**AR:** *Yes, this is such an important kind of symbiosis and collaboration between a maker and a musician. Tell us about the way(s) you practice. Your solid technique reflects your means to playing with a musicality that draws your listener in. Learning about this topic is invaluable for all of us as food for thought for revisiting our own practice habits. Do you have a practice routine that you follow? And how do you work on speed in the right hand and on playing fast passages cleanly and accurately?*

**DK:** We don't usually work on technique just for the sake of technique. Instead, we always try to figure out how to solve all the technical issues related to the music we currently play in a way that supports our interpretation. This requires a very analytical approach and a creative mind. Through our experience we have found a lot of tools for working on speed and accuracy. I personally don't believe that fast passages can be achieved by practicing them only at a slow tempo. I really love to practice tiny snippets from our program in the fastest tempo possible, keeping in mind total control, accuracy, and relaxation.

**AR:** *Isolating these kinds of passages allows us to focus just on them and subject them to important scrutiny to overcome challenges they might be posing for us. I am curious about your teaching positions and experience. Where do you teach? What do you enjoy most about teaching guitar?*

**EJ:** I am currently a professor of guitar at the Jan Dlugosz University in Czestochowa, Poland, and teach at the Academy of Music in Krakow. I am very excited about my new teaching position and look forward to working with many talented young guitarists.

**AR:** *Congratulations, Ewa, on your new position. How exciting.*

**DK:** I teach at the Academy of Music in Katowice, both guitar soloists and ensembles. We have always felt that our teaching improves our own performing as well and helps us have a better approach to our own practice. We don't have any time to waste so we have got to get things done efficiently. We both treat our students as individuals and help them explore and be inspired.

**AR:** *Your words remind me of how much we learn from our students and how much they can inspire us in our own work. I find this to be one of the most rewarding experiences of teaching. I hope the coming years of teaching will bring you many gratifying moments with your students.*

*You frequently travel across Europe for performances and masterclasses, and you have been to Asia and America. You have touched the lives of students and listeners in many different places. How do you balance traveling, teaching, rehearsing, and arranging in your busy schedule? In what ways has this helped you grow and what has been challenging?*

**EJ:** We both live for and with each other. After ten years of traveling, rehearsing, and surviving the ups and downs together, we have to admit that we love our life! We are two people who love each other and who are dedicated to making music that enriches the lives of others.

**AR:** *Tell us about your eighteen-month-long research and recording project that you undertook at the University of Louisville just a few years ago, in 2019. You had received an award for this, and your work was funded by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of Poland. What a unique undertaking, and congratulations again on your award. It is marvelous that you were able to spend an extensive period of time on such a project and immerse yourselves in it. How did it come about? What did your research focus on, and what did you record as a result? And what brought you to the University of Louisville?*

**EJ:** The University of Louisville's Dwight Anderson Memorial Music Library houses one of the world's finest repositories of music compositions: the Grawemeyer Collection of Contemporary Music ([library.louisville.edu/music/grawemeyer](http://library.louisville.edu/music/grawemeyer)). This collection contains pieces for solo guitar and chamber music with guitar. We decided to pick solo compositions. We were very lucky to receive a grant from Poland's Ministry of Science in Higher Education for this project; usually, these grants are reserved for scientists only. As visiting research scholars, we combed through this collection, which comprises scores, recordings, and documents for more than five thousand pieces of music. To date, many of them remain unpublished. We enjoyed a wonderful cooperation with Stephen Mattingly, Associate Professor of Guitar at the University of Louisville, who also took part in this project.

**DK:** For the final project of our research, we recorded a CD entitled *Guitar Works by Grawemeyer Award Winning Composers*. With the wealth of guitar repertoire that has been composed by recipients of this award to date, we decided that it would be most appropriate to focus on this aspect.

**AR:** *What an honor for you to be able to study and record music from this collection and make it accessible to listeners.*

*What creative plans do you have for the next few years as a duo? What are you dreaming of accomplishing in the more distant future? In your multifaceted careers so far, what have you learned about yourselves as artists and musicians that has helped you grow and achieve goals? Also, in what ways would you say your ensemble is unique among professional guitar duos today?*

**EJ:** We always have several projects in mind and on our plate. Every piece, new transcription, new recording, and new project needs time to grow up and develop. That's why we're always thinking ahead and have many ideas. Our new project will be super exciting because we are preparing transcriptions and recordings of concertos (for solo guitar and orchestra) in versions for solo guitar and guitar duo. Our long-term goal is to arrange and record all well-known concertos with guitarist Marcin Dylla (with whom we have collaborated in the past). We already recorded Manuel Ponce's *Concierto del sur* a few years ago. Currently, we're performing Heitor Villa-Lobos's *Concerto for Guitar* and working on Joaquin Rodrigo's *Fantasia para un gentilhomme*.

**AR:** *An ambitious and remarkable project that will much enrich the guitar's repertoire. It's terrific to hear that you'll be collaborating with another artist here as well.*

**DK:** We would like to believe that there is something unique about our duo, but maybe you should ask our audience that question. As a duo, we try to create a varied concert experience for our listeners through great performances of great music. We put all of our hearts and souls into each performance, and we want to share our emotions through our interpretations of this music.



Dariusz's nature-style aquarium. Photo by Dariusz Kupiński

**AR:** *What do you enjoy doing when taking a break from the guitar?*

**DK:** I have a unique hobby. I'm a huge fan of Takashi Amano, an aquascaper from Japan, and I have a nature-style aquarium (with plants; see photo), which brings me much joy and is a fantastic way to relax.

**EJ:** Good company, food, and wine are always a great break from everyday work.

**AR:** *Nature, good cuisine, and good conversation are wholesome for the well-being of our body, mind, and soul, indeed. Returning to the guitar one more time, what advice would you give to young musicians and students who aspire to become performers and teachers of the classical guitar today?*

**EJ:** Keep in mind that you cannot influence many things. The only thing you can influence is the level of your playing and that comes from hard work.

**DK:** Musicians are not born, they are made. Of course, talent is important, but I believe that intelligence and true passion for music are the factors that make you strive for progress.

**AR:** *My heartfelt thanks to you for joining me for this interview, Ewa and Dariusz. It has been a pleasure to have you here today. I'm much looking forward to hearing where your paths take you next and wish you the best for all your upcoming endeavors. We hope to see you again on concert stages here in the United States before too long. Travel safely and stay well.*

**EJ & DK:** Thank you, Annett, and thank you to *Soundboard* magazine for the opportunity to share our story and latest projects.

Annett Richter, a native of Halle, Germany, is vice president of the Minnesota Guitar Society. Active as a music scholar, performer (lute, guitar), editor, and visual artist in Fargo/Moorhead and Minneapolis/St. Paul, she is dedicated to sharing with readers the stories of 20th- and 21st-century guitarists who make today's world of the classical guitar ever more diverse. Her work has been supported by fellowships and grants from foundations, colleges, and arts organizations. She holds a PhD in Musicology from the University of Minnesota and teaches at Concordia College in Moorhead.



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An advertisement for The Classical Guitar Store. It features a large, light-colored acoustic guitar as the central image. To the left of the guitar, the text reads "LARGE SELECTION OF THE FINEST CONCERT & STUDENT GUITARS". Below the guitar, a list of guitar brands is provided: Baarslag, Delarue, Humphrey, Merrin, Pace, Plazuelo, Ray, Verreydt, Castellucia, Esteve, Hanika, Picado, and many more. At the bottom, the store's name "The Classical Guitar Store" is written in a stylized font, followed by "Since 1967", the address "2038 Sansom Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103", the phone number "215-267-2972", and the website "www.classicalguitarstore.com".

## THE WHISKY TALES

By Kevin Callahan

I composed *The Whisky Tales* for Stephanie Jones in 2020. Below is a brief description of its three movements.

### ***Shot 1: “Red Deer of Jura”***

Jura is an island in the inner Hebrides of Scotland and translates from Old Norse to “Deer Island,” reflecting the large population of red deer, far outnumbering its mere two hundred or so human inhabitants. George Orwell lived on Jura intermittently and completed his novel *1984* there. In fact, there is a single malt produced on the island in his commemoration. This movement is a jig, so it’s important to maintain accents in groups of three and six. It is quite accessible harmonically with few technical challenges. You can hear Stephanie Jones perform the movement at [youtube.com/watch?v=r4Axj9Lk5aQ](https://youtube.com/watch?v=r4Axj9Lk5aQ).

### ***Shot 2: “Down by Knob’s Creek”***

This shot is inspired by a well-known American Kentucky Bourbon. “Down by Knob’s Creek” contains Americana style elements such as blues and jazz while maintaining folkloric elements as well. It has a fun or quirky feel with lots of syncopated surprise notes that spice up the flavor. While my intention wasn’t to write a blues piece, it turns out that the structure of “Down by Knob’s Creek” closely resembles a simple blues, although with more harmonic complexity. Stephanie plays it at [youtube.com/watch?v=f-gpZzotFh8](https://youtube.com/watch?v=f-gpZzotFh8).

### ***Shot 3: “Cauldron of the Speckled Seas”***

By some measure, the world’s third largest whirlpool is the Corryvreckan just off the coast of Scotland between the islands of Jura and Scarba. “Corryvreckan” translates to “Cauldron of the Speckled Seas.” In this final movement, I attempt to depict a swirling whirlpool that sucks the listener into its vortex and

also at times spits them back out! One can hear violent clashing of the waters punctuated by big, discordant chords. “Cauldron of the Speckled Seas” is not based in any key or specific tonality and is rife with meter changes, although one section does carry forward themes and folkloric elements from “The Red Deer of Jura” with slight variation. The movement is rhythmic, energetic, and bold, and is the most technically challenging of the tales. You can listen at [youtube.com/watch?v=wzsH3QSxH9c](https://youtube.com/watch?v=wzsH3QSxH9c).



Kevin Callahan received a degree in literature from Dartmouth College, worked as a software developer, and is a guitarist-composer whose compositions have been commissioned by some of the world’s greatest musicians: Odair Assad, Badi Assad, the Los Angeles Guitar Quartet, Stephanie Jones, Artyom Dervoed, Irina Kulikova, Michael Partington, Kami Rowan and the United States Guitar Orchestra, and others. While his pieces are written for the classical stage, Callahan imbues his music with a wide range of elements borrowing from numerous styles including jazz, rock, blues, folk, and pop.

to Stephanie Jones  
The Whisky Tales

Kevin Callahan

♩. = 120

1. Red Deer of Jura

First staff of music, measures 1-5. Includes fingerings (4, 1, 2, 3, 0, 0, 1, 3, 2, 2, 0), dynamics (m, i, m, i, p, a, m), and articulation (i, p, a).

Second staff of music, measures 6-10. Includes fingerings (2, 5, 2, 4), dynamics (p), and articulation (p).

Third staff of music, measures 11-14. Includes fingerings (1, 2, 4, 2), dynamics (p), and articulation (p).

Fourth staff of music, measures 15-18. Includes first and second endings, fingerings (1, 4, 2, 4), dynamics (p), and articulation (p).

Fifth staff of music, measures 19-23. Includes fingerings (3, 4, 1, 4, 3, 1, 2, 3, 0, 1, 3, 0, 1, 4, 3, 0), dynamics (a, m, i, m, a, m, i, a, i, m, p), and articulation (a, m, i, m, a, m, i, a, i, m).

Sixth staff of music, measures 24-28. Includes fingerings (2, 1, 0, 2, 1, 0, 1, 4, 1, 3, 2, 0, 1, 3, 2, 0, 1, 3, 0, 4, 1, 2, 0), dynamics (p), and articulation (p).

Seventh staff of music, measures 29-33. Includes fingerings (4, 3, 1, 3, 1, 2, 1, 3, 2, 0, 2, 3, 1, 3, 0, 4, 1, 2, 0), dynamics (p), and articulation (p).

34

38

## 2. Down by Knob's Creek

$\text{♩} = 108$

4

*f* *f* *f* *f* *bend A#*

6

*p* *m* *i* *p* *f* *f* *vib.*

9

*bend A#* *bend D#*

11

*mi mi ai* *mi ai* *mi ai*

*mi ai* *mi ai* *mi ai*



IV

13 *metallic* *lush horns* To Coda ⊕

15 *f* *f* I *slap*

17

19

21

23 *mp* *f*

25 *mp* *f* D.C. al Coda

⊕ Coda

Musical notation for the Coda section, measures 26-31. The piece is in G major and 4/4 time. Measure 26 starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic and a 7th fret barre. Measure 27 continues with a forte (*f*) dynamic. Measure 28 features a VII barre and a roll barre. Measure 29 includes a 2nd fret barre and a mezzo-forte (*m*) dynamic. Measure 30 has a mezzo-forte (*m*) dynamic. Measure 31 ends with a soft pizzicato (*soft pizz.*) dynamic.

### 3. Cauldron of the Speckled Seas

Musical notation for the first system of 'Cauldron of the Speckled Seas', measures 1-2. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 200. The piece is in G major and 5/4 time. Measure 1 starts with a pianissimo (*pp*) dynamic. Measure 2 continues with a pianissimo (*pp*) dynamic.

Musical notation for the second system of 'Cauldron of the Speckled Seas', measures 3-5. Measure 3 starts with a mezzo-forte (*mp*) dynamic. Measure 4 continues with a mezzo-forte (*mp*) dynamic. Measure 5 ends with a forte (*f*) dynamic and a mezzo-forte (*m*) dynamic.

Musical notation for the third system of 'Cauldron of the Speckled Seas', measures 7-12. Measure 7 starts with a mezzo-forte (*mp*) dynamic. Measure 8 continues with a mezzo-forte (*mp*) dynamic. Measure 9 features a V barre and a mezzo-forte (*m*) dynamic. Measure 10 has a mezzo-forte (*m*) dynamic. Measure 11 continues with a mezzo-forte (*m*) dynamic. Measure 12 ends with a mezzo-forte (*m*) dynamic.

Musical notation for the fourth system of 'Cauldron of the Speckled Seas', measures 13-19. Measure 13 starts with a mezzo-forte (*mp*) dynamic. Measure 14 continues with a mezzo-forte (*mp*) dynamic. Measure 15 has a mezzo-forte (*mp*) dynamic. Measure 16 continues with a mezzo-forte (*mp*) dynamic. Measure 17 has a mezzo-forte (*mp*) dynamic. Measure 18 continues with a mezzo-forte (*mp*) dynamic. Measure 19 ends with a mezzo-forte (*mp*) dynamic.

Musical notation for the fifth system of 'Cauldron of the Speckled Seas', measures 20-26. Measure 20 starts with a mezzo-forte (*mp*) dynamic. Measure 21 continues with a mezzo-forte (*mp*) dynamic. Measure 22 has a mezzo-forte (*mp*) dynamic. Measure 23 continues with a mezzo-forte (*mp*) dynamic. Measure 24 has a mezzo-forte (*mp*) dynamic. Measure 25 continues with a mezzo-forte (*mp*) dynamic. Measure 26 ends with a mezzo-forte (*mp*) dynamic.

Musical notation for the sixth system of 'Cauldron of the Speckled Seas', measures 27-31. Measure 27 starts with a mezzo-forte (*mp*) dynamic. Measure 28 continues with a mezzo-forte (*mp*) dynamic. Measure 29 has a mezzo-forte (*mp*) dynamic. Measure 30 continues with a mezzo-forte (*mp*) dynamic. Measure 31 ends with a mezzo-forte (*mp*) dynamic.

33 VIII <sup>②</sup> spiral down into whirlpool <sup>④</sup>

40 I begin gradual decrescendo

47

51 mild slap bass

55 Transition to flesh pizz bass

60 nail bass

67

74

80 *attack*  
*ff ff ff*

85 *ff ff ff*

90 *ff ff ff*

94 VII *ff ff ff ff*

98 *subito*

102

106

112

119

126

132

*a* *m* *a* *m* *i* *a* *m* *a* *m* *i* *m* *i*

137

*m*

141

145

149

*tasto* *CI*

153

*CIII* *I*

*i* *a* *m* *f*

157 **III** **I**

Musical staff 157-160. Starts with a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The piece is in a key with one flat (B-flat). The staff contains a melodic line with various rhythmic values and fingerings (1, 2, 3, 4, 0). Dynamics include *f*, *p*, *i*, and *m*. A fermata is placed over the first measure. The staff ends with a first ending bracket labeled **I**.

161 **CIII**

Musical staff 161-164. Starts with a treble clef and a 5/8 time signature. The piece is in a key with one flat (B-flat). The staff contains a melodic line with various rhythmic values and fingerings (1, 2, 3, 4, 0). Dynamics include *i*, *a*, *m*, and *f*. A fermata is placed over the first measure. The staff ends with a first ending bracket labeled **CIII**.

165

Musical staff 165-168. Starts with a treble clef and a 5/8 time signature. The piece is in a key with one flat (B-flat). The staff contains a melodic line with various rhythmic values and fingerings (1, 2, 3, 4, 0). Dynamics include *f*. The staff ends with a first ending bracket labeled **I**.

169

Musical staff 169-172. Starts with a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The piece is in a key with one flat (B-flat). The staff contains a melodic line with various rhythmic values and fingerings (1, 2, 3, 4, 0). Dynamics include *f*. The staff ends with a first ending bracket labeled **I**.

173

Musical staff 173-176. Starts with a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The piece is in a key with one flat (B-flat). The staff contains a melodic line with various rhythmic values and fingerings (1, 2, 3, 4, 0). Dynamics include *f*. The staff ends with a first ending bracket labeled **I**.

177 **III**

Musical staff 177-180. Starts with a treble clef and a 5/8 time signature. The piece is in a key with one flat (B-flat). The staff contains a melodic line with various rhythmic values and fingerings (1, 2, 3, 4, 0). Dynamics include *f*. A fermata is placed over the first measure. The staff ends with a first ending bracket labeled **III**.

181

Musical staff 181-184. Starts with a treble clef and a 5/8 time signature. The piece is in a key with one flat (B-flat). The staff contains a melodic line with various rhythmic values and fingerings (1, 2, 3, 4, 0). Dynamics include *f*. The staff ends with a first ending bracket labeled **I**.

185

Musical staff 185-188. Starts with a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The piece is in a key with one flat (B-flat). The staff contains a melodic line with various rhythmic values and fingerings (1, 2, 3, 4, 0). Dynamics include *f*. The staff ends with a first ending bracket labeled **I**.

189

193

196

201

205

210

214

Slap bass

218

222

*f*

*f*

226

*ff*

V



*“The GFA is a true labor of love and an expression of love. Everyone involved is truly passionate about the guitar and about giving to the community. The GFA is a heroic act of smooth leadership, a successful cultural organization that builds community, and a shining light in today’s world that keeps our civilization alive.”*

**-ELIOT FISK**

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## TRIBUTE TO MY BROTHER, BRUCE HOLZMAN

By Adam Holzman



Bruce (left) and Adam

My dear friends of our beloved instrument, I wrote this article ten years ago as a tribute when my brother was granted the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Guitar Foundation of America. I am updating it now as a memorial on his passing and as a celebration of his life.

Bruce, Greg, and I were all born in New York City. We were raised in a middle-class neighborhood in Queens by our parents, David and Natalie Holzman. Neither of our parents were musicians, but the love of music was instilled in all of us from an early age. For Bruce and I, it was the guitar; for Greg, flute, saxophone, and clarinet. Growing up in a two-bedroom apartment meant three boys and many instruments in one room.

My earliest childhood memories center on the guitar. I remember running around the living rooms of Bruce's first teachers, Gustavo Lopez and Rodrigo Riera. Hardly old enough to talk, I remember hearing the guitar and watching Bruce play. As I got older, Bruce's guitar was a place of both solace and safety. Underneath his left hand was where I would hide playfully from our brother Greg. It was the only place Greg wouldn't dare follow me as he was equally afraid of Bruce and the possibility of causing harm to Bruce's guitar!

Bruce practiced every day; in fact it seemed like he was always practicing, both before school started and after it had ended. To this day I remember him practicing *Leyenda*, *Recuerdos de Alhambra*, the music of Bach and Villa-Lobos. He worked tirelessly perfecting his repertoire.

Bruce was my first and last teacher in the formal sense of the word. At our father's request, he began working with me when I was 8. It was not easy on either of us, but somehow we both survived. Most of the time he had the patience of Job, remaining calm when I could not remember a passage or get my triplet rhythms correct. Other times I remember his frustration (well deserved), and I think my arm is still bruised from all the times he "corrected me"!

After his work with Gustavo Lopez and Rodrigo Riera, Bruce began studies with Albert Valdes Blain, with whom he worked for many years. He also spent many summers working with Alirio Díaz in Banff and Caracas and with Oscar Ghiglia in Aspen and Siena. Bruce taught privately from the age of 15 and had his first teaching position at age 19 at the Bronx Settlement House School of Music in New York.

In 1972, at the age of 22 with an undergraduate degree from New York University, Bruce began as an instructor at Florida State University (FSU). He took over the position begun by Mario Abril. According to his earliest students, his passion for the guitar and its music, his meticulous attention to detail, his keen aural skills, and his ability to dissect guitar technique were evident from the onset and like nothing any of his students had ever seen.

As early as the late 1970s the success of his students in competitions both in America and abroad began to demonstrate his impact on the guitar scene. Evidence of this occurred in the early 1980s and involved the late Aaron Shearer, Professor of Guitar at both the Peabody Conservatory and later the North Carolina School of the Arts. For a few consecutive years, FSU students were winning many of the American competitions and quite often defeating Mr. Shearer's students in the finals. Much to his credit, Aaron called Bruce out of the blue one day and asked if he could visit Bruce in Tallahassee to observe his teaching.

At first, Bruce, only about 32 at the time, did not know what to make of Mr. Shearer's request. But after Mr. Shearer's arrival and observance of many lessons, they became fast friends. Aaron was incredibly impressed that a teacher could say so little and get so much from his students! This was the beginning of a long friendship between Bruce and Aaron.

Bruce's teaching style was concise and efficient, based on keen observational analysis, meticulous listening, and his attention to detail from the first note to the last. From the



Bruce

outset he focused on the basics: posture, right- and left-hand setup, positioning, proper technique, tone production, and nail shaping and care. His technique teaching was really a synthesis of those who came before (Segovia, Tárrega, etc.), years of observation and analysis of many great players, and from his own investigation into what works best for each player.

He was an advocate of incredibly slow practice. I can remember him telling me more than once in a lesson, “There are three speeds: slow, slower, and MY SLOW!” He was also an advocate of clear and efficient fingering that best allows for simple and elegant phrasing while always trying to be true to the score and composers’ wishes. Everything was always approached in a musical framework with a focus on the details. Constants among his students are beautiful tone, rhythmic acuity, effortless technique, strong sense of pulse, and strong theoretical understanding.

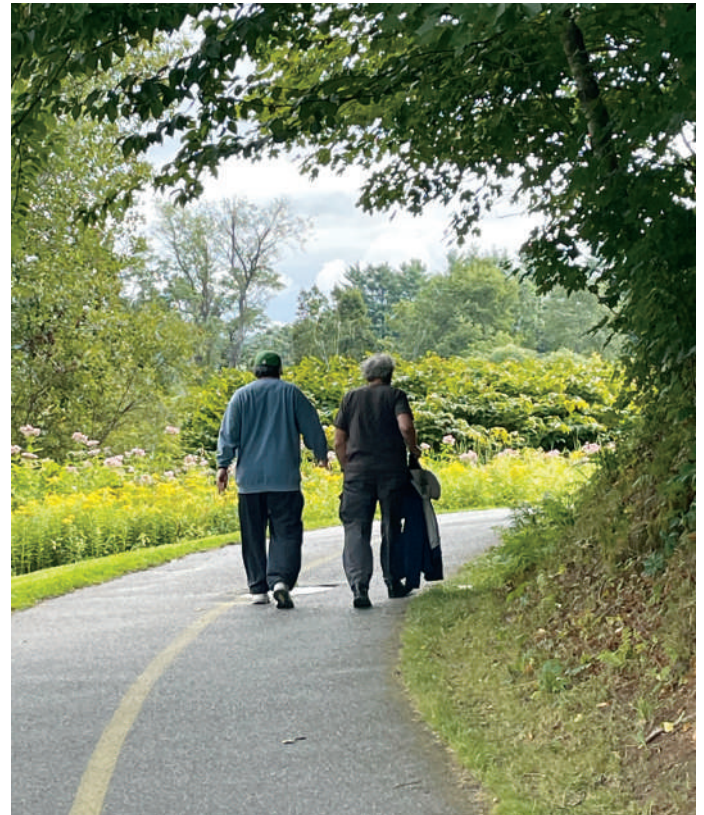
Perhaps what is most interesting is that Bruce has created many successful concert artists and teachers, each with an extremely individual style. That has always been one of the attributes of my brother’s teaching that I have been most impressed with both as his student and as a colleague. While there are many consistent qualities found both technically and musically throughout the generations of his teaching, it is the support of the student as an individual musician that was often most impressive. I remember when I was a student being surrounded by so many gifted players, each one unique and interesting, molded not to play like each other but each to be the best they could be within their considerable talents.

Bruce’s ability to foster confidence and build internal security is evident in the playing of generations of guitarists. Watching his influence on and dedication to his students

was one of the main reasons I wanted to be a teacher myself. One of my favorite tales of Bruce’s dedication is a story best related by his wife, Michele: “I watched Bruce getting ready to head out one morning. Since there was a hurricane about to hit Tallahassee and FSU was closed, I asked, ‘Where are you going?’ He said, ‘Oh, just a few lessons...’ Luckily, I was able to convince him to wait the storm out a bit!” As with any great teacher, his legacy is and will continue to be measured by the accomplishments of his students, their students, and those students’ students that follow.

Few teachers in America or abroad have been as great an influence in shaping the future of the classical guitar landscape as Bruce Holzman. There is not enough space to list all of the recordings, competition victories, concert venues performed, and university teaching positions held by Bruce’s students, so I will close with these two statistics that were shared at his fiftieth anniversary celebration at the Florida Guitar Festival last year: (1) in the forty years of the GFA International Competition, twenty-five of Bruce’s students or his grand students have been in the finals; (2) over 125 guitar positions worldwide have been held by his students and grand students.

Those of us who had the pleasure of working with Bruce know the love and care he bestowed on us. He will long be remembered for his legacy of guitarists the world over. I will miss my brother, teacher, mentor, and friend.



## GFA NEWS

### 2024 GFA Convention

Join us at the Guitar Foundation of America International Convention and Competition, hosted by Douglas Lora at California State University Fullerton, June 17–22, 2024. This convention will feature a stellar artist lineup including Göran Söllscher, Gaëlle Solal, Marko Topchii, the Mēla Guitar Quartet, Duo Mantar, Srdjan Bulat, Patterson/Sutton Duo, Petra Poláčková, András Csáki, and more!

### GFA National School Summit, February 16–17, 2024

The National School Summit is the Guitar Foundation of America's annual educational event dedicated to high school and college students. The NaSS takes place every year in Las Vegas, Nevada, and brings together the top classical guitar programs around the country. The inaugural NaSS celebrates the history of the GFA and features former ICAC winners as guest artists. The 2023 NaSS will take place at the Las Vegas Academy of the Arts hosted by Dr. Lucas Finney. Questions can be sent to Dr. Federico Musgrove Stetson at [fmusgrove@guitarfoundation.org](mailto:fmusgrove@guitarfoundation.org). For more information visit: [www.guitarfoundation.org/page/nass](http://www.guitarfoundation.org/page/nass).

### Obituary

*Loris Chobanian, a founder of the GFA and composer of many fine works for guitar, solo and ensemble, died in May of this year. His student and friend Chris Ellicott offers this heartfelt eulogy.*

Loris Ohannes Chobanian, guitarist, composer, teacher, humanitarian, and friend of mine, left us on May 14, 2023. He was my guitar teacher during my time as a student at Baldwin Wallace University in Ohio and for several years afterwards. Dr. Chobanian taught me more about music and expression than any other. A prolific composer, many times a lesson would begin with him enthusiastically going to the piano to play a bit of his latest work for me. A great treat for me and my fellow students would be to be the first ones to learn, and sometimes premier, his newest creations. He

had a great talent arranging for various instruments. This gave many in the conservatory, students and faculty alike, the opportunity to play and perform his wonderful pieces.

Dr. Chobanian was born in Armenia and his early life was spent in the Middle East. During a lesson he would often share some of the unfortunate events he and those he knew experienced there. To counteract such suffering, he was determined to live a life of love and compassion, evidenced by the way he interacted with his students and colleagues, and was able to exhibit a wonderful sense of humor as well. A quiet person, he best expressed himself through his compositions. For a more complete biography of Dr. Chobanian as well as a list of his principal works for guitar, see Robert Ferguson's "GFA Founders, Part 1," *Soundboard* 49, no. 1 (March 2023).

For those of us who were fortunate to have known Loris, we are truly blessed. For all others, his works remain his gifts to the world.



## PUBLICATION REVIEWS

**Debussy, Claude:** *The Music of Debussy for Solo Guitar, arr. Yago Santos.*  
**Fenton, MO: Mel Bay, 2023 (MB31034). 64pp. \$19.99**

It is one of the misfortunes of history that Claude Debussy never wrote a work for guitar, yet what is perhaps even more remarkable is that few guitarists have transcribed and performed his works over the past century. While there are a handful of arrangements that have met with some popularity—Francis Kleynjans' *Clair de Lune* comes to mind—and a few guitarists who have performed a considerable number of his pieces—Paul Galbraith for instance—Debussy's music remains largely uncharted territory for most guitarists. Given that the guitar is well-suited to the temperament of impressionist-style pieces, one would think we'd be overrun by transcriptions of his works, yet we are not. And when compared to the practically countless versions of works by Albéniz, Granados, and Falla, it's even more confounding. In recent years there have been a number of transcriptions of Debussy works for guitar in ensemble or chamber music settings, but not so many for solo guitar. This collection of eleven solo guitar arrangements by Yago Santos are a welcome addition for guitarists and should serve to bridge the gap for anyone interested in tackling this magnificent repertoire.

The pieces in this collection are challenging, as one might expect, but most are about the difficulty level of the aforementioned Albéniz, Granados, Falla pieces that adorn many guitarists' programs. Several of the selections are more demanding and require significant ability to perform, such as *Doctor Gradus ad Parnassum*, with its rapid lines, and *Golliwog's Cakewalk*, with bouncing rhythms and block chords, but that is mainly due to the fast tempos. The arrangements here are both well thought out and nicely laid out on the fingerboard. Most of the pieces use standard tunings and traditional techniques, with the exception of *Doctor Gradus*, which requires the use of a low C on the sixth string. However, the rest of the pieces use either standard tuning or sixth to D.

Many of the well-known classics are here: *Clair de lune*, *Arabesque no. 1*, *La fille aux cheveux de lin*, and *The Little Shepherd* in addition to *Doctor Gradus*, and *Golliwog's*. Also included is the beautiful *Elegie*, L. 138, which works

beautifully on guitar, and *Syrinx*, originally for solo flute. It's a nice set of eleven pieces for guitarists to explore and hopefully add to their programs.

It is a little surprising to see the inclusion of tablature notation in this edition. The scores are arranged in grand staff format with standard notation on top and tablature underneath, as is typical for popular styles of music. But why for this repertoire? How many advanced guitarists are going to use tablature? Such notation would make more sense if the works were either aimed at beginning-level players or non-classical guitarists who aren't accustomed to reading standard notation. The combination of tablature and staff notation might also make sense if the edition lacked meticulous right- and left-hand fingerings. However, these pieces have substantial fingerings and are not likely to be played by beginners. It's a minor cavil and may even be welcomed by some, but it does add to the page turning since only up to five staves can fit on a page.

Font size is relatively large, standard for most Mel Bay publications, making the layouts clear and easy to read. There is a single page of text with a brief description of the general style of Debussy's music, but no information is given about the individual works in the collection, other than that they were drawn mostly from his piano repertoire and from different periods in his life. It would be nice to have more substantial written commentary to accompany each piece, but perhaps such information is readily available these days and doesn't need to be included with universally well-known works, even if they are new to most guitarists. Overall, this is a fine collection of arrangements by one of history's greatest composers that does much to expand the guitar repertoire.

—Brad DeRoche

**Hochman, Elysa:** *The Book of Rumba Strums for Spanish, Classical and Flamenco Guitar.*  
**Fenton, MO: Mel Bay, 2023 (MB31047M). 123pp. \$24.99**

If you've ever spent time trying to learn how to play rumba tunes by watching videos of the Gypsy Kings, then you will know what it means to be frustrated. The rhythms of the strumming patterns go by so quickly that it's hard to discern

## PUBLICATION REVIEWS: (cont.)

exactly what it is they are doing. Sure, there are now many online instructional videos for one to watch as well, but most only show one or two patterns, or are too advanced to understand, leaving much to be desired—and learned. Wouldn't it be great to have an instructional book and a video for each lesson? Well, now we do. In *The Book of Rumba Strums*, Elysa Hochman delivers twenty-five strum patterns that will certainly take most guitarists a long way toward understanding and performing this music.

The book is set up progressively with the first strum patterns being the easiest, and advancing through to more difficult rhythms and techniques. It's helpful that each lesson has standard notation, tablature, and chord grids to help guide players through the material. The first page of each lesson provides a written description of what to do on each beat in order to create the desired strumming pattern. There are some important bits of information here, such as “keep your thumb planted on the 6<sup>th</sup> string as you strum up with your index finger,” which really add value to the work. These details are nearly impossible to include with notation alone, and help make each lesson far more descriptive than would be otherwise. Then, below that is an enlarged single measure with the strum pattern in standard notation, tablature, and a chord grid showing the chord used in that measure. Counting is added above the measure as well as the appropriate fingering/strumming for the right hand. Following this is a short “Progression,” or if you will, an etude, using the strumming pattern and typical harmonic progression. Once again, standard notation, tablature, chord grids, and strumming patterns adorn each measure. It's an ideal format for learning this style of music. But, if this weren't enough, there are downloadable audio and video clips for each lesson that can be found on a code within the book, or on Mel Bays' YouTube channel. Elysa Hochman plays each of the twenty-five examples from the book in the video lessons. So, coupled with excellent written instruction, the videos add tremendous value and make this an excellent instructional package. It's thorough, logical, and progressive, and should enable any guitarist to be playing rumba tunes in no time.

—Brad DeRoche

**Calmes, Keith:** *Early Music Gems*.

**Fenton, MO: Mel Bay, 2023 (MB30946M). 64pp. \$17.99**

**Rob MacKillop:** *Renaissance Lute Repertoire*.

**Fenton, MO: Mel Bay, 2019 (MB 30749). 80pp. \$19.99**

Since its inception as a four-course instrument, the guitar was destined to navigate waves of fervent popularity invariably followed by troubled waning periods. During the hard times, the guitar relied on the enthusiastic support of amateurs, its banner held high by loyal dilettantes that carried its flame forward. The professional class of guitarists played its part in keeping this fire alight, sometimes in revolutionary manners. Yet, the demand created by the non-professional has always been the impetus that propelled the guitar onwards. One simply needs to look at the great number of publications aimed at amateurs at the turn of the eighteenth century to observe the magnitude of this driving force.

The assimilation of the guitar within the conservatories and universities in the twentieth century, and its wider acceptance as a legitimate concert instrument, seems to have changed this dynamic. The guitar was validated, and the professional could then enjoy the same institutional support as orchestral instruments and piano. A survey of the catalog of any major guitarist-composer of the twentieth century shows this change in objectives, the bulk of his or her efforts focused on concert music and the demands of professionals. Fortunately, the past couple of decades have seen a progressive recovery from this downturn. Widely accessible and affordable digital typesetting, e-publishing and print-on-demand have diminished the cost of publication. Cheaper good quality instruments, strings, and video lessons have democratized the guitar even further, and we seem to be in a new golden age of publications aimed at nonprofessionals.

Three publications from Mel Bay are representative of this trend: Keith Calmes' *Early Music Gems* and Rob MacKillop's *Renaissance Lute Repertoire*, which is available in two versions, guitar or lute tablature. Calmes' *Early Music Gems* presents a generous assortment of favorites from the renaissance and early baroque repertoire, including music for vihuela, lute, and guitar alongside consort and vocal music in arrangement. The vast majority of times, the music remains within first and second positions, without a lowered third string. Although fingerings are sparse, players around the Royal College of Music or Trinity College grades 2 to 3 anthologies can learn these without assistance, with a couple of exceptions. Just about a single page long, each piece is a rewarding read and teachers will find this a useful resource. An accompanying suite of audio recordings is available online, particularly helpful for the independent learner.

MacKillop's *Renaissance Lute Repertoire* is issued as a supplement to his *Introduction to the Lute and Guitar Players*. Similar to Calmes, here we have another anthology, albeit focused on representative music for the lute in tablature. As mentioned, two versions are available: French tablature (with letters used for fret location, here called simply lute tablature) and guitar tablature (with lowered third string and numbers used for fret location, i.e., Italian tablature). While the music presented is widely available as PDFs of the originals found online, it is a great torment to read from these grainy, pixelated pages. Paradoxically, anyone that has had the chance to handle such documents in person can attest to the beauty and clarity of their typesetting. Unfortunately, like digital remasters of vinyl releases, too much is lost in its digital translation. It is refreshing to see a clean, properly justified modern typeset of this great music bound in a physical book (a digital version is also available).

The distinction between amateurs and professionals was tenuous in the nineteenth century. The words *amateur* and *dilettante* did not carry the negative connotation with which they are now associated—Sor and Aguado were both applauded as amateurs. The professional status did not necessarily carry a positive association and simply “rested upon being a *professor*... meaning a ‘public teacher.’”<sup>1</sup> The lines that were so boldly drawn between these classes in the mid-twentieth century are perhaps fading again. For example, any person can create a social media account that delivers guitar-focused content and capitalize in a way that could qualify as professional. One hopes that this will generate the same type of demand observed in the early nineteenth century. Regardless of the exact meaning one takes from the words, amateurs and professionals alike will find great satisfaction in these publications from Mel Bay, which one hopes are to be followed by more of its kind.  
—Josinaldo Costa

<sup>1</sup> Christopher Page, Paul Sparks and James Westbrook, *The Great Vogue for the Guitar in Western Europe: 1800-1840* (Woodbridge Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2023), 90.

**Paganini, Niccolò:** *Various Compositions (M.S. 85-105) for Guitar, Lucio Matarazzo Collection. Edited and fingered by Riccardo Del Prete. Forward by Angelo Gilardino.*  
**UT Orpheus, 2018 (CH-280). 60pp. €16.95**

This score, together with the previous editions *37 Sonatas* and *43 Ghibibizzi* from UT Orpheus, completes the publisher's offerings of solo guitar compositions by Niccolò Paganini. This three-volume set vies for distinction with the highly

regarded previous editions by Suvini Zerboni (Ruggero Chiesa, ed., 1987) and Chanterelle Verlag (Giuseppe Gazzelloni, ed., 2006). Like the those editions, this is a scholarly work and worthy of standing alongside them. The UT Orpheus score comes with detailed editorial notes written by Riccardo Del Prete, who also shows careful consideration in regards to the music notation, a difficult job, as Paganini's manuscript was known to be perplexing to decipher. In addition, fingerings and historical context are included. The score shows clearly what is in the manuscript and adds in brackets alternate fingerings, missing notes, and other details in connection to the facsimile. The editor writes: “The suggested fingerings are aimed at a didactic purpose and in the general setting of the work I preferred the use of formulas which are more suitable to the modern guitar technique, being aware that the approach to the study of these compositions is significantly different if we use a modern guitar or a 19<sup>th</sup> century guitar.”

This edition collects and organizes all the “loose” compositions for guitar by Paganini and makes reference to previous editions while simultaneously providing a new perspective to them. It is a beautiful printed score with yellowish paper that facilitates the reading of text and music notation. In this age of quick access to music by downloading PDFs, you can take pride in owning a score like this.

—José Luis Puerta

**Hill, Kenny:** *Stolen Moments Suite.*

**Ben Lomond, CA: Hill Guitar Company, 2022 (KRL-101). 16pp. No price given.**

**Hill, Kenny:** *Songs from Home.*

**Lévis: Doberman-Yppan (DO 1493), 2023. 12p. \$11.77CD.**

**Hill, Kenny:** *Lost and Found Suite.*

**Lévis: Doberman-Yppan (DO 1486), 2023. 12p. \$11.77CD.**

[Reviewer's note: *Songs from Home* and *Lost and Found Suite* were originally published by Hill Guitar Company, Ben Lomond, CA (KRL-107, KRL-109), 2022.]

Kenny Hill needs no introduction to guitarists; his well-known and innovative concert instruments are found in most of the finest shops worldwide, his New World student model guitars have been very popular, and his efforts in establishing guitar workshops in Mexico, China, and elsewhere is unparalleled. However, his most recent endeavors into the world of music composition with a

collection of solo guitar pieces make him a true renaissance man, as if that weren't already known.

The music here represents “a deliberate comeback to composing for guitar after decades of dormancy and neglect,” according to the poetic and intriguing program notes that accompany each score. *Stolen Moments* was Hill's first foray into composition after reaching his seventieth birthday and reflects on a conversation he had with Lou Harrison. Kenny asked the composer how he found time to compose and Harrison replied, “Oh there is no time, only stolen moments.” The three-movement suite utilizes an unusual tuning with the sixth string tuned to low C and a partial capo on the top five strings at fret four. The resultant tuning gives the suite a haunting, ethereal quality that in the first movement, “Stolen Moments,” is reminiscent of what many “new age” acoustic steel-string players create with their unique use of capo and scordatura. The second movement, “Blindness,” showcases Hill's ability to compose in a modern style, evoking the mood of Vicente Asencio's *Getsemani*, though it's a bit sparser harmonically. “Canary Jig” is a light, energetic merriment that caps off the suite.

In *Songs from Home*, Hill gives us three lovely pieces each with its own flavor and character. The first movement, “Solitaire,” written for his wife, Roberta, is a heartfelt tune that sounds a bit like a Scottish air; tender, poignant, and a touch melancholy. “Twilight” sounds like it could have come from the pen of Andrew York, with arpeggiated chords moving up and down the fingerboard. The third movement, “Wedding Song,” written for his youngest child, is a sentimental piece with a simple, elegant melody above an arpeggiated bass; not unlike what Carulli or Giuliani might have composed had they been living in our day.

*Lost and Found Suite* begins with its flowing “Prelude” in dropped-D tuning. The music is appealing and untroubled, simple and elegant. The second movement, “Lost,” is Hill's most inspired, and here he reaches his greatest emotional and compositional depth. This is the gem of the series. “Found,” the third movement, is a new age, Windham Hill-esque piece, and while not quite the powerful, exhilarating finale one might expect, it is an effective way to end the suite. Anyone looking for new music of moderate difficulty that is appealing and audience-friendly would do well to look into these works.

—Brad DeRoche

## CD REVIEWS

**Kanengiser, William, with The Alexander String Quartet (Zakarias Grafilo and Frederick Lifitz, violins; David Samuel, viola; Sandy Wilson, cello). *British Invasion*. Works by Krouse, Sting/Bogdanović, Lennon and McCartney/Brouwer. Foghorn Classics FCL 2023, 2023.**

*British Invasion* is a striking album featuring works arising from the British artists who remade popular music decades ago. Two of the pieces are re-compositions of works written for Mr. Kanengiser's iconic group, the Los Angeles Guitar Quartet. The composer of those is Ian Krouse, whose early career as a guitarist evolved into composition, culminating in the critically acclaimed *Armenian Requiem* in 2015.

The disc opens with *Labyrinth (On a Theme of Led Zeppelin)*. The theme is “Friends,” a lesser-known piece by the group. It has an exotic sound inspired by Moroccan music. Opening with the original theme strummed by Mr. Kanengiser on steel-string guitar, the quartet joins shortly after. The variations are highly creative, and

the piece sounds like nothing else in the guitar/string quartet repertoire. Moreover, it is one of the few works that successfully synthesizes classical music with rock. Kanengiser and the quartet seem to be having quite a time.

Next is *Prisms: Six Songs by Sting*. This is no mere arrangement. Having a gifted composer like Dušan Bogdanović, with his eclectic compositional tool kit, means that the results will be something beyond just a song setting. The work has a quasi-baroque cast. This is explicit in “Every Breath You Take,” where the melody weaves in and out of the “Prelude” from Bach's *Cello Suite* no. 1. Several of the other movements have subtitles linking them to baroque music. Each one is beautiful, with “Shape of My Heart” having a particularly pretty guitar part. My only wish is that “Fields of Gold” were longer.

Krouse's other contribution is *Music in Four Sharps*. It is based on one of John Dowland's loveliest works, the *Frog Galliard*, known in its vocal version as “Now, o now I

## CD REVIEWS

needs must part.” The theme works its way into the piece gradually, and it is very abstractly treated as the work proceeds beautifully toward a magical ending.

Leo Brouwer has engaged with the music of the Beatles repeatedly. *Beatlerianas* in the present version includes four songs. “Eleanor Rigby” begins with a brief toccata-like section, leading to an equally brief fugal passage before the song is presented in fairly straightforward fashion. “She’s Leaving Home” is a delightfully wistful dialog between guitar and quartet. “Penny Lane” is a light-hearted romp while “Yesterday” conjures up beautiful sonorities among the instruments. Recorded sound is excellent, and the notes and presentation are superb.

—Al Kunze

**Attademo, Luigi. *J. S. Bach Guitar Music. Music by Bach. Brilliant Classics 96679, 2022.***

Luigi Attademo is an artist who combines eclectic musicality with technical brilliance. His recent recordings range from an all-Scarlattini album to a disc of popular songs by Astor Piazzolla. His approach to Bach is very personal. In the Prelude to *Cello Suite* no. 1, he employs considerable rhythmic fluidity without distorting the fundamental rhythm. Attademo is not the first modern player to take on the *Tocatta & Fugue* in D minor, but his arrangement is notably successful, assuming you purge your mind of the organ sonority as well as the somewhat gothic accretions that the piece has acquired. It calls for a high level of virtuosity, which the artist applies with great success. In the *Chaconne*, Attademo eschews most of the added notes and harmonies that other players embrace. But what he does exceedingly well is ally dynamics to phrasing and employ an unrushed rhythmic fluidity. This has become one of my favorite performances of the piece. On a less monumental scale, the Aria from the *Goldberg Variations* is lovely, with tasteful and effective ornamentation. He also takes on a pair of pieces that go beyond the guitar’s usable sustain: the Air from *Orchestral Suite* no. 3 and the Largo from the *Harpsichord Concerto* in F. While he tries to finesse the inevitable decay of the guitar’s sound, the pieces really don’t work. (Of course, the Largo doesn’t work on harpsichord either.) Attademo plays two well-known gavottes from the cello and violin repertoires and two sicilianas from violin and flute sonatas. I am not at all convinced that Gavotte II from the sixth *Cello Suite* sounds good with *notes inégales*: the effect is of wildly inappropriate swing eighths. The last piece in the program is David Russell’s magical arrangement of the piece commonly known as *Jesu, Joy of Man’s Desiring*. It sounds beautiful, preserving more from the original textures than has typically been attempted. (I have a quibble with the nomenclature on the disc: I think the title given as “chorale-prelude” is not correct. The manuscript refers

to the piece, which occurs twice, at the ends of the two sections of the cantata BWV 147 as just “choral.”) Recorded sound is fine, although the rather resonant acoustic takes a bit of aural acclimation.

—Al Kunze

**Bianco, Gabriel, and Marina Viotti, mezzo-soprano (with Leonard Disselhorst, cello, and Gerry Lopez, saxophone). *Porque existe otro querer [:] French & Hispanic Romances for Voice and Guitar. Works by Fauré, Massenet, Torroba, Almarán, Satie, Falla, Brel, et al. Apartemusic AP 311, 2023.***

Gabriel Bianco, GFA International Concert Artist Competition winner in 2008, has created a wonderful recital disc in collaboration with mezzo-soprano Marina Viotti. Their efforts place them in the excellent company of other recent voice/guitar CDs such as Sharon Isbin with Isabel Leonard and David Leisner with Michael Kelly. Viotti is a very successful opera singer, but what is required in a recitalist, especially with guitar, is a voice that can be scaled to a more intimate medium. Viotti has a beautifully modulated voice with a honeyed piano sound that, though soft, never loses resonance or vibrato, landing gently on the ear. On the other hand she can, when needed, deliver forte dynamics without strain or get into a powerful chest voice. Great singing. And of course, Bianco is her equal with his own versatile virtuosity.

Their recital had me from the first notes of their Fauré set with a heavenly performance of “Après un rêve,” one of the most beautiful songs in the entire *chanson* repertoire. The program has a wide variety, including the Latin standard “Dos gardenias” by Isolina Carrillo. This song includes the lyric that forms the title of the CD, meaning, loosely, “Why is there another love.” All of the songs are worth hearing and expertly performed. If space permitted I would detail the felicities of each one. That can’t happen, but here are a couple of standouts: “Historia de un amor” by Carlos Eleta Almarán is exquisite, and Jacques Brel’s “La chanson des vieux amants” is ineffably touching. The performers include the Falla *Siete canciones*, which are generally fine, but be warned: in “Nana” Viotti does a quasi-improvisatory section of dubious worth, and Bianco’s realization of the difficult guitar part in “Polo” lacks crispness.

Bianco also plays two solos. The first is a wonderfully fluid version of Torroba’s *Madroños*. The second, Satie’s hypnotic *Gnosienne* no. 1, is less successful. The fault may lie in the Roland Dyens arrangement he uses: the even eighth notes at the beginning of the piece are rendered as what seems to be an eighth rest and two sixteenths (I don’t have a copy of the arrangement). This is rhythmically wrong, and not in keeping with the musical aesthetic.



## CD REVIEWS: (cont.)

Recorded sound is excellent. Liner notes are interesting but sadly do not include texts or translations.

—Al Kunze

**Boros, Zsófia. *El ultimo aliento*. Works by Ginastera, Duplessy, Sinesi, Alem, and Moscardini. ECM Records 2769, 2023.**

*El ultimo aliento* is the third CD by Hungarian guitarist Zsófia Boros. I have not heard the first two, also on ECM Records. She has a beautiful melodic sense and fine skill in dovetailing phrases and sections of the works she plays. Her program focuses on six pieces by Mathias Duplessy.

*De rêve et de pluie* is a lovely work in which Boros's precise arpeggio technique allows her to highlight melodies regardless of where they are in the texture. The next piece is *Le secret d'Hiroshigé*. Duplessy is often inspired by art, in this case the works of Japanese artist Utagawa Hiroshige. Also inspired by art is *Le labyrinthe de Vermeer*, which moves agreeably through melodic sections, in and out of tremolo. Among the other Duplessy pieces are *Berceuse*, a beautiful lullaby, and *Valse pour Camille*, a gently restrained slow waltz. There are two pieces by Argentine composer Quique Sinesi. *El abrazo* utilizes rapid arpeggios with melodies emerging in lower voices. For some reason, Boros plays this with mutes on the strings. I don't know why she does it, but it provides an interesting contrast. The other Sinesi piece is *Tormenta de ilusión*. She plays this engaging piece full of scales and arpeggios on the *ronroco*, an Andean instrument, loosely related to the *charango*. One of the prettiest pieces on the album is an early *Milonga* by Alberto Ginastera. Originally for piano, it sounds wonderful on guitar.

One complaint: ECM Records has an ethos of a kind of aggressive austerity, so there are no notes, no artist bio, no mention even of what piece uses the *ronroco* or, for that matter, what it is. Sound is excellent.

—Al Kunze

**Cracow Guitar Quartet (Miłosz Mączyński, Joanna Baran-Nosiadek, Łukasz Dobrowolski, Mateusz Puter) *Musical Landscapes*. Works by Bach, Boccherini, Debussy, Grieg, Mussorgsky, Bellinati, and Brouwer. DUX 1780, 2022.**

Classical guitar is alive and well in Poland, evidenced by this excellent release from the Cracow Guitar Quartet. The group was founded in 2006 with members Miłosz Mączyński, Joanna Baran-Nosiadek, Łukasz Dobrowolski, and Mateusz Puter. This recording includes the quartet's transcriptions of well-known pieces as well as a few not often heard.

Opening the program with the first movement from Bach's *Brandenburg Concerto* no. 3, a favorite for decades among guitar ensembles, the quartet delivers a smooth, well-crafted performance that breathes with life and joy. Luigi Boccherini's "Fandango" features pristine, coordinated phrasing. Claude Debussy's *Reverie* is sweetly delivered using harmonics and rich tone; this could make the piano players who hear this jealous! Two well-known pieces from Edvard Grieg's *Suites*, op. 46 and 55, are immaculately performed. "Anitra's Dance" uses the delicate soft range of the guitar's dynamic spectrum exquisitely, stating the theme over a pizzicato accompaniment. Similarly, "Solveig's Song" is played with an unhurried spaciousness, and demonstrates the ensemble's unified musical interpretation. The quiet Grieg pieces are followed by a contrasting, twelve-minute arrangement of *Night on Bald Mountain* by Mussorgsky. Its contrasting moods and themes are presented with clarity, using the guitar's tonal and dynamic range well. The program concludes with an energetic rendition of Paulo Bellinati's *Baião de Gude* and Leo Brouwer's *Cuban Landscape with Rain*.

Recording quality is pristine and liner notes are adequate. This is a recording you will want to hear from beginning to end. And you will enjoy it—I know I did!

—Jim McCutcheon

**Papandreou, Elena. *Paper Moon* [:] *Songs by Manos Hadjidakis*. Works by Hadjidakis and Brouwer. Bis Records 2636 (SACD), 2022.**

This is a wonderful album. Elena Papandreou and her friend the late Roland Dyens had the idea of a complete program of arrangements of songs by the great Greek composer-songwriter Manos Hadjidakis. Dyens had already done two songs. But the project was forestalled by his untimely death. Luckily it was revived when Dyens' student Orestis Kalampalikis undertook the (huge) task of creating arrangements of ten of the twelve songs heard here. And his versions are masterpieces: each song becomes a virtual tone poem, as each original is expertly and creatively arranged. Hadjidakis's songs are wonderfully varied, ranging from romantic to tragic to humorous. One is even a very plausible travelog. As is often the case, space is not available to give details on each song, but I assure you that every one merits your attention. In a brilliant stroke of documentation, Kalampalikis gives us summaries of the texts of the songs he has arranged, and my comments on the songs owes a great deal to his work.

The title cut is a beautiful ballad extolling love as giving meaning to everything. *The Urchins Down in the Meadow* is one of the arrangements that, as mentioned, takes on the scope of almost a tone poem. *Hymettus* makes masterly

use of guitar voicings, textures, and effects. The song is inspired by political gossip (!). Demanding counterpoint is present in *Noble Dame*, lamenting a faded beauty. *A Stroll to the Moon* is characterized by Kalampalakis: “take away my sorrow, let us take a stroll to the moon.” But in *Little Rallou* the moon takes on a less benign character, becoming jealous of a woman’s beauty. In *The Coachman* overtly eastern modes are used to take the listener around Istanbul. The disc concludes with *Preludio de la Nostalgia* written for Papandreou by Leo Brouwer. It was inspired by a lullaby by Hadjidakis.

Every moment of this release is to be savored. Perfect recorded sound (surround sound if you have a SACD player) and notes that couldn’t be bettered.  
–Al Kunze

**Världid, Kristina. *5 Stages of Grief*. Works by Rak, Koshkin, Takemitsu, Vasks, and Schmitz. Simax Classics PSC 1393, 2023.**

The death of the brilliant Serbian guitarist Sabrina Vlaškalić in 2019 still has sad reverberations around the guitar world. She was one day shy of her thirtieth birthday. Among those most heavily impacted was her friend and hoped-for duet partner, Kristina Världid.

*5 Stages of Grief* is a powerful and touching tribute to her friend by a player also in the forefront of our field. It is organized around the stages of grief posited by the late Swiss psychiatrist Elisabeth Kübler-Ross. In the booklet the five pieces are portrayed alongside five pictures. The works Världid plays are all fine. The first is an ethereally beautiful *Tombeau for Sabrina* by Štěpán Rak. What follows is one of the most important recent additions to the repertoire, *Sonata* no. 2 by Nikita Koshkin. I heard it for the first time at a GFA festival, played by the formidable Rovshan Mamedkuliev. It struck me as a great piece at the time, and Världid’s powerful performance confirms that. The first movement is full of dramatic contrasts, rising to powerful emotional outbursts. The beginning of the second movement is more restrained but follows a pathway to an emotional high point before returning to the delicacy of the opening. The last movement begins with phrases of great drama, separated by ominous silences. Later incorporating passages of dramatic (and quite challenging sounding) counterpoint, it entails a dialog between overt and constrained passion. After this drama, the placidity of Takemitsu’s *In the Woods* provides necessary breathing space, very well played. Music is very important in the Baltic countries, and Latvian composer Pēteris Vasks is an example of this. His *Sonata of Loneliness* is more modernist than the earlier works, but succeeds in transforming the emotion of its title. Georg Schmitz is known as a leader of the Iserlohn

guitar festival, and his *Last Encores* would probably serve well in the purpose its title suggests.

Kristina Världid is a player equally able to supply tremendous delicacy or raw power as the music demands, and this disc is a fine tribute to her late friend. Recording is excellent as are the liner notes by Fabio Zanon.  
–Al Kunze

***Quick Takes*, by Al Kunze**

**Holloway, Collin. *A Musical Portrait*. Works by Brouwer, Agudelo, Ponce, Albéniz, and Gilardino. No label or number, ca. 2022.**

Collin Holloway introduces himself in *A Musical Portrait*. He begins nicely with the Brouwer arrangement of Ernesto Grenet’s “Drume negrita” (*Canción de cuna*). Ponce’s *Theme, Variations and Finale* is a highlight of the album. And if Albéniz’s *Cordoba* is a bridge too far, well, a number of much better-known players have suffered similar fates. The last work is *Ikonostas* by Angelo Gilardino, to whom the album is dedicated and with whom Holloway studied. It is in the late Italian master’s very approachable later style. Holloway plays it excellently, leading to a triumphant conclusion.

***Crossover***

**Color as Time (Joshua Stamper, guitar, with other collaborating artists). *Soma Schema*. Works by Stamper. Adhyāropa Records, no number, 2022.**

[Reviewer’s note: Color as Time have adopted a no-upper-case-letters policy, so all upper case letters are my additions.]

I’m not sure this belongs in *Soundboard*, but this impressive album of jazz/classical/experimental chamber music does involve the guitar of Joshua Stamper alongside a group of excellent collaborators playing a host of instruments. So I don’t know where to file this, but I’m glad I heard it. The names of the pieces are clever and wistful, including *Synapse Dispatch* and *Eardrum Thrum*. The guitar is most often prominent in brief interludes between larger and more ambitious works, but more prominent in the aptly named *Sotto Voce*. The recorded sound is good. I reviewed this from a preliminary copy, so I cannot comment on possible liner notes or presentation.



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