



newsletter

Volume 15, No. 4, June/August 2008

BCGS Open Board Meetings

Sunday, July 6, 3:00 p.m.

BCGS Open Board Meeting, location TBA.

Sunday, August 3, 3:00 p.m.

BCGS Open Board Meeting, location TBA.

Sunday, September 7, 3:00 p.m.

BCGS Open Board Meeting, location TBA.

Check bostonguitar.org for the latest details on upcoming board meetings.

*Board Meetings are open to the public.
All are invited.*

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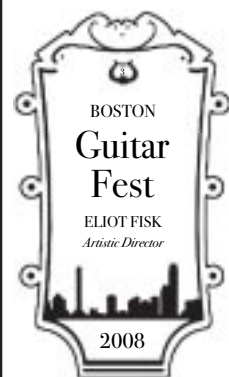
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... This Month ...



**NEW ENGLAND
CONSERVATORY**



Boston GuitarFest 2008

West Meets East "Occidente y Oriente"

An intense week of cultural & musical discovery.

JUNE 10 -15, 2008

Seminars | Concerts | Master Classes | Performance Competition

Boston GuitarFest 2008 is a concentrated guitar workshop consisting of concerts, master classes, workshops, lectures, and a guitar competition, attracting aficionados and professionals from around the world.

In 2008 our efforts will be centered on the theme West Meets East ("Occidente y Oriente") celebrating some of the great music born of the artistic currents which have flowed back and forth between east and west over the centuries. We will feature the music of Spain as a great example of the melding of contrasting cultures. Boston GuitarFest 2008 will also include music of Britten, Reich, Riley, and Takemitsu, and where appropriate, will also present the sources of this music in popular styles outside the classical music canon. We will make a special tribute to the life and work of Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco (1895-1968).

Boston GuitarFest is the dream of visionary guitar virtuoso Eliot Fisk. While the main focus is always on the classical guitar, the festival also aims to set the instrument within a broader musical, cultural and social context.

Competition

As an educational tool for those aspiring to a performance career, GuitarFest offers two competitions in a friendly, supportive environment. The Adult Competition spans the week, while the Youth Competition is on June 14. Consult our website for information about prizes, eligibility, and requirements. Please contact Dan Acsadi with additional questions at bostonguitar@hotmail.com.

Registration

Download an application at www.bostonguitarfest.org
Check our website for updates and deadline information.

Dan Acsadi, guitar (USA/Hungary)
Ricardo Gallén, guitar (Spain)
John Gibbons, harpsichord (USA)
Grigory Goryachev, guitar (Russia)
Adam Levin, guitar (USA)
Steve Lin, guitar (USA)
Cristina Pérez Madiedo, guitar (Cuba)
Zaira Meneses, guitar (Mexico/USA)

Jérôme Mouffe, guitar (Belgium)
Luis Orlandini, guitar (Chile)
Peter Row, sitar (USA)
Moisés Fernández Vía, piano (Spain)
Robert Ward, guitar (USA)
Wu Man, pipa (China)
and many more!



ELIOT FISK
Artistic Director



ANGEL ROMERO
Special Guest



Dominic Frasca



Ricardo Gallén



John Gibbons



Adam Holzman



Bruce Holzman



Luis Orlandini



Peter Row



Richard Savino



David Tancbaum



Wu Man



La Bella Strings is the official sponsor of Boston GuitarFest 2008

Anthony Paul De Ritis, Administrative Director
General Information: Margaret Ulmer 617-585-1126
mulmer@newenglandconservatory.edu

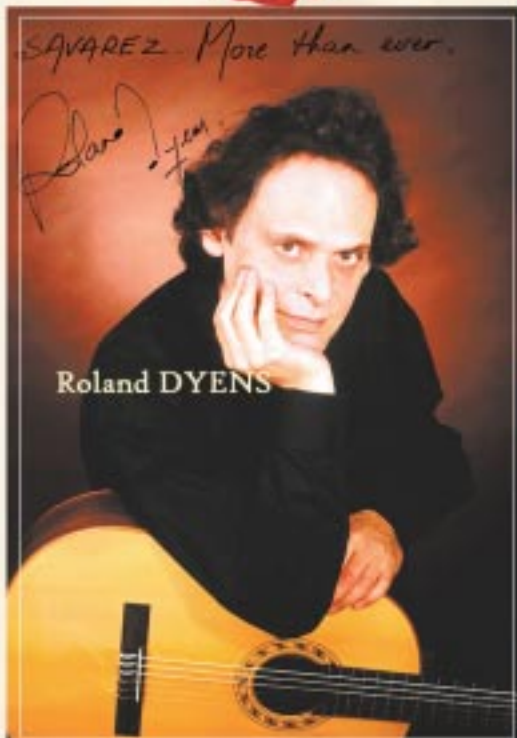
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Letter to Members

Dear Members,



It has been a great year for the Society and I thank you all for the encouragement I have received throughout the year. I especially want to thank all the volunteers who make this Society possible, our Board members, advertisers and foundations, as well as Nancy Knowles, Bob Ward and Northeastern University.

The BCGS has come a long way and I am proud of our accomplishments: a redesigned website contains more current information, an archive of old newsletters, PayPal buttons for membership, donations, and online ticket sales, concert pages with downloadable programs and posters as well as YouTube links. We received a grant from the D'Addario Musical Foundation and I am very pleased to announce that the Harvard Musical Association has recently given generous support to our sponsorship of the Boston GuitarFest Youth Competition. We produced our first CD and presented exceptional artists from Japan, Bulgaria, Turkey, Iran, Peru and America on our Artist Series and at the daylong BCGS New Music Festival in April. Membership is on the rise and donations have gone from only a few hundred dollars per year to nearly \$1500 this year. Including the wonderful free series run by George Ward at the Hingham Public Library, we had over 900 people attend events this year!

Let me share a few personal highlights: hearing Jorge Caballero play Scarlatti; meeting Sebastian (the skeleton) and his master, Jerald Harscher, with his wonderful body-centered approach to teaching; receiving dozens of raves about the New Music Festival and feeling the camaraderie throughout that day--during Glenn Kurtz's reading and discussion of his book *Practicing*, Bob Sullivan's stories about Dan Pinkham and during the many performances; talking with Eduardo Costa (a remarkably mature artist at the age of 23) and seven members of his audience about "presence" at dinner after his magnificent concert.

I am currently working on a lineup of exceptional artists for next season as well as negotiating with a corporate sponsor who may help make such a season possible. If you have the means, please consider making a special gift to the BCGS now so our coffers can support bringing the best to Boston.

I hope to see you at the Boston GuitarFest, which is offering all BCGS members a 10% discount for evening concerts or Day Passes.

Frank Wallace, *Artistic Director*

New Music Festival

Photos by Nancy Knowles



Atanas Ourkouzounov performing with Mie Ogura

Jerald Harscher with skeleton (Sebastian)



Jose Lezcano and students from Keene State College in master class with Atanas Ourkouzounov



Atanas teaching Annika Lueckebergfeld



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Boston GuitarFest III 2008: West Meets East “Occidente y Oriente”

By Dan Acsadi

Greetings! It is my pleasure to introduce you to Boston GuitarFest 2008! New England Conservatory and Northeastern University are pleased to announce the third Boston GuitarFest, June 10 –15, 2008 — West Meets East “Occidente y Oriente” — under the artistic direction of Eliot Fisk. GuitarFest 2008 is a concentrated guitar institute consisting of concerts, master classes, workshops, lectures, and a guitar competition, attracting aficionados and professionals from around the world.

For the first time, this year’s GuitarFest will be a joint venture of NEC and Northeastern University. Events will be held on the campuses of both institutions. La Bella Strings, manufacturer of acoustic, electric, flamenco, classical, bass and custom guitar strings, is the official sponsor of this year’s festival.

Guest artists include Ricardo Gallén, guitar (Spain); Luis Orlandini, guitar (Chile); Peter Row, sitar; Wu Man, pipa; Adam Holzman, guitar; Richard Savino, guitar; David Tanenbaum, guitar; John Gibbons, harpsichord; and the winners of last year’s Adult Competition.

The highlight of the festival will be a gala concert on Saturday, June 14, 2008 at 8:00 p.m., featuring world renowned guitarists Eliot Fisk and Angel Romero, at New England Conservatory’s Jordan Hall. Details for all events, and information for prospective participants, may be found at www.bostonguitarfest.org.

As an educational tool for those aspiring to a performance career, GuitarFest offers two competitions in a friendly, supportive environment. The Adult Competition spans the week, while the Youth Competition, co-sponsored by the Boston Classical Guitar Society, takes place on June 14.



Each individual registered as an “active student” will receive two (2) 45-minute master class lessons; every effort will be made to match your preferences. This year’s master class instructors include: Eliot Fisk, Adam Holzman, David Tanenbaum, Alex Dunn, Ricardo Gallén, Luis Orlandini and Dmitri Goryachev (lessons with Mr. Goryachev are private, one-on-one lessons). Early registration is recommended. A registration form is attached to this e-mail for your convenience.

Please direct your questions regarding registration to Margaret Ulmer at NEC, 617-585-1126, mulmer@newenglandconservatory.edu. Housing questions may be directed to Arthur Rishi at Northeastern University, 617-373-2671, a.rishi@neu.edu. For more information regarding the competitions, please contact me directly.

See you in June!

Sincerely,

Dan Acsadi

Director of Competitions, Boston GuitarFest
Membership Director, Boston Classical Guitar Society

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Calendar

PERFORMANCE PARTIES

Saturday, August 9, 2:00 p.m.

Thuy Wagner hosts a performance party at 40 Highland Avenue, #3, in Somerville, 617-699-2711.

Saturday, September 13, 2:00 p.m.

Robson Goulart hosts a performance party at 37 Wardwell Avenue in Lynn, 781-599-5151.

For information about hosting a performance party, contact Oscar.Azaret (JOscar.Azaret@lsi.com).

BCGS SPONSORED EVENTS

Saturday, June 14, Time TBA

Youth Competition at Boston GuitarFest 2008, New England Conservatory, Boston MA. Please visit the official site of the Boston GuitarFest 2008:

http://www.bostonguitarfest.org/2008/4_competition.html for details.

NEW ENGLAND EVENTS

Friday, May 30, 8:00 p.m.

New Lullabies & Dances: Four premieres of wonderful lullabies by four American composers, and works by Geroge Gershwin, Astor Piazzolla & Isaac Albéniz. Aaron Larget-Caplan, with Emil Altschuler –violin, Geoffrey Shamu – whistler, Josiah Altschuler – cello. Admission: \$15 adults; kids pay their age (12yrs = \$12); reserve by calling 617-947-1330. St. Paul's Church, 15 St. Paul St., Brookline, MA

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CONNOR GUITARS

Sunday, June 22, 7:00 p.m.

Summertime - Exotic Dances & Love Songs, Altschuler-Caplan Duo. Pieces by Piazzolla, Paganini, De Falla, Gershwin/Takemitsu, Schubert, J. Rodrigo, R. Dyens. \$10 donations, Taylor House, 50 Burroughs St., Jamaica Plain, 02130, www.taylorhouse.com.

Wednesday, June 25, 5:30 p.m.

Summertime - Exotic Dances & Love Songs, Altschuler-Caplan Duo. Pieces by Piazzolla, Paganini, De Falla, Massanet, Gershwin, Schubert, Rodrigo. Free admission. Church of St. John's the Evangelist, Beacon Hill, 35 Bowdoin Street, www.stjohnsbowdoinst.org.

Thursday, June 26, 8:00 p.m.

Summertime - Exotic Dances & Love Songs, Altschuler-Caplan Duo. Pieces by Piazzolla, Paganini, De Falla, Massanet, Gershwin, Schubert, Rodrigo. Admission: \$15 cash only, reservations preferred. Café St. Petersburg, 57 Union Street, Suite 1, Newton Center. www.cafestpetersburg.com, 617-467-3555 or 617-467-3133.

Tuesday, September 30, 12:00 p.m.

King's Chapel Music Series presents Ernesto Tamayo, guitar, in concert. King's Chapel, Boston MA.

Wednesday, October 1, 8:00 p.m.

Georgia Guitar Quartet perform at Bentley College, Waltham, MA.

WORKSHOPS AND FESTIVALS

Jun 10 – 15: Boston GuitarFest III 2008: West Meets East "Occidente y Oriente"

New England Conservatory and Northeastern University, Boston MA. Boston GuitarFest 2008 is a concentrated guitar workshop consisting of concerts, master classes, workshops, lectures, and a guitar competition, attracting aficionados and professionals from around the world.

In 2008 our efforts will be centered around the theme West Meets East ("Occidente y Oriente") celebrating some of the great music born of the artistic currents which have flowed back and forth between east and west over the centuries. We will feature the music of Spain as a great example of the melding of contrasting cultures. Boston GuitarFest 2008 will also include music of Britten, Reich, Riley, and Takemitsu, and where appropriate, will also present the sources of this music in popular styles outside the classical music canon. Finally, we will make a special tribute to the life and work of Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco (1895-1968). Go to <http://www.bostonguitarfest.org/> for details.

ONGOING EVENTS

Thursday evenings 7:00 - 10:00 p.m.

Eric Anthony performs classical guitar repertoire with emphasis on Spanish composers (Albeniz, Tarrega, Sor, Rodrigo, etc.) at the Tasca Spanish Tapas Restaurant, 1612 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, MA. Free valet parking, no cover charge. (617) 730-8002.

Every other Sunday 12:00 - 2:00 p.m., Sunday Brunch

John Bigelow performs on a unique eleven-string guitar, arrangements of classical repertoire from Milano to modern, with forays into Celtic, Blues, Bossa-Nova, etc. during Sunday brunch (excellent fare) at Veggie Planet, 47 Palmer Street, Cambridge, MA (same space as Passim's Club. For schedule info call Veggie Planet (617) 661-1513.

***** Advertising in the Calendar is free of charge *****

Send your listings to Frank Wallace at adbcs@gmail.com

Fourth String

At Sight

By Robert Margo

Sight reading is one of those incredibly useful basic skills of musicianship that many guitarists fail to develop properly or ignore more or less completely. Hand your average second-year college level string quartet an early work by Mozart they haven't seen before and I bet they can give a pretty fair rendition on the first try. Hand an analogous piece of guitar music (or even something simpler) to a second (or third or fourth) year guitar quartet and I'll wager even money the same won't happen.

Allegedly, the guitar is a very difficult instrument on which to sight read. This was Segovia's point of view (actually, I think Segovia's point of view was stronger than this). The reasoning here is that the guitar has multiple places to play most notes and the optimal fingering may not be apparent at first sight (see below about fingering). The only trouble with this argument is that, in the history of the guitar, there have been performers who were quite phenomenal at sight reading. Ida Presti, it is said, sight read the solo part to the Rodrigo "Fantasia" fluently. A professional guitarist and superb sight reader told me that a friend of his once watched Eliot Fisk put a score *upside down* on the music stand, and play it correctly (an urban legend, perhaps, but maybe not). And, of course, every guitarist knows that John Williams can play anything whatsoever correctly at first try. The composer Stephen Dodgson relates how he gave Williams a hand-written first draft of a score, chicken-scratch, more or less – and Williams played it, as they say, "just like the record". Ditto Julian Bream, another great sight reader. There are all those studio guitarists in LA making money sight reading every day. Even if one concedes that the guitar is more difficult on which to sight read than some instruments because of the multiple-places-to-play-a-note problem, this is also true of bowed string instruments, such as that second-year college string quartet.

How can one improve sight reading on guitar? First, learn the entire fingerboard – *all* of it. By "learn" I mean knowing, immediately, when you see a "c" on the page, where you can play it, not just "first fret, second string". Some guitarists think they know where all the notes are, but don't really – not up the neck. But it is up the neck where the knowledge is essential when you are sight reading. Second, know your rhythms. Some guitarists are rhythmically challenged. That is, they see a mixture of half, quarter, eighth and sixteenth notes on the page, interspersed with rests and ties, but don't know what the rhythm is supposed to sound like. Practice tapping out common (and uncommon) rhythmic patterns – on a table unless you like

leaving nail impressions on the soundboard of your guitar.

Third, develop your ability to prune as you go along. By prune, I mean leaving out notes on the fly that you just can't play right now. Usually, this happens on guitar when you have to play a multi-voiced chord. Leaving the stuff in the middle out will usually work – that is, keep the melody and bass going, and pick up the middle at the next opportunity. Of course, if you really know where all the notes are, you won't have to do this too often. Fourth, whatever happens, *don't stop*. Keep going, even if you make a mistake. Remember, you are sight reading, not trying to learn the music. To make it easier to keep going, choose a *very* moderate tempo – maybe half the performance tempo (or slower).

Fifth, look ahead. Paradoxically, you cannot sight read properly by trying to play the notes right in front of you while you are reading them. You must have already put the notes in front of you into your very short term memory before you play, because to keep going you must already be looking ahead in the score. Sixth, keep it simple. Don't worry about whether the fingering at the moment is the best possible fingering. Train yourself to pay *no attention* to the fingerings on the page that some other guitarist has supplied – they are a distraction.

Seventh, practice sight reading every day. Instead of working on "Leyenda" for the umpteenth time, pull out music you haven't seen before, and play it. It doesn't have to be guitar music—in fact, it's often better if it isn't (no fingerings). Indeed, a really good idea is to sight read the left-hand of a piece of piano music. Almost all of the time it will be in bass clef, which means you will have to learn how to read bass clef—a valuable (and scarce) skill on guitar, especially if you ever have to realize some figured bass or accompany a singer from the piano score she has just handed you. Eighth, most amateur guitarists try to play music that is too difficult for them (this is certainly one of my faults). A good rule of thumb is, if you cannot hit around 75-80 percent of the notes correctly while sight reading at a slow to moderate tempo, the piece is too difficult for you. If you are new at sight reading or pretty rusty, try single lines first. After all, if you cannot play a single line correctly at sight, you cannot possibly play two (or more) voices correctly.

Last and most important practice sight reading with other people. Indeed, one of the reasons that guitarists often have great difficulty in ensemble is that they spend all their practice time playing solo guitar music. Music is meant to be played with other people. If you can, join your local guitar orchestra or (even better) mandolin orchestra. That way you will learn how to play with a conductor, another useful skill.

Classifieds

Classifieds are \$10 per issue of the BCGS newsletter for a 32-word ad, and \$0.25 for each additional word. The fee includes posting on bostonguitar.org. Send inquiries to c.carrano@comcast.net; send checks to BCGS, P.O. Box 470665, Brookline, MA 02447.

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