

Letter to Members



Dear Members,

With a combined sense of sadness and relief, I will be relinquishing the title of artistic director at the end of the 97-98 season. When I assumed the role three seasons ago, it was with some trepidation. But I also had a strong

desire to sustain the momentum the society gained under the leadership of Berit Strong. It's been an honor to hold this position, and I hope that I have lived up to the expectations of the members.

There are a few accomplishments that I would like to be remembered for. Badi Assad's concert had the biggest audience of any BCGS event that I am aware of. Our first significant effort to apply for funds from both public and private grant foundations was a success. We were also able to overhaul procedures for keeping track of memberships and collect dues on an annual basis.

The luckiest break I got was when Gloria Vachino and George Ward both came on board as BCGS volunteers and double-handedly took over publishing the newsletter. We now have what is arguably the finest newsletter of any guitar society in the USA. The best part of the job, without question, was getting to interact with many of the world's finest guitarists. For this, I am full of envy for my successors.

Recent changes in my life have left me with less time than the job deserves, and I'm confident that the new directors will continue to make the BCGS the best organization possible. I wish the very best for the two individuals who, together, will take on the leadership: Gloria Vachino as executive director and Glorianne Collver-Jacobson as artistic director.

-Steve Terry-

Mark Your Calendars and Get Ready for Spring 1998!

CONCERTS

Sunday, April 5, 3:00 p.m.

BCGS sponsors The Virtual Consort at the First Church, Unitarian Universalist, Jamaica Plain. See page 2 for biographical profiles and the insert page Flyer for full details on this concert.

Sunday, May 3, 4:00 p.m.

BCGS and MIT co-sponsor Jad Azkoul at MIT's Killian Hall, Cambridge. See page 3 for Jad Azkoul's biography.

Saturday, June 6, 7:30 p.m.

BCGS sponsors Duo LiveOak at the Friends Meetinghouse, 5 Longfellow Park, Cambridge. More information on this event will be available in the next newsletter.

ALSO OF NOTE

Saturday, March 28, 1:30 p.m.

Jorge Caballero, first-place winner of the Naumberg Competition, performs at The Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston. BCGS members are being offered free tickets to this event! See page 3 for more information.

MASTERCLASS

Saturday, May 2

BCGS and The Boston Conservatory co-host a Masterclass by Jad Azkoul at The Boston Conservatory, 8 The Fenway, Boston. More details will be sent out in April.

Interested BCGS members are invited to audition for the masterclass. To find out more about the application procedure and fee and suggested repertory for the masterclass call 781-224-4203. Send tapes (with music of your own choice) to Glorianne Collver-Jacobson, 14 King St., Lexington MA 02173 by April 1.

(Continued on page 2)

Contents

	Page
Biographical Profiles.....	2,3
The Society Speaks (new feature column)	4,5
Calendar	6,7
Perspectives.....	9,10
Classifieds	11
The Virtual Consort in Concert	Insert Page

Mark Your Calendars, *continued*

ATTENTION ALL TEACHERS!

The Teacher List will run in the next newsletter. If your profiles need to be updated, please send your new information by April 1 to Gloria Vachino, 196 Broadway, Wakefield MA 01880 or to Glorv@worldnet.att.net (please note this new email address).

CHECK OUT BCGS'S NEW WEBSITE

<http://home.att.net/~glorv/BCGS.html>

The WebSite is being maintained by Bill Glenn and new BCGS member Charlie Carrano.

The Virtual Consort- Biographical Profiles



Left to right:
Charlie Schneeweis
Peter Blanchette
Jean Chaine

Peter Blanchette is the innovator responsible for the flourishing "multi-string guitar" scene in the US today. Since the early 80's through his half dozen recordings of mostly early music, (Medieval to Haydn), and performances in two dozen countries, Blanchette has singled-handedly created a substantial new repertoire for the guitarist. Developed with Boston area luthier Walter Stanul, the expanded range eleven string instrument enables Blanchette to do things most guitar duos can't. The number of "archguitar" (Blanchette's word) players is growing steadily, with devotees in Europe, North America and Asia. His playing of Bach prompted the Danish critic Jorgen Falck to call

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him, "One of the most important guitar players in the world today." Blanchette is also a composer/arranger whose recent work won him a top prize in the 1995 Massachusetts Cultural Council's Artist Grant competition. Writing in *Soundboard*, David Harris advised listeners to; "get his records and hold on to your hat!"

Charlie Schneeweis is a Minnesota native, who now performs as a trumpet player and vocalist in a variety of Northeast based jazz, rock and blues combos. He's been lead trumpeter with the Gene Pitney Orchestra since 1988, and has performed with notables The Four Tops, and Ben E. King. With these and other groups Charlie has performed in Carnegie Hall, The Wang Center, the Sahara Tahoe, Park West Chicago and First Ave. Minneapolis. He is an organizing member of the Crops Music Collective, which can be heard on the Atomic Theory Records album, *The Crops* (1988) as well as the Crops second album *Wipe Hands on Pants* (1990), for which Charlie's masterful horn arrangements won enthusiastic critical praise.

Jean Chaine began his career when he hooked up with drummer/vocalist David Moss and the eccentric New York avant-rockers Dense Band, taking the place of bassist Fred Frith. After touring and recording in US and Europe, Jean joined forces with John King's Electric World, completing a rhythm section including Bernie Worrell, Zeena Parkins, Rashid Ali, Wayne Horvitz, Andrew Cyrille, Abe Speller (Sonny Sharrock Band), and Terry Silverlight. Jean is still in the New York scene playing the bottom with Gods and Monsters, ex-Captain Beefheart guitar wizard Gary Lucas' brainchild. Teamed with drummer Jonathan Kane, they provide the rocket fuel for Gary's intergalactic flights. Recent engagements include performances at Lincoln Center, Whitney Museum of American Art, The Knitting Factory- all in NYC- and at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Arhus Percussion Festival, (Denmark) Berlin Jazz Festival, and dozens of other festivals in the USA, Canada and Europe. Jean has released four albums of his own music, *Those Incredible Shamen*, *Distant Suns*, *The Dancing Man*, and his latest, *Sunk In The Sun*. He tours with his own band as well as with Virtual Consort.



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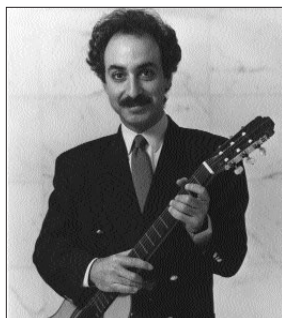
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Jad Azkoul



A former teaching assistant of Abel Carlevaro, Jad Azkoul is a proponent of the Carlevaro style advocating purity of tone without the accompanying unpleasant noises characteristic of the guitar. Cultivated by his experience with the *Alexander Technique* and his earned MA in psychology from the American University of Beirut, an intimate bond between body

movement and musical interpretation is central to his approach.

Jad Azkoul has studied in Australia, Europe, Asia, and North and South America with notable guitarists including Alexandre Lagoya, Nadia Boulanger, and Abel Carlevaro. He has studied composition and arranging at Berklee College of Music in Boston and interpretation with Guido Santorsola in Uruguay. Jad Azkoul speaks several languages and has translated instructional works of Abel Carlevaro into English and French. Honors he has achieved include the Order of the Cedar, awarded by the President of Lebanon in recognition of artistic merit and achievement, the Affiliate Artists Award (New York), and grants from the governments of France and Uruguay. He has been featured at the Festival Estival de Paris, the Menton and Monflanquin Festivals (France) and the Jerash Festival (Jordan), and has performed in additional festivals including the Guitar Foundation of America (USA), Kraków (Poland), Voronezh (Russia), Montreux (Switzerland), and Ezstergom (Hungary). He holds international master classes on a regular basis and has taught at universities in the US, Lebanon, and Switzerland.

Jad Azkoul's CD *Latin Illustrations for Guitar* (on the French label Forlane) featuring the works of Augustín Barrios, Abel Carlevaro, Lourival Silvestre, and Villa Lobos has been widely acclaimed for its lyrical phrasing, a rich, pure tone and musically intelligent variations in dynamics. Both the recordings and performances of Jad Azkoul reflect his solid technique, mastery of sonic variation, and ability to project a well defined melody

Jorge Caballero



On Saturday, March 28, at 1:30 p.m., Naumberg Guitar Competition winner Jorge Caballero will perform at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in the *Young Artists Showcase*. Music Director Scott Nickrenz would like to offer all members of the Boston Classical Guitar Society a pair of complimentary tickets to this exceptional concert. To obtain free tickets, call the Music Coordinator

at (617) 278-5150 and leave your full name, address, and phone number. Please allow one week for the mailing of tickets. Caballero's program will include works by Milano, Bach, Paganini, Barrios, Carter, and Castelnuovo-Tedesco.

A native of Peru, Jorge Caballero has gained international recognition as an outstanding musical talent. He began his musical studies at age ten with Oscar Zamora and later studied with David Starobin at the Manhattan School of Music. In 1991, Caballero was unanimously awarded first prize at the First Latin American Guitar Competition in Montevideo, Uruguay. As the first guitarist to win the Naumberg Competition, Caballero has been touring throughout the USA debuting at Alice Tully Hall, Merkin Concert Hall, the Library of Congress, the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts, and the Frick Art Museum.

The Walter W. Naumberg Foundation continues in the pursuit of ideals set out by Walter Naumberg. His desire to assist young gifted musicians in America has made possible a long-standing program of competitions and awards in solo and chamber music performance, composer recordings, and conducting. It was Naumberg's firm belief that such competitions were not only for the benefit of new stars, but very much for those talented young artists who would become prime movers in the development of the highest standards of musical excellence.

The Gardner Museum continues Isabella Stewart Gardner's musical legacy by offering nearly sixty concerts to the public (September-May) in the *Sunday Concert Series*, *Young Artists Showcase*, and *Jazz at the Gardner*. The *Sunday Concert Series* features world-renowned musicians and residencies by several outstanding chamber music ensembles like Musicians from Marlboro and the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. The *Young Artists Showcase* spotlights extremely talented young musicians at the beginning of their careers. *Jazz at the Gardner*, a part of the *Young Artists Showcase*, brings jazz musicians from the local area into the Museum on the first Saturday of every month. For recorded concert information, please call (617) 734-1359. To receive a concert schedule, please call (617) 278-5150.

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The Society Speaks

With this issue, the newsletter begins featuring a new column that will spotlight members' opinions on a variety of topics. The success and continuation of this column depend, of course, on input from members. However, judging by the enthusiastic response to the first survey (conducted by email) this column will likely be featured on a regular basis! Surveys are open to everyone and ALL members are invited to participate. The topic for the next survey is presented at the end of this page.

String Survey:

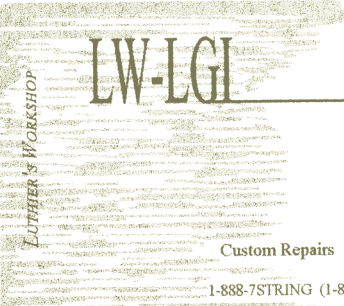
The comments provided below were made in response to the following questions.

- 1) Which brand of strings do you use and why?
- 2) Describe the types of strings (brand-name, tension, etc.) you have tested and comment on their pros and cons.
- 3) Given the assortment of brands on the market today, what factors should a guitar player consider when purchasing strings?
- 4) Other comments?

I use LaBella 2001, medium tension. Although people say they have a bright sound, I find that they make my guitar sound richer. They also last a very long time. My next favorite after LaBella is Hannabach. I've tried several varieties. They all have great sounds, but they're expensive and I found that the trebles got scratched and frayed unless my nails were perfectly smooth.

Both D'Addario and Augustine come from companies that have given a lot to the guitar community, so I always recommend that people at least try these strings. However, I have found Augustines to be of uneven quality in the past. Maybe they're better now. D'Addarios are consistent, but sound rather plain on my guitar. Both brands have the advantages of wide availability and low price. The most important factor, however, is the sound on the particular instrument in question.

Next to price, longevity should be taken into account. Finally, the reputation and corporate citizenship of the company should be considered. *Larry Spencer*



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I have tried many different brands and gauges of strings for 30 years. I have tested La Bella, Aranjuez, GHS and Concert Classic from Martin, but keep coming back to the D'Addario, Pro-Arte J46 hard tension. They sound really good, give the brightness I like, and also last longer than other brands. Lately I have experimented with the new D'Addario strings, which use a compound "polymer" instead of nylon on the third through sixth strings. These are guaranteed to last 2 -3 times longer than regular strings. But after trying these, I found that after just a few days they sounded too "thin".

Other strings I have tried include Augustine, which sound good but die quickly: after a week they sound too mellow and lack brightness. Some strings like GHS never settle, keep on stretching and are constantly out of tune.

I strongly believe the choice of guitar string is subjective; some people like hard tension, others like light! Personally, I look for a string which offers brightness, complements my instrument and is affordable. I also look for duration as I want my strings to last at least three or four weeks. *Maurice Cahen*

I personally use either LaBella 2001 or Savarez strings. They give a sharp clear bass which I like. Hannabach strings are slipperier than others, especially on the trebles. They also seem a little thicker at a given tension. D'Addario strings are a standard of the industry, but I find the D string a bit too dull sounding. The new composites are interesting because the G string differs. They have a brittle sound which sounds better on Bach than Villa Lobos. Augustine has several different versions of strings which are good except they are too easily broken, especially the D. Also, the trebles may pull through the bridge because they are slippery, and must be knotted at the tieblock to prevent a bad ding on the top when they slip.

I've always found it difficult to recommend strings to someone although generally, I suggest trying different brands until they find the best one for their guitar. The most difficult choice is tension. The guitar is louder and more resonant the higher the tension, but is also more difficult to play.

Strings go bad because the oil and sluffed off skin from your fingers clog the windings on the bass strings. Since strings are relatively inexpensive in comparison to a good guitar, it makes sense to change them frequently—every month to six weeks if you play every day. Otherwise, nuances of tone are lost. Treble strings last longer than bass strings. At the Luthier's Workshop, I have a good selection of sets and bass strings sold separately. *Tom Knatt*

I use LaBella 2001 medium hard tension strings. Several years ago, I was given a set by New York guitarist Michael Cedric Smith. For me, they possess the best balance of the following attributes: sound quality, consistency from set to set, longevity

and value. I have used D'Addario Pro-Arte and the new composite strings, Hannabach, Augustine, Aranjuez and Savarez.

String selection is as subjective as choice of guitars and each guitar may respond differently to a given set of strings. Whenever I get a new guitar I try a variety of strings until I find the one that seems most suitable to me. *Anonymous*

I use D'Addario medium tension or sometimes Savarez Alliance. I use the D'Addario because I've been fairly satisfied with tone quality, and I used the Savarez Alliance because my teacher recommended them.

Savarez Alliance project quite well, but the tone is a bit harsh sometimes. I've also used a brand called Luthier (sold by a New York-based company), but I haven't seen them in stores around here. They have very sweet-sounding treble strings. I've never used high tension although it's been recommended to me to do so.

I consider tone quality first because that is most important to me. I think players should also consider how long strings will last, if possible, and how particular strings interact with their own guitar. I guess money is always an issue, but I'd rather pay a bit more if the sound is better. *Anonymous*

I have been happy with D'Addario J45 strings, which were recommended to me by my teacher. They sound reasonably warm, yet clear. *Anonymous*



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I prefer LaBella 2001, medium or high tension, for my big, loud guitar, and Savarez Alliance high tension for a small guitar. In any case, for classical music (as opposed to flamenco) it's important that the trebles are polished, not matted. Otherwise, there's too much squeaking.

I find that, generally, LaBella and D'Addario J45 or J46 are of equal quality: they wear similarly and sound alike. Savarez are much thinner and have a higher tension, so it makes sense to use a Savarez third if you want a little more punch. They are also better for a light guitar with a shorter scale. *Igor Golger*

I experiment a lot, but usually buy D'Addario Pro Arte. The tension varies with the action of the guitar I happen to be playing — generally, the lower the action, the higher the tension. However, at the moment I am settling on normal tension for all of my guitars because this gives the best results in terms of consistency of sound between plucked tones and slurs (a big consideration, in my view). At various times I have used Augustine (Imperials or Regals) and Savarez, but I get the best results with D'Addario. I have also tried Hannabach (about average), GSP (same as Hannabach) and various expensive German brands.

It is my understanding that a much smaller number of plants actually make the strings, which are then marketed under different names. So, a bigger consideration than brand name for me is really tension; also whether the trebles are "rectified" (which I don't like); how long the bass strings will last (generally, not very long for Augustine); whether the treble strings will be true (mostly the first or third strings. The first string is often a problem with Augustines).

"Composite" trebles are the latest thing (composite refers to high-tech materials other than nylon) because they permit much thinner third strings. So far the ones I have tried I haven't liked, but this could be because I'm not used to a thinner third string. *Robert Margo*

For the next survey, footstools, thigh cushions and A-frames will be the focus of discussion.

- 1) Which of the above have you tried, and which (if any) do you currently use?**
- 2) What factors led you to your final choice- comfort? ergonomics? ease of playing?**
- 3) Comment on the pros and cons of each.**

Responses to this survey can be made by answering each question individually or by commenting in paragraph form.

Please indicate whether you wish to include your name with your response or prefer to comment anonymously.

**Send to: Gloria Vachino, 196 Broadway, Wakefield, MA 01880
or email Glorv@worldnet.att.net
Please note the new email address.**

Deadline is April 1.

C * a * l * e * n * d * a * r

BCGS OPEN BOARD MEETING:

SUNDAY, MARCH 15, 2:00 P.M.

Glorianne Collver-Jacobson, 14 King St., Lexington.
Call (781) 863-9652. These meetings are open to everyone!

BCGS-SPONSORED EVENTS:

SUNDAY, APRIL 5, 3:00 P.M.

The Virtual Consort performs at the First Church, Unitarian Universalist, Jamaica Plain at the corner of Eliot and Centre Streets. Via public transportation: Forest Hills buses No. 39 or No. 40 and Jackson Centre St. bus No. 41. Admission: \$12 general/\$8 BCGS members.

SATURDAY, MAY 2

BCGS and The Boston Conservatory co-host a Masterclass by Jad Azkoul at The Boston Conservatory, 8 The Fenway, Boston. More details will be available in April.

SUNDAY, MAY 3, 4:00 P.M.

BCGS and MIT co-sponsor Jad Azkoul at MIT in Killian Hall (Rm. 14W-111) in the Hayden Library Building, 160 Memorial Drive, Cambridge. Call (617) 253-2906.

SATURDAY, JUNE 6, 7:30 P.M.

Duo LiveOak performs at the Friends Meetinghouse at 5 Longfellow Park, Cambridge. More details will be available in the next newsletter.

DISCOUNTED FOR BCGS MEMBERS:

SATURDAY, MARCH 28, 1:30 P.M.

Jorge Caballero performs at The Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum as part of the Young Artists showcase. BCGS members are being offered free tickets. Call the Music Coordinator at (617) 278-5150 at least one week in advance to receive your tickets. The Museum is located at 280 The Fenway, Boston.

PERFORMANCE PARTIES

SATURDAY, MARCH 14, 2:00 P.M.

Steve Terry, 186 Arbor Way, Jamaica Plain. RSVP at (617) 983-9588.

SATURDAY, APRIL 25, 2:00 P.M.

Carl Kamp of Union Music will host a gathering in his shop at 142 Southbridge St., Worcester. Call (508) 753-3702. Directions: take the Auburn exit off the Mass Pike onto 290 East. Take exit 13 and turn left at end of exit ramp. Drive across Kelley Square continuing straight onto Rte. 122/Madison St.. Drive 1/2 mile to Southbridge St. Take a left. Union Music is the third building on the left.

NEW ENGLAND AREA CALENDAR EVENTS:

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11, 3:00 P.M.

John Muratore performs the music of Bach, Rodrigo, Orbon at the Stevens Auditorium at Merrimack College. Call (978) 837-5256. Admission is free.

SATURDAY, MARCH 14, 8:00 P.M.

Sol y Canto Trio plays at the Crossroads Coffeehouse (North Parish Unitarian Church, 190 Academy Road) in North Andover. Call (978) 474-9195 or 681-7856.

SUNDAY, MARCH 15, 5:00 P.M.

Berit Strong will appear in a faculty recital and perform an all Spanish Program including works by Barrios, Garoto, Milan and Pena at Indian Hill Arts, 36 King St., Littleton, Ma. Tickets: \$15 for public, \$5 for IHA members. For further info. please call (978) 486-9524 during business hrs.

FRIDAY, MARCH 20, 11:00 A.M.

"Con Brio" Series at All Newton Music School presents John Muratore in a performance/lecture spotlighting the music of Spain. Luncheon follows performance. 321 Chestnut St., W. Newton, MA. Tickets \$15. For more info. call (617) 527-4553.

FRIDAY, MARCH 20, 8:00 P.M.

Sol y Canto Trio (Rosi & Brian Amador with special guest from Puerto Rico, Alan del Castillo) perform on traditional instruments at the El Tremedal Coffeehouse, St. John's Methodist Church, 80 Mount Auburn St. Watertown. Call (617) 924-3795.

SATURDAY, MARCH 21, 8:00 P.M.

Sol y Canto Trio (see 3/20/98) at South Acton Congregational Church Coffeehouse, 33 School St., Acton, MA.

SUNDAY, MARCH 22, 2:00 P.M.

Showcase Concert for the Connecticut Classical Guitar Society at the Connecticut Historical Society, 1 Elizabeth St., Hartford. For more information call (860) 249-7041. Tickets \$10/Free to members.

SUNDAY, MARCH 22, 3:00 P.M.

Berit Strong will appear in a faculty recital at Bridgewater State college, Horace Mann Auditorium (Boyden Hall) at the main campus in Bridgewater, Mass. This is part of the Sixth Annual Spring Sinfonia new Music concert. Works will include Machado, Slavskii, and Villa-Lobos. Concert is free and wheelchair accessible. Call (508) 697-1377.

SUNDAY, MARCH 22, 7:00 P.M.

Paco de Lucia Sextet at Symphony Hall. Presented by World Music (617) 876-4275, email: worldmus@star.net. Tickets: \$37, \$32, \$28.

SUNDAY, MARCH 22, 2:00 & 3:30 P.M.

Family Shows with Sol y Canto Trio (see 3/20/98) at the Fitchburg Public Library, 610 Main St., Fitchburg. Call (508) 665-3709.

THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 12:00 NOON

Sol y Canto Trio (see 3/20/98) at Mechanics Hall, Worcester, MA. Call (508) 752-0700. Presented by WICN Radio.

FRIDAY, MARCH 27, 8:00 P.M.

John Zaradin performs the music of Franz Lehar and others at the Harvey Wheeler Community Center, 1276 Main St., West Concord, MA. Call (781) 894-4292.

SATURDAY, MARCH 28, 1:30 P.M.

Jorge Caballero performs at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum as part of the Young Artists Series. Admission free for BCGS members. Advanced tickets required. Call (617) 278-5150.

SATURDAY, MARCH 28, 8:00 P.M.

Olav Chris Henriksen (lute and Baroque guitar) and Carol Lewis (viola da gamba) perform Sagas: Music from the Danish-Norwegian Court with music by J. Dowland, N. Diesel and premiere of Daniel Pinkham's "Sagas" for lute and viola da gamba at the Boston Conservatory Concert Hall, 8 The Fenway, Boston, MA. Call (617) 536-6340.

SATURDAY, MARCH 28, 8:00 P.M.

Sol y Canto Duo at TriWorks Coffeehouse in New Bedford, MA. (508) 994-9719.

THURSDAY, APRIL 2, 12:00 NOON

John Muratore (solo guitar) at MIT Chapel, 77 Mass. Ave., Cambridge. Admission free. (617) 253-2906.

THURSDAY, APRIL 2, 8:00 P.M.

Thomas Noren (guitar) and Fernando Brandao (flute) with the New World Guitar Trio perform a faculty recital at the Longy School of Music in Pickman Hall. Call (617) 876 -0956.

SATURDAY, APRIL 4, 8:00 P.M.

Olav Chris Henriksen (lutes), Carol Lewis, Emily Walhout, Roland Hutchinson, and Janet Haas (viols) perform a special concert: Rex Splendens: Music from the Court of Christian IV of Denmark with music for viol consort by Dowland, Brade, Simpson, others at the Somerville Museum, Central St. at Westwood Road, Somerville. Call (617) 666-9810. Admission: \$12/\$8.

SUNDAY, APRIL 5, 9:00 A.M.-4:30 P.M.

Viola da Gamba Society-New England Spring Workshop at the University of Massachusetts, Boston. Music from the Court of Christian IV of Denmark. Olav Chris Henriksen and Carol Lewis, organizers. Lecture by Olav Chris Henriksen on viols and lutes at the court of Christian IV. Call (617) 484-5676.

SUNDAY, APRIL 5, 3:00 P.M.

BCGS sponsors a concert by The Virtual Consort at the First Church, Unitarian Universalist, Jamaica Plain at the corner of Eliot and Centre Streets. Via public transp.: Forest Hills buses No. 39 or No. 40 and Jackson Centre St. bus No. 41. Adm.: \$12 general/\$8 BCGS members.

FRIDAY, APRIL 17, 8:00 P.M.

The Harp Consort featuring Andrew Lawrence-King (director, Spanish double harp, psalter), Rodrigo del Pozo (voice, guitar), Steve Player (guitar, gaitas, dancer), Pedro Estevan (percussion), Hille Perl (viola da gamba, lirone), Paul O'dette (vihuela, guitar) performs Luz Y Norte: Dances, fantasias, and ballads from Spain, South America, Italy and Africa at The Great Hall at Faneuil Hall Marketplace. Presented by the Boston Early Music Festival. Tickets range from \$15 to \$32. Call (617) 661-1812.

FRIDAY, APRIL 17, 8:00 P.M.

Thomas Noren (guitar) and Fernando Brandao (flute) perform at the Prince recital Hall at Gordon College, Wenham MA. Call (508) 927-2306 ext 4364.

SATURDAY, APRIL 18, 8:00 P.M.

Paco Pena performs Misa Flamenca at Symphony Hall. Presented by World Music (617) 876-4275, email: worldmus@star.net. Tickets: \$37, \$32, \$28.

TUESDAY, APRIL 21, 12:00 NOON

Duo Maresienne: Olav Chris Henriksen (theorbo and Baroque guitar) and Carol Lewis (bass viol and pardessus de viole) perform From Lowest to Highest with music by Marais, de Visee, Porre, others at Kings Chapel, Boston, MA.

SATURDAY, APRIL 25, 8:00 P.M.

Sergio and Odair Assad perform for the Connecticut Classical Guitar Society at South Congregational Church, 277 Main St., Hartford. For more information call (860) 249-7041. Tickets: \$20/\$15 for guitar society members.

SATURDAY, APRIL 25, 8:00 P.M.

Duo Maresienne: Olav Chris Henriksen (theorbo and Baroque guitar) and Carol Lewis (bass viol and pardessus de viole) perform Music for Viols and Friends IV: From Lowest to Highest (see 4/21/98 program), Lindsay Chapel, First Church in Cambridge Congregational, 11 Garden St., Cambridge. Call (617) 776-8688. Admission: \$12/\$8.

SUNDAY, APRIL 26, 3:00 P.M.

Duo Maresienne: Olav Chris Henriksen (theorbo and Baroque guitar) and Carol Lewis (bass viol and pardessus de viole) perform The Somerville Museum Concert IV: From Lowest to Highest (see 4/21/98 program), at the Somerville Museum, Central St. at Westwood Road, Somerville. Call (617) 666-9810. Admission: \$9/\$6.

SUNDAY, APRIL 26, 6:00 P.M.

New World Guitar Trio at the Prince recital Hall at Gordon College, Wenham MA. Call (508) 927-2306 ext. 4364.

THURSDAY, APRIL 30, 12:00 NOON

Glorianne Collver-Jacobson performs Brazilian Guitar Music featuring works of Paulo Bellinati and others at MIT Chapel. Call (617) 253-2906.

FRIDAY, MAY 1, 7:00 P.M.

Paul Cortese performs a faculty recital at the Community Music Center of Boston, 34 Warren Avenue, Boston (behind the Boston Center for the Arts). For more information call (508) 879-3508 or (617) 482-7494. Admission is free.

SATURDAY, MAY 2

Jad Azkoul teaches a masterclass at The Boston Conservatory. See above under BCGS-sponsored events.

SUNDAY, MAY, 3:00 P.M.

Dartmouth College "Chamberworks" Series presents "Crossings" with John Muratore and David Newsam (guitars), Alex Ogle (flute), Fred Haas (saxo-

phone and piano). Program will explore common ground between jazz and classical music. Works by Brouwer, Machado, Brubeck and others. Rollins Chapel, Dartmouth College. For more information call (603)-646-2422.

SUNDAY, MAY 3, 4:00 P.M.

BCGS and MIT co-sponsor Jad Azkoul at MIT in Killian Hall (Rm. 14W-111) in the Hayden Library Building, 160 Memorial Drive, Cambridge. Call (617) 253-2906.

SATURDAY, MAY 16, 8:00 P.M.

John Muratore, soloist with Symphony by the Sea, performs Rodrigo's Concierto de Aranjuez. Wiggin Auditorium, Peabody City Hall, Peabody. Tickets \$18, \$15 and \$10 student.

SATURDAY, JUNE 6, 7:30 P.M.

BCGS sponsors Duo LiveOak at the Friends Meetinghouse at 5 Longfellow Park, Cambridge.

SUNDAY, JUNE 7, 3:00 P.M.

New World Guitar Trio at the New School of Music, Lowell St., Cambridge.

ONGOING EVENTS**THURSDAY EVENINGS 7:00-10:00 P.M.**

Eric Anthony performs classical guitar, including works by Albeniz, Tarrega, Sor and Rodrigo etc., at the Tasca Spanish Tapas Restaurant, 1612 Commonwealth Ave., Boston MA. Free valet parking, no cover charge. (617) 730-8002.

WORKSHOPS**APRIL 24-26 (5:00 P.M. FRIDAY-5:00 P.M. SUNDAY)**

Frank Wallace is holding a workshop in his home for teenage guitar players, including a masterclass, private lessons, performance sessions, etc. Fee is \$150 for the entire weekend. 75 Bridle Road, Antrim, NH 03440, (603) 588-6121.

JUNE 17-21

Manuel Barrueco teaches a masterclass at The Peabody Conservatory, Baltimore MD. Fee for active students: \$400, auditors: \$100. Call (410) 252-1776 or email Asgerdur@Barrueco.com

JULY 20-JULY 25

Frank Wallace and Nancy Knowles are holding a workshop for teenagers on guitar playing and singing. Accommodations will be provided. Fee is \$400, \$100 deposit due in early June. 75 Bridle Road, Antrim, NH 03440, (603) 588-6121

* * *

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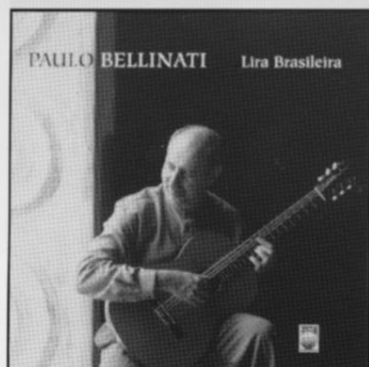
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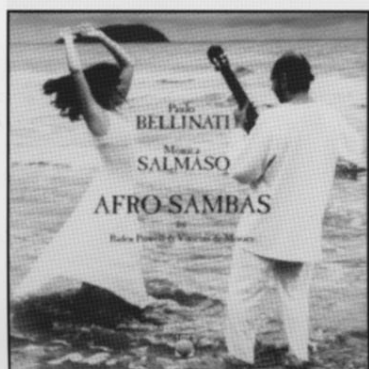
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Perspectives

Back to Basics With David Russell

as told to Mark Small

David Russell is highly regarded in the guitar world for his pristine technique and musical sensitivity. In a recent conversation, he stated emphatically that he was no child prodigy and that his technique made a quantum leap between the ages of 20 and 24. He worked meticulously on the basics then to enhance muscle memory. This is the type of work that he says *must* be done by anyone hoping to be a professional guitarist. "Players with the best technique have fabulous muscle memory," Russell says. "That means they play something once and can remember how to do it again the next time. Those with less technique have less perfect muscle memory. When they repeat a hand movement, it doesn't come out the same way. Some people who don't play very well may do a trill beautifully once, but they may need 50 tries to get it that once. That means they forgot how to do it 49 times and remembered once."

The top players practice very well and less proficient players often practice badly, Russell explained. He feels that every time you execute a passage poorly, you are sending erroneous information to your brain. If you find that you are consistently playing something badly, he recommends that you stop immediately, analyze the problem, and learn how to play it correctly. Ultimately, this will send the proper message from the brain to the fingers. The great guitarists practice almost perfectly he maintains, letting nothing that is unclear or technically dirty go by.

Russell described how slow practicing is only one component in solving technique problems. Ultimately you have to get the passage up to speed. "Playing slowly, you use slow muscles which is not going to help you to go fast," he says. "You can go slowly and pluck with only your index finger, but that is not going to do you any good for the final result. You have to learn how to go fast without doing it wrong. You can be fast and perfect in small bits. If you have a big long scale run, tension can build up. If you make the passage but your neck muscles are bursting, you have done it wrong."

Russell recommends combining fast and slow practice methods. "You have to learn something slowly at first, and then bring it up to speed three, four, or five notes at a time," he says. "Make sure that each change or shift can be done at full speed. If not, you have to go back and do pure technique practice to learn what is preventing this. Almost always there are between 10 and 20 very basic movements [in a piece]. Complications are usually combinations of the basic movements. If you don't get the stepping stones right, you are never going to play the passage correctly. A ballet dancer doesn't suddenly go out on stage and do the complete *Swan Lake*. He or she works on all of the basic movements until they become pure habit so that when the body is asked to do a pirouette, it is there."

"When I am practicing, I spend about half an hour doing warm-up studies. Half of it is reconfirming things that I already know

how to do. I need to go over them so that I don't get into bad habits. I would recommend spending some time with the right hand doing the simplest plucking action with each finger. Make sure your nails are shaped right and you are producing a beautiful tone. Then start alternating *i m*, *i m*, then *m i*, *m i*. It is just like learning to walk. Then *m i m*, and so on through all of the combinations. Begin with the index and middle fingers and go through four-note and five-note groups. This helps you to know exactly what message to send to your hand."

"If you can play *im*, but *mi* is slightly more difficult, when you go to play a long scale, it is always going to limp. Work these combinations on one string. If you can't do them on one, there is no point in trying to do them on two strings or with a string crossing. Get the first step right before you go on to the next one."

"The Prelude to Bach's fourth lute suite is really difficult, but 90 percent of the movements are actually very simple finger motions. However, there is no rest, so you have no time to think. All of your habits have to be perfect because once you are off the rails it will be hard for the next finger to go down right. You have to work steadily to teach those habits to your hands."

(Continued on next page)

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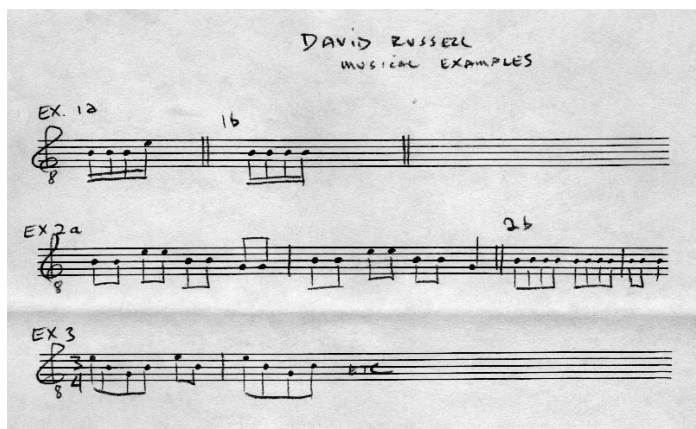
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Back to Basics, *Continued*



"If you want to play [he sings:] bbbe, but you can't play bbbb, [see examples 1a and 1b] there is no point in putting the complication of a string crossing at the end. Make sure you get at least 90 percent of the first action before going to the next one. If you attempt to play bb ee bb gg bb ee bb g, [example 2a] but you can't play bbbb bbbb bb b [example 2b], then it is going to be chaos. If you can't play ebgb eb ebgb [example 3], then you shouldn't be playing the B minor study by Sor. That study has that in the right hand and many other complications." "You have to do the same work with the left hand. Don't start with big long slurs or trills, just move the fingers up and down

so that when you have your first finger down on a string and you ask your third to go down, it goes to the right place because you have done it a thousand times every morning. Then when you are playing a Bach fugue, the fingers will go down in the right places because the technique habits are ingrained. You have taught yourself many good habits by doing this daily."

Russell feels that studying well-known etudes entices you to learn a lot of notes and extra things that may only serve to distract you from addressing your basic problem. He feels that every player who reaches a high level would be able to write his or her own group of studies. Your problem may be one or a few very basic motions, and you don't need a whole Sor study to work on them.

"I began to make a huge jump forward when I began to think like this," he says. "Instead of playing a big study with lots of mistakes, I recommend taking care of the basics. Once there is a nice tune, your mind goes there and you start 'end gaining.' You start trying to make the music sound good regardless of how you are doing it. In your concert the whole thing is to do what you can do to make the music work, even if tension creeps in. But don't do that in your practice or you will never have the chance to play it right in your concert."

* * *

Mark Small is the Editor of *Berklee Today* magazine for Berklee College of Music, and writes for *Acoustic Guitar* magazine. As a member of the Mark Small & Robert Torres Duo, he performs frequently and has released four CDs.

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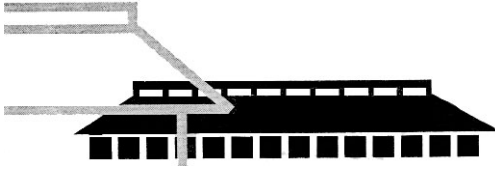
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Performing in the serene environment of this library, with its wood-beamed ceilings and graceful skylights, might just be the ideal opportunity for those of you looking to gain performance experience in a low-key setting. Although no payment is being offered, players are encouraged to prepare a program and introduce themselves to library patrons.

The Hingham Public Library is located on Rte. 228 (Main St.) in Hingham, about five miles east of Rte. 3. For more information contact George Ward at (781) 545-7863 evenings or 781/862-7878 x-25 days or by email: g.ward@mail.comap.com.



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