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BOSTON GUITARFEST X THE ETERNAL FEMININE

JUNE 17-21, 2015 *Eliot Fisk, Artistic Director*

Wednesday, June 17 | Fenway Center | 8PM

Opening Night
Boston GuitarFest 2014 competition winner Xavier Jara performs a solo recital, including the world premiere of 2014's Composition Competition first-prize work *Obsession* by Viet P. Cuong
Free

Thursday, June 18 | Fenway Center | 7PM

New Music
Contemporary music by women composers, with duo Promenade Sauvage: Maarten Stragier guitar and Luca Piovesan accordion

Stars of Boston GuitarFest
Featuring Zaira Meneses, Kim Perlak, Jennifer McNeil
\$20 general, \$10 student

Friday, June 19 | Jordan Hall | 8PM

Oscar Ghiglia and Xuefei Yang
Maestro Oscar Ghiglia plays Poulenc and Milhaud, followed by special Boston GuitarFest guest artist Xuefei Yang
\$20 general, \$10 student

Saturday, June 20 | Jordan Hall | 8PM

The Eternal Feminine: Eliot Fisk and Friends
Eliot Fisk presents J. S. Bach's Cello Suite VI (Trans. Fisk), Ralf Gawlick's monumental song cycle *Kallwitz-Kannex* (with soprano Anne Harley), and the world premiere of Boston GuitarFest commissioned work *Conversation Piece* by Kurt Schwertsik [with marimbist Ayumi Okamura]
\$40 general, \$15 student

CONCERTS

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Boston Guitar Fest
June 17-21, 2015
www.bostonguitarfest.org

Letter to Members



Dear Members,

As I listened with amazement to the expansive and varied sounds emanating from the collective efforts of 71 guitarists on stage at NEGEF, memories of each of the '14-15 BCGS concerts seemed to suddenly hit me at once. It

seemed then, as it does now, that this season was saturated with moments of musical transcendence. Ana Vidovic marked her return to the Boston stage with an expertly crafted, popularly appealing program. Her physics-defying tremolo technique shone brightly on Barrios' *Una Limosna por el Amor de Dios*. Pavel Steidl introduced us to his unparalleled richness of interpretive colors and delightfully surprising sense of humor. Most of us are still wondering how he produced some of the otherworldly sonorities in his composition, "Are You Going to Ithaca, Too?" Sharon Isbin brought her star power and authoritative-yet-sensitive approach to music old and new alike. With Granados' *Spanish Dance No. 5* and Waltzes by Lauro and Barrios, she made sure that the entire audience moved to the music. Marcin Dylla unleashed a heavyweight recital with his sophisticated artistry and assured virtuosity. He showed in Roberto Sierra's *Sonata para guitarra* that newer compositions for our instrument can be challenging, energetic, and supremely enjoyable at the same time. Carlo Domeniconi's masterful guitar ensemble composition *Never Forget Atahualpa* and exotic solo concert propelled us, rejuvenated, into a long-awaited spring. His second half opener, *Buddha's Smile*, showcased a seamless and personal integration of classical and world music inspirations.

It is important to mention the some of the names who made our society's activities possible this past season. George Ward continues to be an all star, running the ever-successful Hingham Sunday Sounds series, publishing our newsletter, and serving as Treasurer. Will Riley is instrumental as newsletter editor and online marketing chief. Oscar Azaret's commitment and passion for our performance parties can perhaps only be matched by his dedication to building beautiful classical guitars. Kim Perlak's deep experience with guitar organizations continues to inspire and help plan for the future. Scott Borg's limitless dedication to our guitar ensemble programs and festival provides an irreplaceable vitality and energy to our concerts. I would like to also thank and congratulate the members of the Boston Guitar Orchestra for enriching our community with so much beautiful music making. I am extremely grateful to George Attisano for his expert legal advice.

Our New England Guitar Ensembles Festival would not be where it is today without the continued, generous support from

the Augustine and D'Addario Foundations. Of course, the biggest thank you goes to you, Dear Members, for continuing to believe in our mission and programming. It is with you in mind that we strive to continually improve and present adventurous, entertaining, and musically rewarding activities. Please help us spread the word by talking about the BCGS' wide range of offerings with anyone who might be interested. And if you haven't already done so, please take a moment now to go online and renew your membership, or make a tax-deductible contribution to the society. The next BCGS season will begin with an absolutely epic concert in late September, stay tuned for the details!

First we turn all of our attention to Boston GuitarFest. Over the last couple of decades, the Boston guitar community has been greatly enriched by the visionary guitarist (and Newton resident) Eliot Fisk's superlative performances, teaching, and leadership. His commitment to creating a world-class, weeklong guitar festival in our backyard is truly bearing fruit with an abundance of exquisite concerts, workshops, masterclasses, and competitions. In its tenth-season anniversary, GuitarFest is titled, "The Eternal Feminine," and is co-headlined by the legendary Oscar Ghiglia and the wonderful Xuefei Yang (who presented a great concert for the BCGS a few years ago). Taking place June 17-21, the full festival details are available at www.bostonguitarfest.org. I encourage everyone to attend the entire festival or as many events as possible!

Warm regards,

Daniel Acsadi
Director, BCGS



Sonido

by Donna Ricci

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. John 1:1

The definition of “word” in this context has been debated. For centuries people have fought over the meaning of God’s Word claiming ownership of interpretation of the message from the divine. And the assumption is made that the Word is be understood as the vowels and consonants we use to communicate with today. But others believe that that the Word is not these utterances that lead to love or war but are rather the vibrational energy that led to the creation of the universe. And this vibrational energy is what we have come to know as sound. So one might say, in the beginning was the Sound and the Sound was with God and the Sound was God. Those of us who have held a guitar against our chest and felt the vibration of the soundboard in rhythm with our heart beat can easily believe that Sound is God.

On April 18th, seventy one guitarists present at the 2015 New England Guitar Ensembles Festival pressed together on a stage in Boston and felt the vibrational sound of pulsing 16th notes as we performed *Never Forget Atahualpa*, an original work written for us by the Italian composer and guitarist Carlo Domeniconi. Nine guitar groups from around New England made up the New England Guitar Ensemble. They included Keene State College and Timberline High School, both in New Hampshire, the Hartt School of Music in Connecticut, the University of Rhode Island and the Rhode Island College, Bridgewater College of Music and Berklee College of Music, the Boston Guitar Orchestra, and New England Conservatory.

In rehearsal the night before Maestro Domeniconi explained the origin of this piece:

Atahualpa Yupanqui was an Argentine singer, songwriter and guitarist, who is considered by many to be the most important Argentine folk musician of the 20th century. Maestro Domeniconi told us that several years ago he shared a stage with Mr. Yupanqui and was deeply moved by his music and performance. When it was over he joined the line of autograph seekers, waiting for a moment with the exhausted performer. As the last in line, when he arrived in front of this man he had come to admire greatly, he found he could not find the words. Mr. Yupanqui asked him, “And what would you like?” Unsure of how to answer, Domeniconi remained quiet. Yupanqui stated, “Would you like some banana?” Domeniconi said, “Yes, I would like some banana.” Yupanqui then took out a large folding knife from his pocket and began to peel the banana, offering half to Domeniconi.

In the telling of the story Maestro noted that there was no talk of guitar or music or performance. They simply shared a banana. And, as I understand the story, that sharing of the



banana, (a kind of breaking of bread?) and the musical connections made through the shared stage was the true holy communion. The Word was Sound. And the Sound was God. And in the presence of Sound, no words are needed. Domeniconi, in remembrance of this great man wrote *Never Forget Atahualpa* and we were the guitarists who had the honor of playing the world premiere of this piece.

In listening to Mr. Domeniconi’s performance, I was intrigued by the continued emphasis he placed on the concept of sound and the spiritual underpinnings of it. He ended his planned performance with a piece entitled *Gita*, which he noted was a shortened form of the spiritual teachings of the bodhichitta, believed to be the enlightened mind or the enlightened heart. When I heard him make reference to bodhichitta I was taken back to a time early in my career as a psychologist. I was speaking to a group of high school students in Fukuoka, Japan about psychology and the mind. When I asked them what they thought a psychologist was, a young student said “A heart doctor.” As I tried to correct what I misperceived as his misconception, his teacher interrupted me and said, “In Japan, we believe the mind resides in the heart.” Mr. Domeniconi, in his soft spoken voice, elaborated on the bodhichitta that inspired this piece. As I understood him, it is in reference to the vibrational sound that created the universe; that in the beginning sound came from above into the earth and then was “warmed by the earth to be sent up toward,” and at this point he raised his arm up looking to the sky and said “to infinity.” As his guitar vibrated against his chest, mind and heart blended as a true bodhichitta. Low tones of the guitar rumbled and I could imagine sound being warmed by the earth and sent fourth up to the heavens.

It was fitting that his encore was a piece called *Sonido*, the Spanish word for Sound. When it was over, I wanted to say the words “thank you” to him for creating this beautiful composition for us to play and for his performance. However, he was engaged with others. Then I realized we did not need to share words; we shared Sound. So I went home and wrote these words in gratitude. And then I bought some bananas.

Ah, the Tone!

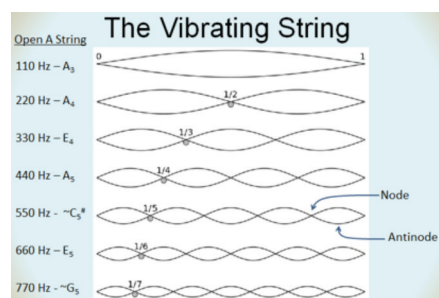
by Oscar Azaret

Certainly one of the most alluring elements of our classical guitar is the rich and varied pallet of tones available to us. I remember some years ago standing in the reception line to shake Julian Bream's hand after his last Boston concert, and one of the other greeters asked him what he prized most in the guitars he played, to which he simply exclaimed – "the sound." Well, that response can leave one rather at a loss, like, of course; but then knowing what we know about Bream and the beautiful tone color he has given us over the years, and which is captured in his recordings; we know what he meant. That night he was playing a Hauser I instrument which was simply stunning ... some of you may remember.

Volumes can, and have, been written about tone production on the classical guitar, but perhaps we can just scratch the surface a bit here and actually take a peek and one aspect of this, and look at some physical measurement of the sound. The only element we will vary is simply where the string is plucked. We all do this – mostly play just below the soundhole in the "standard" position, move above the fretboard for a sweeter sound, and toward the bridge for a brighter, sharper sound. So in this little experiment we simply pluck the open A string with a gentle rest stroke using the index finger, and we do this in three places – above the 12th fret, just below the soundhole, and very close to the bridge. And as we do this, we capture the waveform on an oscilloscope and look at the frequency components on a spectrum analyzer.

If we were to look at all of the processes which are set in motion when a string is released we would find there are many and with very complex interactions. We can, however, limit ourselves to a couple of major contributors and glean some useful insights. So let's first look at what the string will do a few tens of milliseconds after it is released. The string will oscillate in characteristic modes, specifically it will have a fundamental frequency (which will be the specific tuned note), and it will also oscillate at integral multiples of this fundamental which we call harmonic partials. (We can further complicate this by talking about transversal and longitudinal modes, but alas, let's not do that). **Figure 1** depicts this for the open A (5th) string for the first 7 modes.

Figure 1



Right away we see some very interesting things – we not only get our A (in the 3rd piano octave) at 110Hz, but we also get other higher octave A's, and an E, and an approximate C#, and

an approximate G, and it goes on and on. Now, of course, an E and a C# are the other two notes of the A Major chord so it's comforting to know that these notes are already being given to us by the single string. However, the C# is not quite what we would likely tune our second string to give us on an A chord. Since we typically use even tempered intonation, the C# we would have on our string two, second fret, is likely to be closer to 554 Hz while the C# partial on the A string will be an even 550Hz. You can check this out by playing a C# harmonic on the 5th string just over the 4th fret, and then playing the C# on string two second fret. It will sound slightly out of tune. Now retune string 2 to be perfect with the harmonic from string 5, and then play an A chord second position. The chord will sound very pleasant, but then play an E chord, and oh oh, trouble, which is precisely why it is true that we spend half our time tuning, and the other half playing out of tune.

Now let's look at what we get when we pluck the open A string in the three positions – dolce, standard, and ponticello. **Figure 2** is dolce, note in the spectrum that we have the strong fundamental A₃ at 110Hz, and very weak components for the other 4 partials – A₄, E₄, A₅, and ~C₅[#]. Looking at the waveform, we see that after the initial transient, the waveform settles down to something resembling a pure sinusoid, as we would get from a tuning fork. The total time window shown is 0.1 seconds, or 100 milliseconds, and it takes about that long for the waveform to reach its maximum amplitude.

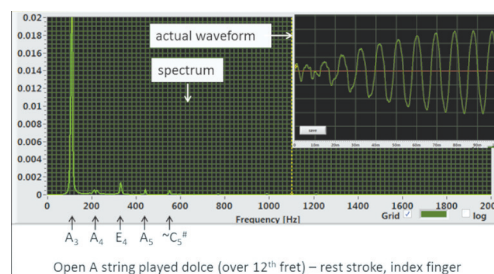


Figure 2

Moving on to the standard position, we see in **Figure 3** that now the waveform and spectrum has become more

complex. Indeed by moving our hand down to this more "fractional" position we excite more of the partials of the string thereby giving us a richer sound. We get strong contributions from A₄, E₄, A₅, and minor contributions from the ~C₅[#], as well as frequencies which are now close to a B₆ and a D₆[#], the latter being fairly out of tune. Looking at the waveform we see a more complex shape reflecting the summation of all of these other partials, and also we see that the waveform has now risen to its maximum value in only about 40 milliseconds – a faster attack.

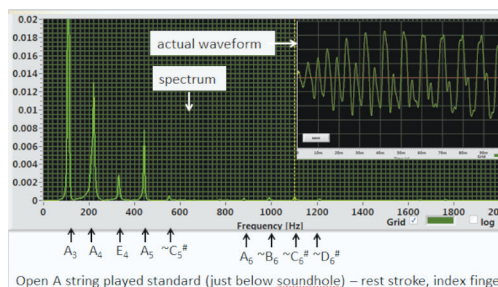


Figure 3

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Calendar

BCGS events are in red, member events in grey. Please visit the BCGS website (www.bostonguitar.org) to see further information including a link to maps and directions. Members may enter their own events by contacting the BCGS for permission and instructions.

Boston GuitarFest X – “The Eternal Feminine”

June 17-21 Concerts, Masterclasses, Lessons, Seminars, Competition, Luthier's Expo and more at New England Conservatory in Boston. Visit www.bostonguitarfest.org for registration, tickets, events, directions, and additional information.

Schedule of Events:

June 15-21 Young Guitarists' Workshop

Monday-Sunday, June 15-21: Classes, Workshops & Rehearsals
Tuesday, June 16, 7:30pm YGW Faculty Performance - Fenway Center, *free*
Sunday, June 21, 2:30pm YGW Students Performance - Brown Hall, *free*
Sat./Sun. June 20-21 Youth Performance Competition (in three rounds)

Wednesday, June 17 Boston GuitarFest Opening Night Concert

Boston GuitarFest 2014 competition winner Xavier Jara performs a solo recital, including the GuitarFest 2014 winning composition “Obsession” by Viet P. Cuong

Thursday, June 18 New Music Concert Contemporary music by women composers, with duo Promenade Sauvage: Maarten Stragier guitar and Luca Piovesan accordion

Stars of Boston GuitarFest Concert

Featuring Zaira Meneses, Kim Perlak, Jennifer McNeil
June 18, 7:00pm Fenway Center \$20 general, \$10 student

Friday, June 19 Oscar Ghiglia and Xuefei Yang in Concert

Maestro Oscar Ghiglia plays Poulenc and Milhaud, followed by special Boston GuitarFest guest artist Xuefei Yang
8:00pm Jordan Hall \$20 general, \$10 student

Saturday, June 20 The Eternal Feminine: Eliot Fisk and Friends Concert

Eliot Fisk presents J. S. Bach's Cello Suite VI (Trans. Fisk), Ralf Gawlick's monumental song cycle *Kollwitz-Konnex* (with soprano Anne Harley), and the world premiere of Boston GuitarFest commissioned work *Conversation Piece* by Kurt Schwertsik (with marimbist Ayami Okamura)
8:00pm Jordan Hall \$40 general, \$15 student

Sunday, June 21 Performance Competition

Final Round 4:00-6:00pm Jordan Hall *Free and open to the public*

Saturday, June 27 BCGS Performance Party

At the home of Lin and Anni Hymel, 137 Plain St. Norton, MA 02766
2:00 – 6:00pm

Classifieds

Classifieds are \$15 per issue of the BCGS newsletter for a 32-word ad, and \$0.25 for each additional word. The fee includes posting on the BCGS webpage for three months. Email director@bostonguitar.org with inquiries. Please send checks to BCGS, P.O. Box 470665, Brookline, MA 02447, or pay online.

Guitars for Sale

Paul Jacobson, 1987. Spruce top, Brazilian Rosewood back & sides. Rogers tuners, 650mm scale, includes HSC. Currently on consignment at the Music Emporium. www.themusicemporium.com or email: heaton.matt@gmail.com

Ramirez 1A, 1977. Very good condition with an appraised value of \$5000 that has been properly stored and humidified in a Ramirez guitar case. Will consider any reasonable offer around \$2500. peteralford@earthlink.net

Ovation Classical Electric Guitar \$700. Model 1763 with case. Near Mint Condition. Factory OP24 pickup with 3 band EQ and volume control. Rounded cutaway. Call (617) 694-1973 or email musicbypaula@gmail.com

Yamaha 1972 Grand Concert classical guitar (GC-3D model) \$1400. Spruce/Rosewood (appears Brazilian) good condition, play wear. It has a sweet beautiful aged sound. Call (617) 838-3745 or email noahlubin@gmail.com

Ángel Benítez Aguado (Madrid). \$5,500. Please call: (617) 522-4994.

Allan Harold Chapman, 1995. “Lattice Brace Prototype.” Indian rosewood back and sides, Sitka spruce top, mahogany neck with rear weighted head, Gilbert tuners, beautiful rosette. Recent setup by Jim

Mouradian. Excellent tone and projection. \$1,800 OBO. Includes Harptone hard shell case in very good condition. (617) 835-3621, or email: ronaldkgold@gmail.com

Antonio Loriente Clarita Spruce Classical Guitar with nylon strings, comes with a humidifier case. Mint condition, barely used. \$1700 OBO Call 617-975-0146 or email roberta.warshaw@gmail.com

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HANDCRAFTED GUITARS BY THOMAS KNATT – \$1,500-\$3,000. Inexpensive guitars for serious students \$400-\$700. La Bella, Hannabach, D'Addario and other strings and accessories – Dynarette thigh cushions – Repairs and Guitarmaking class. 687 Townsend Road, Groton, MA 01450, (978) 448-9663, email: luthiers@alum.mit.edu, website: www.newenglandluthiers.org

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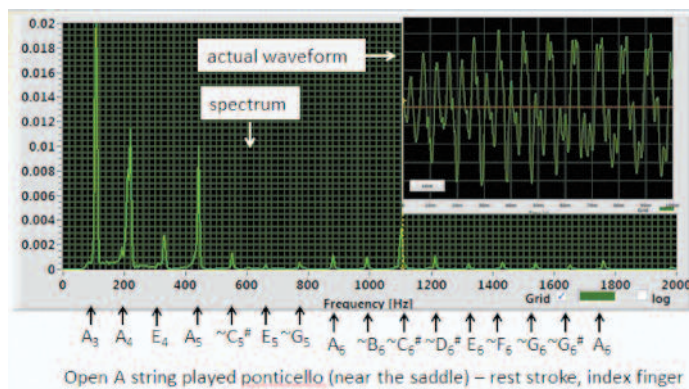
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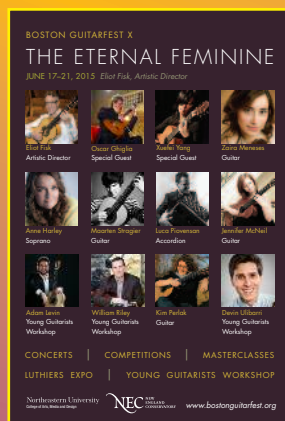
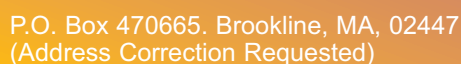
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So why does this happen? Referring back to **Figure 1**, the different vibrating modes resolve into standing waves which have peaks (antinodes) and valleys (nodes). When we pluck a string at the location of an antinode, we are putting the launching energy into a location which will favor that oscillating mode (frequency). Now the fundamental and the lower order partials will always have an advantage because it is much easier for the string to have high amplitude at those modes. This is why plucking the middle of the string over the 12th fret so strongly favors the fundamental and overwhelms the partials giving us almost a pure sinusoidal tone. As

Figure 4



There is so much more which contributes to the tone we produce on our guitar – bridge, soundboard, air cavity, back, string, nail shape, use of flesh, which finger is used, angle of attack, apoyando, tirando, and, oh yes...skill. It interesting to consider that all these factors result in a certain shape of waveform that we perceive as attractive within the given context of the music.



Boston Guitar Fest
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www.bostonguitarfest.org

www.bostonguitar.org

