



# BCGS

## newsletter



Volume 23, No. 1

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AUGUSTINE



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## 2017-18 ARTIST SERIES

**Xavier Jara**  
September 29, 2017



**Los Angeles Guitar Quartet**  
November 18, 2017



**Zoran Dukić**  
February 10, 2018



**Eliot Fisk & Robert Beaser**  
New England Guitar Ensembles Festival  
NEGEF  
Saturday & Sunday, March 17-18, 2018



**All Concerts 7:30 p.m.**  
The First Lutheran Church of Boston  
299 Berkeley Street, Boston

**Jorge Caballero**  
April 27, 2018



**New England Guitar Ensembles Festival (NEGEF)**  
Longy School of Music of Bard College  
27 Garden Street, Cambridge



BCGS

Online Tickets – [www.bostonguitar.org](http://www.bostonguitar.org) Information – 617/420-2247  
director@bostonguitar.org



BOSTON CLASSICAL GUITAR SOCIETY

## Xavier Jara in Concert September 29, 2017

7:30 p.m. The First Lutheran Church of Boston  
299 Berkeley Street, Boston

Information and tickets at [www.bostonguitar.org](http://www.bostonguitar.org)

## Letter to Members



### Dear Members,

It is an honor to serve as the new Director of your Boston Classical Guitar Society. The BCGS is the cornerstone of the Boston classical guitar community and is becoming a major guitar society in the country. I approach my new

position with enthusiasm as I glimpse new horizons for our organization to reach.

I would like to thank the board: Daniel Acsadi, George Ward, Oscar Azaret, Will Riley, Charles Ewing, Kim Perlak, Mark Small, Rocco Bombardieri, and Micheline Soley for the trust they have placed in me. Special thanks to Daniel Acsadi for the extraordinary work that he has accomplished during the past seven years as BCGS Director and President of the Board. I am thrilled that Dan will continue to direct the New England Guitar Ensembles Festival.

In recent years, the BCGS has brought top-notch artists to Boston and attendance at our concerts has been rising. The New England Ensembles Festival (NEGEF) and the BCGS have commissioned new works for guitar ensemble from such composers as Andrew York, Roland Dyens, or Clarice Assad. The Boston Guitar Orchestra (BGO) thrived under Scott Borg, and will continue to do so under its new conductor, Robert Bekkers (see BGO article). Thanks to the efforts of Oscar Azaret, we enjoy monthly guitar performance parties in member's private homes across New England. These things would not be possible without the extraordinary efforts of my predecessor and our dedicated board of directors and volunteers.

The BCGS has tremendous potential, yet in order to fulfill it, we will need more resources. If you would like to get involved, share ideas, host one of our artists, or if you know a dedicated individual who has experience in fundraising, marketing, or legal matters, please contact me at [director@bostonguitar.org](mailto:director@bostonguitar.org). You

can also help by simply spreading the word about BCGS events or bringing a friend to one of our concerts.

My priorities are the following: a strong commitment to the artistic quality and integrity of the BCGS series, development of community activities including the BGO, performance parties, and our partner concert series featuring local artists. I will also work with the board to improve the structure and funding that supports all of our activities.

We have an incredibly exciting 2017–2018 artist series planned, and I hope to see many of you at the concerts. Xavier Jara, 2016 GFA winner, will open the season on September 29. For the first time in the history of our organization we will present the Los Angeles Guitar Quartet on November 18. Croatian sensation Zoran Dukić will bring warmth to Boston on February 10, and we'll close the season with the genius touch of Jorge Caballero on April 27. The 2018 NEGEF promises to be a highlight with a new commission for guitar ensemble from Robert Beaser and a closing performance featuring Eliot Fisk. Are you ready to be part of this historical season? I, for one, cannot wait!

Warm regards,

*Jerome Mouffe*

Director



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## Calendar

*BCGS events are in red. 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.*

### **Monday, August 28, 8:00 pm**

A World of Guitar – Aaron Larget-Caplan & Peter Janson

### **Saturday, September 9, 2:00 pm**

BCGS Performance Party 300 Mill Glen Pond Rd, Winchendon, MA 01475 at the lake home of Steve and Rosemary Rapson. 617-877-2745

### **Sunday, September 10, 3:00 pm**

Portsmouth First Sunday: Brian Killough  
Portsmouth Music and Arts Center, 973 Islington St, Portsmouth, NH

### **Saturday, September 16, 6:00 pm**

Dave McLellan - Concert In Your Living Room for HOPEsudbury.  
Private Home in Sudbury, MA  
CIYLR to benefit the humanitarian assistance foundation

HOPEsudbury. This is a private event by invitation only. Contact CIYLR on FB, email to dave@ciylr.org, or by phone at 978-500-2546.

### **Friday, September 29, 7:30 pm**

BCGS Artist Series: Xavier Jara  
First Lutheran Church, Berkeley St., Boston, MA

### **Sunday, October 1, 3:00 pm**

Portsmouth First Sunday: Kim Perlak  
Portsmouth Public Library (NH), 175 Parrott Ave, Portsmouth, NH

### **Sunday, October 22, 2:00 pm**

BCGS Performance Party.  
1448 Dorchester Ave. Dorchester, MA. Performance Party hosted by Nho Van Truong and Mike Tomases at the home.stead coffeehouse in Dorchester. 617-533-7585. Parking lot nearby off Leonard St.

*Please visit the BCGS website [www.bostonguitar.org](http://www.bostonguitar.org) to see further information including a link to maps and directions.*

## Classifieds

*Classifieds are \$20 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](mailto:director@bostonguitar.org) with inquiries. Please send checks to BCGS, PO Box 230528, Boston, MA 02123, or pay online.*

### **Guitars for Sale**

**2000 Ramirez 1A Traditional**, cedar top, Brazilian and **2013 Kohno Pro J**, Spruce, Cocobolo. Both instruments like new in mint condition. Please call 207-322-5580.

**Alhambra 4P LEFT-HANDED** classical. Looks brand new. See . I paid \$876 a year ago + \$120 for TKL Hardshell case. Will sell both for \$675. .

Beautiful **1990 Brune Artist** guitar for sale. Spruce top, excellent condition. Easy to play, outstanding tone and projection. A first Class concert instrument by a world famous luthier. \$11,500. .

**1977 Kohno 15**. \$2,500. Good condition. Chip on back of headstock. Very light picking wear near soundhole. Please see <http://www.brucesanders.com/kohno.html> for pics and complete specs or call 512-689-3718.

**Paul Jacobson, 1987**. Spruce top, Brazilian Rosewood back & sides. Rogers tuners, 650mm scale, includes HSC. Currently on consignment at the Music Emporium; .

**1972 Ruck Guitar**, cedar top, Brazilian rosewood. Some minor cracks, have been repaired. Long-scale; one owner. Big, bold sound, well-balanced, with famous piano-like sonority characteristic of Ruck guitars. Asking \$15,000. Call 603-313-3027 or .

**1995 Bazzolo Classical guitar** 650 mm scale length, East Indian rosewood with western red cedar top with French polish finish. . This guitar is in excellent condition. There is not a mark on it. It has been rarely played. Wonderful tone. Asking price \$3,500. .

**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 .

**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. or (617) 835-3621

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

**2001 Paul Fisher** (taut model) Excellent condition , Spruce top, Brazilian back and sides, Roger tuners. 781-956-1296

**1997 Jose Ramirez R2 guitar** 650 mm scale length. Indian rose wood with Canadian red cedar solid top and Spanish cedar neck with ebony fingerboard. Comes with a TKL case. Both in excellent shape. : or call (484) 888-1185. Asking \$1,300

### **Luthiers and Dealers**

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### **Miscellaneous**

Now Available from SheetMusicPlus.com as a Digital Download:

**Four Exercises for the Classical Guitar by Andrew LeClaire**

Volume 1 Major and Melodic Minor Keys

Volume 2 Natural, Harmonic, and Real Melodic Keys



## Interview with David Russell

by Mark Small



David Russell gave the final performance for the BCGS 2016–2017 concert series on April 28. The First Lutheran Church was packed with a multigenerational crowd eager to hear the Scottish-born virtuoso. And he did not disappoint.

Russell frequently adds an educational component to his concerts by presenting music not often played by other major guitar recitalists. He opened with “Fantasia in E” by little-known Spanish guitarist and composer Jose Brocá (1805–1882). The work shared some of the characteristics of music by Brocá’s peers (Sor, Giuliani, Arcas, and Aguado).

He followed with his transcriptions of two five-movement “parties” by keyboard composer Johann Kuhnau (1660–1722). Russell told the crowd that Kuhnau was from the generation before J.S. Bach and was Bach’s predecessor as the Thomaskantor of Leipzig. Each of the parties and their individual movements are shorter than those found in Bach’s sonatas and partitas. Their somewhat lighter contrapuntal textures shed light the path that led the more elaborate counterpoint of Kuhnau’s successors. Reading the scores from his iPad, Russell played the music with his characteristic burnished tone and touch and included a variety of attractive ornaments.

He closed the first half with an homage to Enrique Granados (1867–1916), by playing his arrangement of the Valses Poeticos. Russell pointed to the irony that in 2017 we celebrate the sesquicentennial of Granados’s birth, while only last year we marked the centenary of his death. Russell’s pacing and tempi were carefully chosen, allowing him to render the more difficult waltzes with grace and ease.

Russell opened the second half with sonatas 308 and 309 by Domenico Scarlatti. Tongue-in-cheek, he noted that Scarlatti’s music showcases great creativity throughout the body of his 500 sonatas, but his titles—not so much. He followed with “Landmarks,” a new work by Matthew Dunne (b. 1959), dedicated to Russell. The first movement, “Camilliola,” (named for a jazz club) exploited jazz harmonies with lovely rippling arpeggios and campanella passages. Given the title of the second movement, “Canción,” it was surprisingly not too melodic. The third movement, “Reel Variations,” was a standout and gave a nod to Russell’s heritage beginning with the Scottish lilt of the opening theme. It transitioned to variations that included a slow and gorgeous melodic portion, a jazzy segment, and a section with a long-breathed bass melody accompanied by arpeggios above. A substantial work, it covered a lot of ground stylistically without returning to Scottish feel of the opening theme.

Russell rounded things out with three mazurkas by Tárrega and the composer’s playful—yet technically demanding—“Gran Jota.” It was an energetic finish that elicited lengthy applause from the audience. For his encore, Russell offered a reverent reading of “El Ultimo Canto,” one of the most beloved tremolo pieces of Agustín Barrios. It brought the evening to a satisfying and peaceful conclusion.

Before his arrival in Boston, Russell was generous enough to respond to a few questions via e-mail, providing insights to his routine before and during his tours.

### **How long does it take you to prepare a new program for a concert season?**

As programmes normally have to be sent well in advance, I have to decide first which pieces I wish to play in a year’s time. I then organise my practice to make sure the pieces are ready on time.

### **What type of practice regimen do you employ to keep your pieces concert-ready while you are on the road?**

Once I am on tour, I usually don’t change programmes, but at times I have to practice pieces that I will be playing the following month, so I must give them some attention. I try to put in some practice time every day, regardless of whether I have to travel or whether we remain in the same city. When I am at home, I am able to organise my time much more efficiently and dedicate more time to the pieces that I will play in the next concerts and also some time to the pieces I wish to learn for future performances. I usually make a list and observe which of my pieces need more attention and which I feel are ready for concerts.

### **Your programs frequently include newly written pieces. What features will either attract you or turn you away from a piece of new music?**

I really don’t have any clear idea as to why I become attracted to one piece and not another. There can be many reasons, not all of them logical: a new musical experience for myself, for example, perhaps pushing my comfort zone and many other different reasons. I continue to enjoy reading new works and each year I try to select a few pieces I may like to introduce in my programme.

### **At this point in your career, what are you feeling as the time approaches for you to take the stage?**

The feelings prior to a performance are pretty much the same as they were at the beginning of my career. There is excitement, anticipation, apprehension and enthusiasm to try to do it well.



## Boston Guitar Orchestra

by Robert Bekkers



Whether it's fair or not, concert-going audiences and guitar aficionados alike have low expectation for guitar orchestras. But I believe an orchestra consisting of only guitars is capable of delivering a musical experience akin to those of the world's best orchestras that leave audiences inspired and excited to hear more. After my first season working with the Boston Guitar Orchestra (BGO), I wish to address the process of creating excellence together.

My personal experience with the BGO thus far has been one of great achievement both for the orchestra and for me. In my new role as artistic director and conductor, I wanted the orchestra to grow musically by ensuring that we work on excellent and challenging repertoire and perform with confidence at the highest standards. But being a community-based orchestra, it's important to make sure that along with my ambitions, all members feel appreciated and included. It took a few concerts for me to get used to the dynamics of the group, and for the orchestra to understand my approach as an artistic director and conductor.

We have a variety of player levels and personal preferences within the orchestra. Some members are very experienced, while others need more work on rhythm or technique. And of course, guitarist rarely come with experience working with a conductor. The guitar tends to be a visually demanding instrument. Guitar notation can be dense and complex left-hand gestures often demand that the players watch their hands. That means there is little attention to spare to give to someone waving his arms in front of them.

I give a lot of thought to what music would appeal to all, our musical tastes are quite varied. This presented a steep but very interesting learning curve. We've only started to explore the repertoire for guitar orchestra and there are many more excellent works out there.

While gently pushing each player toward excellence, I tend to focus as much as possible on the big picture of the orchestral sound and musical expression in the music. Dynamics, phrasing, and articulation are the three pillars of any good orchestra, and central to my approach. Then there is note accuracy, timing, tempo, color, and technique, which are, to some degree, an

individual responsibility, yet they require overall attention. Last but not least there is stage presence, which we have been developing. Seeing it all come together in the final concert of the season brought me great satisfaction and I foresee our orchestra consistently delivering excellent concerts going forward.

The outcome of the work done so far created a wonderful experience at our final concert of the season in Jordan Hall during GuitarFest. It was a focused and inspiring performance for all participants. People walked away excited and ready to undertake more great work.

For the coming season, we will continue to work on excellent new repertoire that will excite our audiences and orchestra members, and, I hope, motivate new members to join us. There is always a place in the orchestra for new performers!

Finally, I want to thank everyone for their heartfelt participation and for the opportunity I was given as the new conductor and artistic director. It's my aim to continue to grow the orchestra in size, quality, and impact on the Boston musical scene. In the future, I hope to take the orchestra abroad, and perhaps to next year's GFA!



## BCGS Performance Parties

By: J. Oscar Azaret



*Discussion on technique.*

At performance parties, discussions are typically tame, but on the topic of nails versus flesh emotions may flare, and guitarists defend their stance taking up arms of cedar or spruce alike. The idea of friendly informal performance gatherings was at the very genesis of the BCGS in the 1970s.

As a member, every few weeks you receive an invitation to one of these gatherings. Roughly about a quarter of our members take advantage of these from time to time. The number of attendees is typically in the teens, and most, but not all, choose to perform. As the photo on the last page shows, some come just to listen. With few exceptions, our gatherings are held on designated Saturdays at 2:00 P.M., and we typically hang out for about four hours, though everyone is free to arrive and leave whenever they want. Various society members graciously host the gatherings at their homes, though sometimes we meet at a coffee house or some other public venue in a more open-mic format.

*(continued on the back cover)*

## Performance Parties, continued



*Fabian Abarca-Calderon*

What is the usual protocol? Members start to arrive at 2:00 P.M. and immediately lively conversations take off while attendees enjoy the snacks and libations provided. Members are welcome to bring food or drink to share if they want. There are always plenty of goodies to go around. This is the time to catch up

with old friends, meet new ones, compare guitars, and chat about whatever. Usually between 2:45 and 3:00 the host (or designated MC) will decide to ask the group to grab chairs and start the performances. Depending on the size of the group, we may or may not have a player sign up sheet. Once everyone is settled, members begin to play. The operative word here is sharing and welcoming at all levels—beginner to expert. Folks talk about the pieces, their experience in learning them, about the composer, arrangement. Since we all share many common pieces, it's fun to hear each other's perspectives.

Playing goes on for about an hour with folks taking turns, and



*Just here to listen!*

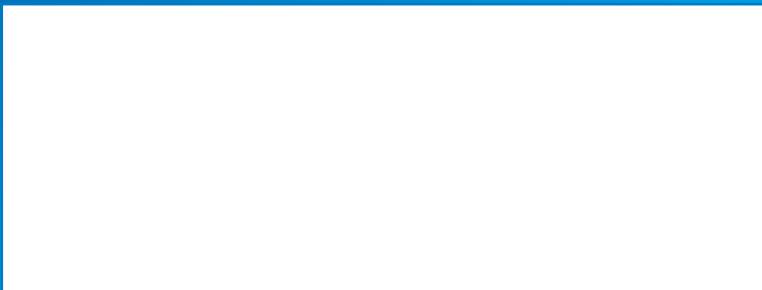
then we take a break for more refreshments and conversation. We gather again for a second round until everyone who wants to play gets a chance. Two pieces is a typical number played by each guest, though it can be greater or fewer, being sensitive to the size of the group. As the party winds down, we'll have

folks who are off in small groups comparing arrangements, fingerings, guitars, or just solving the world's problems. Several duos and ensembles have been spawned after these parties as people get to know each other and their common interests.

If you have not attended our BCGS parties, I highly recommend them. Don't fret about uncertainty and how to respond on Evite. Your answer can be changed at any time, and even if your plans change and you don't get to Evite, that's fine. The law of averages works in our favor.



[www.bostonguitar.org](http://www.bostonguitar.org)



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