

Washington Guitar Society

No. 38

May/June 1998

Dawn Culbertson, Renaissance Lute Performs for WGS, Friday, May 15

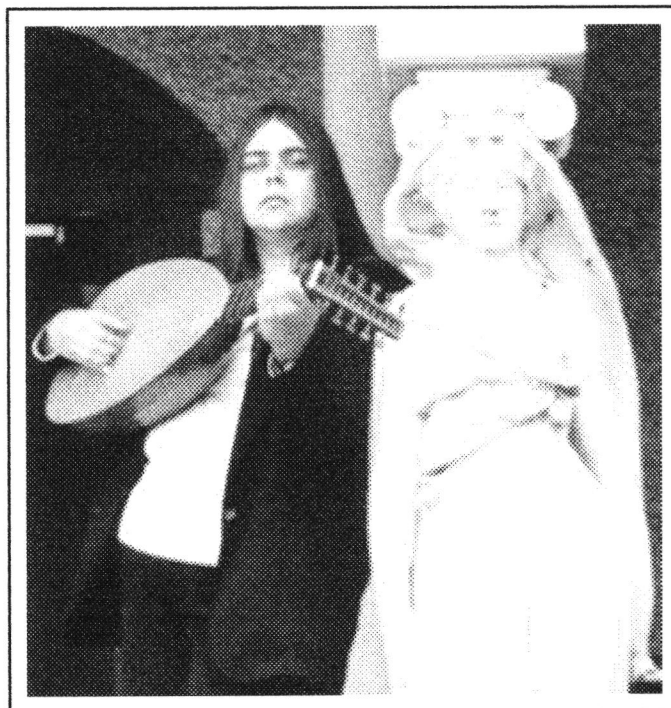
Dawn Culbertson, a Baltimore native, received a bachelor's degree from Towson State University and a master's degree from the Peabody Conservatory, both in music composition. She studied lute with Roger Harmon at Peabody and with Paul O'Dette, Cathy Liddell, Karen Meyers and Pat O'Brien at Lute Society of America seminars and master classes. She is currently a member of the Lute Society's Board of Directors.

Culbertson is especially interested in studying and performing repertoire most lutenists ignore, particularly early Renaissance music from Germany, France and Italy written before 1550. She is also interested in playing contemporary lute music as well, and to that end has written several pieces for solo lute or lute and voice herself. These include *Lux Aeterna*, a lament on the death of early music pioneer Thomas Binkley which was premiered last year, and *Four Fragments*, which uses avant-garde techniques. But she was also half of a punk-rock duo (she's probably one of the few lutenists whose repertoire includes the Velvet Underground and the Sex Pistols), and appeared on *age of awakening*, an album by the folk-rock group Brandon.

Recent recitals include an appearance with soprano Elizabeth Schaum as part of the concert series at St. John's Huntington in Baltimore, a lecture-recital on "Women and the Lute" at Leaf Through Books (Rockville), an all-Italian program at Washington's Church of the Epiphany noontime series, and an Italian and Scottish program at Baltimore's Cathedral of Mary Our Queen. Currently, she can be heard regularly at Louie's Bookstore Cafe in Baltimore.

In addition to all the above, Culbertson is also a professional recorder player who plays with the baroque music duo Squire Western's Fancy, a singer who is currently a member of the choir of Grace and St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Baltimore and has performed with the Municipal Opera of Baltimore and Opera Vivente, and a national award-winning journalist. She is currently music and dance critic for the Baltimore Alternative and her writings also appear regularly in *Early Music America*, the *Washington Blade*, *Every Wednesday* and *Radio World*. She can also occasionally be found calling and playing for English country dancing in Baltimore and Washington, working on choreography projects for a class at Towson University, or playing the bass with the Volunteer's Collective avant-garde pickup ensemble. She never gets enough sleep because she's a bit too fond of staying up late to answer her e-mail or watching shows like *Mystery Science Theatre 3000* and *South Park*.

On May 15, Culbertson will be the featured performer at the WGS regular monthly meeting, presenting a lecture-recital called "Around the World in Three Tablatures." Although every classical guitarist generally includes some lute music in their



repertoire, it tends to be only the tip of the iceberg in a repertoire that includes dozens of composers and thousands of pieces ranging from simple dances and ballad tune settings to intabulations and fantasias so difficult that they baffle most modern players. This performance will include a brief cross-section of representative lute music from Renaissance France, Italy, Germany, Scotland and England written between 1500 and 1625 by composers such as Pierre Attaignant, Francesco da Milano, Hans Newsidler, John Dowland and Joanambrosio Dalza - perhaps with a few surprises thrown in!

This concert will take place at the Washington Conservatory of Music, 5144 Massachusetts Ave., Bethesda, MD. For further details, see the calendar of events on page 8.



In This Issue...
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Upcoming WGS Meetings
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From the President

A few months ago we received as a gift to our Society a box of books and magazines belonging to a previous Washington Guitar Society. Inside were five or six copies of a book called "Guitar Teaching in the United States: The Life and Work of Sophocles Papas." I read this book straight through in a few days. It was really fascinating. I knew Mr. Papas for about the last twenty years of his life, but there is much in this book from way before my time. The book is based on a series of interviews and was published by the former Washington Guitar Society with support from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Mr. Papas was a year younger than Segovia, and began teaching in Washington while in his twenties, so his career really did cover a lot of the history of guitar teaching in this country. He really loved to talk and tell stories, and was a wonderful interview subject. It was great to hear his version of his relationships with Aaron Shearer, John Marlow, Charlie Byrd and many others. Some of these stories are told in the book quite differently than the way he told me himself, and also quite differently from the way others involved told them, but this is really great stuff, and I enjoyed hearing the "official" versions. Give me a call if you would like to borrow a copy of this book. We have several that we can lend. (Anybody want to step forward as the WGS librarian?)

Glen and Elizabeth Caluda played a wonderful program of music for guitar and piano for our April meeting. We passed the hat and collected a nice pile of cash for them, and they promptly turned it over to us as a donation. Roger Rutti did the same after his recent performance for us. This kind of help is very appreciated.

In the near future, perhaps even as you read this, we hope to have more photographs in our newsletter. This is possible because we have a volunteer member, Kirk Clarke, who is willing and able to do both the photography and processing for us. In the past we used a few photos because of the cost of processing them for publication. Thanks, Kirk. I get quite a few guitar society newsletters from around the country and I really think ours is among the best. Thanks mainly to Kevin, Don and also Kirk.

John Rodgers

Members Recital for WGS Meeting Friday, June 19

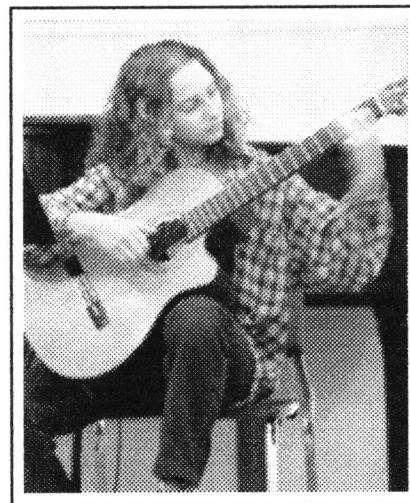
The Washington Guitar Society will be holding a Members Recital on Friday, June 19 at 7:30 pm. This is a wonderful time to play for an audience of your peers. In the past, these have been glorified open stage performances, meaning that they've been lots of fun and extremely informal. If you've never played in front of an audience before and your teacher is telling you to....this is for you. If you want to try out some new pieces....this is for you. If you want to meet others like yourself who share a love for guitar music....this is for you. This is even for those of you who don't feel like playing; just come on out and join in on the fun.

It will take place at the Washington Conservatory of Music, 5144 Massachusetts Ave., Bethesda, MD. If you are interested in playing, call John Rodgers at (202) 686-1020. For further details about WGS meetings see page 8.

WGS IN REVIEW

Youth Concert

In the photo to the right is young guitarist Nicki Lehrer performing for the annual WGS Youth Concert which was held on March 6. Nicki has performed for every Youth Concert the WGS has sponsored since this tradition began three years ago. She has also opened for two WGS concerts at the Lyceum Museum in Old Town Alexandria.



Here's the program from the WGS Youth Concert:

Nicki Lehrer

Zachery Tcheyan

Valerie Klavens

Kelly Landers

Bill Clausem

Alexis Beveridge

Luisa Miller

Dan Freudiger

Joe Simpson

Lake Braddock Guitar Quartet

Canarios

Lagrima

Country Dance

Tell Me Daphne

Hungarian Dance

Etude #6

Etude in Em

Air on a G String

Andante

Andante

Song Without Words

Samba

Estudio #9

Prelude in Dm

Concerto in D

Black Opal

Bantu

Sanz

Tarrega

Carulli

Byrd

Anon.

Brouwer

Giuliani

J.S. Bach

Carulli

Sor

Coste

Argentinian

Sor

J.S. Bach

Vivaldi

Houghton

York

Joe Simpson, Justin Apergis, Jeff Baker, Eddie Kowalczyk

Open Stage, April 17

Linda Crisafulli (flute) and WGS president John Rodgers performed Giuliani's Gran Duo Concertante and Ibert's

Entr'acte for the WGS open stage. It was nice to hear the guitar with a n o t h e r instrument. Way to go, Prez!!!





Beverly Ross, Bob Wysong and Don Sauter perform at nearly every WGS open stage as the Patowmack Guitar Trio. They always have something new and exciting to perform for those in attendance. They are certainly an inspiration to their fellow guitar enthusiasts. Keep it up, gang!

CALUDA



WGS Featured Performers for April 17

Elizabeth Watkins Caluda and Glenn Caluda performed piano and guitar duets as the featured performance for the April 17th meeting. Their performance included *Duetten für zwei Gitarren* by J.K. Mertz, *Transmutations I and II* by Robert Feuerstein, *Variations de Beethoven, Op. 169* by Ferdinando Carulli (a transcription of a set of variations Beethoven wrote for cello and piano on a theme by Mozart), *Fantasia, Op. 145* by Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco (a composition dedicated to Andres Segovia and Paquita Madriguera, his wife.)

Francesco da Milano

Recently, my mandolin buddy lent me some old **Guitar Reviews** he bought from a used book store. *Guitar Review 9*, dated 1949, was devoted to the lute. A footnote to the article about Francesco da Milano mentioned that the Library of Congress held copies of his *Intabolatura de Lauto, Libro Segundo* and *Libro Terzo*. Well, you can guess where I headed.

Sure enough, *Libro Terzo* is still there. It's date is 1547 and it

looks like it should last another few thousand years (as opposed to items from around 1900, which are turning into yellow crumbs as you read this.)

Here's a bit about **Francesco da Milano**. He was born Francesco Canova. He lived from 1497 to 1543. Contemporaneous writers - both musician and non-musician - heaped superlatives on his playing and composing abilities. He stood head and shoulders above the rest of the pack in the first half of the 16th century.

The introduction to **The Lute Music of Francesco Canova da Milano** tells us: "His works for the lute, which survive in a quantity considerably greater than that of any other lutenist of the time, are contained in over forty extant tablatures printed in Italy, France, Germany, Spain, Switzerland, and the Lowlands between 1536 and 1603, and in nearly 25 manuscripts of almost equally diversified provenance. In several English manuscripts his music appears side by side with that of the eminent Elizabethan lutenist and composer John Dowland, who was born some twenty years after Francesco's death."

There are more than 90 fantasias in his extant lute books. There are no dances at all. The 7th fantasia in *Libro Terzo*, which I've included in this newsletter, is an example of what *Guitar Review* calls Francesco's "free", as opposed to "strict", fantasias. In these "free" fantasias, "imitative sections alternate with free, toccata-like passages."

The *Guitar Review* lamented that Francesco "deserves to be retrieved from the limbo of 'dictionary composers'." I think they would be pleased with the current situation. For example, I found pieces by Francesco in 9 publications in my music collection; and guitarists have been performing and recording his music for some years now.

Donald Sauter

Notes on the music: In the translation to modern tablature, I corrected one error. Measure 13, rhythm 4, string 3 showed fret 2.

While evolution has generally been very good to us humans, it's pretty clear that it's been sabotaging our left hands over the last few hundred years. That "flying wedge" 4-finger, 2454 formation (see measures 6, 15 and 26) must have been child's play in the 1500s and 1600s, judging by its ubiquity. For most modern guitar mortals, it's a sure-fire crash point. Suggestion: use a 3-finger formation and leave out the second note from the top. Hey, it sounds the same!

References:

The Lute Music of Francesco Canova da Milano (1497-1543)

edited by Arthur J. Ness. Harvard University Press, 1970.

"Francesco da Milano". Joel Newman, *Guitar Review 9*, 1949.

"Fantasia de mon triste" by Francesco da Milano. Peter Danner, *Soundboard*, Summer 1993.

Also see: "Some Thoughts On Lute Tuning". WGS newsletter, Nov94.

The Great Tablature Debate. WGS newsletter, Jan98.

INTABOLATURA DE LAVTO

DI M. FRANCESCO MILANESE
ET M. PERINO FIORENTINO

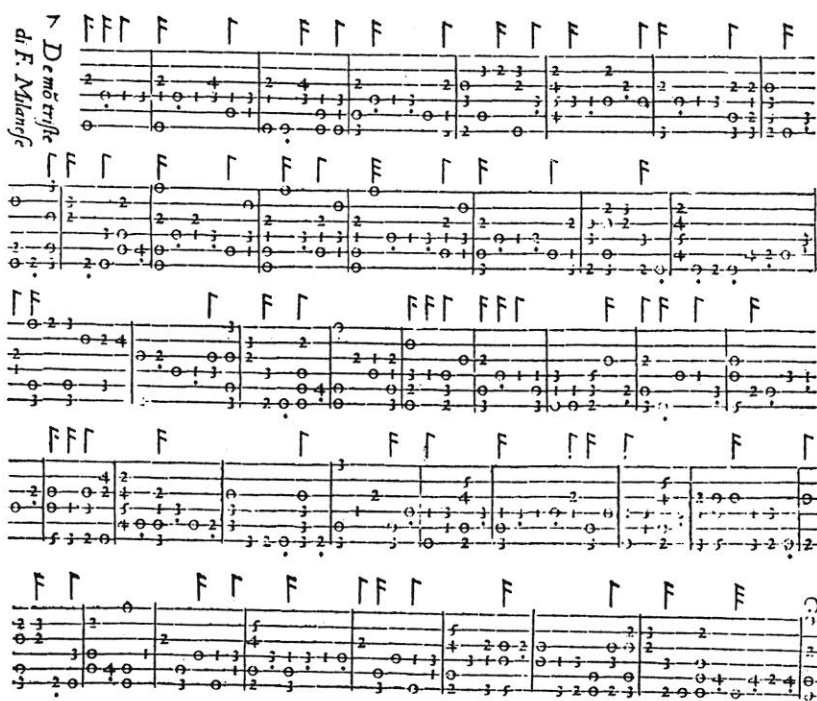
Suo Discipulo Di Recercate Madrigali, & Canzone Franceſe
Nouamente, Riſtampata & corretta.

LIBRO



In Venetia Aprefſo di
Antonio Gardane
M. D. XLVII

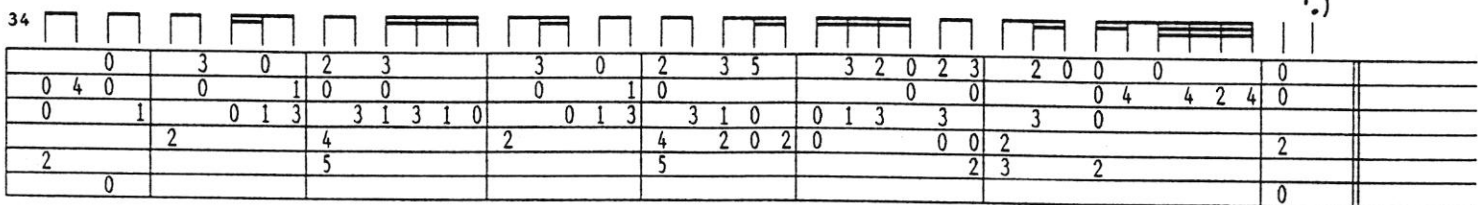
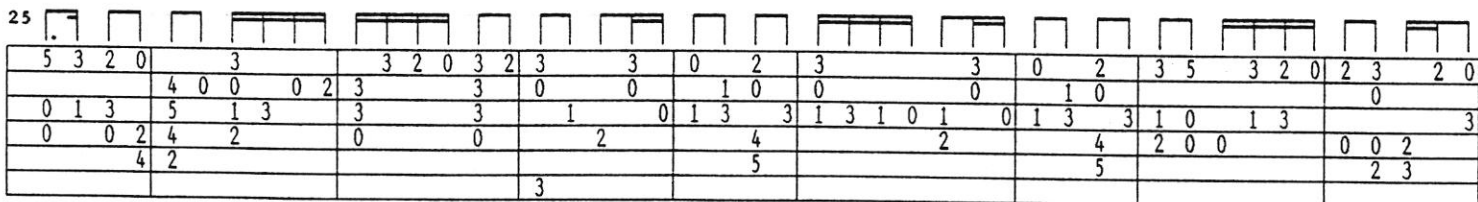
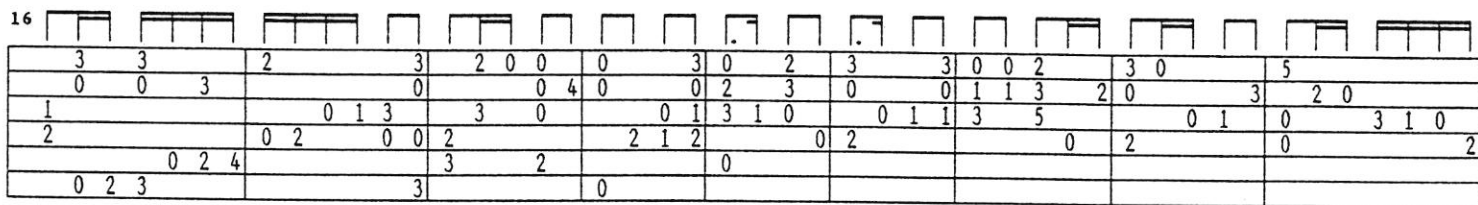
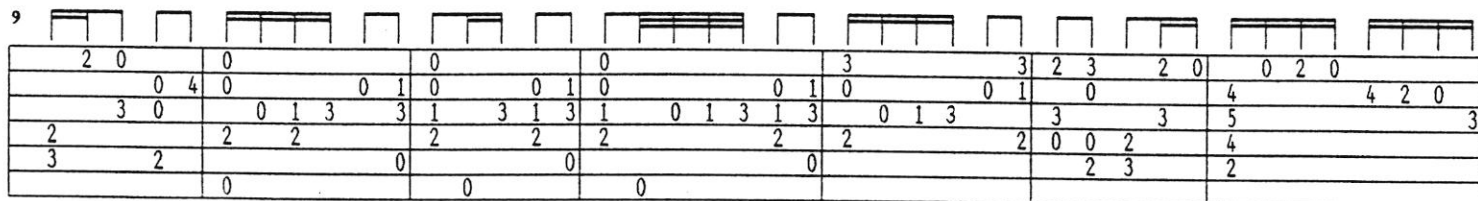
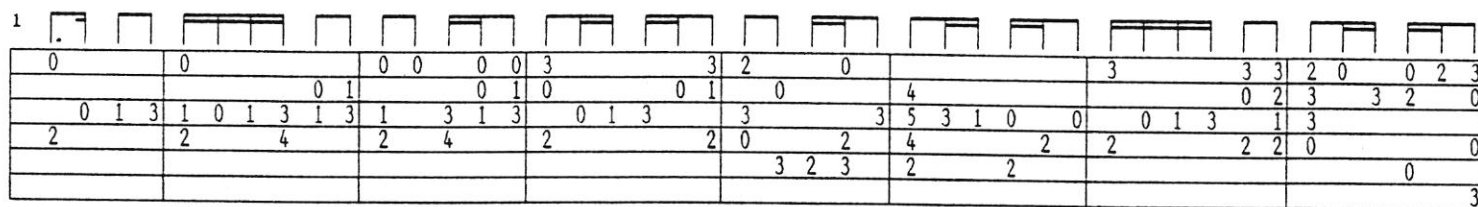
TERZO



3 = F#

7. De mō triste di F. Milanese

Francesco da Milano



Fun With German Tablature

German tablature is absolutely fantastic - if you like solving puzzles. At the Library of Congress, I stumbled on a small, facsimile edition of a Lautenbuch (lute book) from Bern, dated 1556. (It's not obvious to me if it was a manuscript or published - probably a manuscript.)

The idea of German tablature is that a unique symbol is used for each string/fret intersection. Simultaneously played notes are listed in a column - with no gaps for unplayed strings. Rhythm values are shown above the columns as in other tablature systems. (See the sample piece.)

But the pieces in this Lautenbuch looked like trouble. There were no bar lines and it wasn't obvious how the music should be grouped into measures. In addition to the unfamiliar print style and legibility problem, two of the most commonly used symbols in the pieces were perplexing. The "+" didn't seem to be anywhere in the explanatory tablature chart. The frequently used "l" and several other symbols seemed to indicate fret 7 notes - very unlikely in this presumably modest music. Perhaps "+" and "l" indicate some other sort of musical instruction?

I chose a small piece named [your guess is as good as mine] to work on, and after a few light bulbs went off, here's what I came up with.

First of all, this is what the Lautenbuch chart is trying to tell us:

String

1	e	k	p	u	g	e	k	5
2	d	i	u	f	7	d	i	4
3	r	h	n	s	z	r	h	3
4	b	g	m	r	y	b	g	2
5	a	f	l	q	x	a	f	1
6	A	f	l	q	x	A	f	+

Fret: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 open

The composer had tripped me up by putting the column for open strings *after* fret 7, rather than before fret 1. Thus,

5 = open string 1,

3 = open string 3 (about the only good coincidence in the whole chart),

1 = open string 5,

u = string 2, fret 3,

f = string 5, fret 2, etc.

Got it? His "+" in the music is a simplification of the cross and dash in the lower right corner of the chart: none other than good, old, open string 6. His "l" slash is really just a 1. What look like "e"s are actually "l"s. Phew.

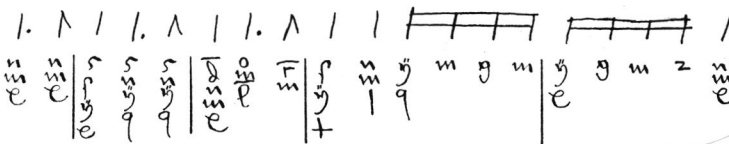
Treatment of string 6 in this Lautenbuch is not standard. Other

German tablatures from the time use capital A for open string 6, and then B, C, D... for the frets right on up the fingerboard. In fact, note that there is a *big* problem with the system here: \bar{f} represents *three* fretboard locations! So would \bar{l} , \bar{q} and \bar{x} .

So now that we have the symbols pegged, the remaining problem was rhythm. My best guess is that the composer had trouble notating dotted rhythms. (I don't recall seeing any rhythm dots in the whole Lautenbuch.) If we treat the 4er/8th pairs as dotted 8th/16th pairs, everything falls into place - not necessarily the *right* place, but a plausible place. (In the cadence, I let his 4er/8th rhythms stand.) If anyone has more informed thoughts on what the intended rhythm was, let me know. In any case, consider the level of sophistication of this piece in comparison with that of Francesco's in this newsletter.

I doubt that German tablature causes great joy among too many players nowadays. However, Dániel Benkő, in his introduction to a book of works by lutenist Matthäus Weissel, states, "As a matter of fact, the knowledge of reading the German notation system may be acquired within some days as easily as that of the French tablature commonly believed simpler. In comparison with the latter, the German system applies more concrete signs and leaves thus less possibilities for error."

Hmmm... Let's check that out. Here's a little contest. Below is the opening of a well-known piece. (Tune string 3 to F# and string 6 to G.) First person to identify it and complete the transcription wins a free string winder.



Donald Sauter

Note: In the translation of the Lautenbuch piece to modern tablature, I fixed two presumed mistakes. Measure 11, second "l" (looking like an "e") was missing a dash on top. Measure 13, rhythm 1 was a 4er. (Compare with measure 6.)

References and thanks:

Lautenbuch, Bern, 1556. Facsimile by Cornetto-Verlag, Stuttgart, 1997.

M. Weissel, Tabulatura (1573), edited by Daniel Benko. Editio Musica Budapest, 1980.

Lute on the Web

Here are two interesting websites where you can learn more about the lute, tablature, lute composers and 16th C. lute publications.

The first is called "Sixteenth Century printed tablatures for the lute, vihuela, guitar and cittern". The address is:

<http://www.lib.duke.edu/music/lute/home.html>

The second is called "Lute page for guitarists." It contains some lute pieces in ascii tablature. The address is:

<http://yoyo.cc.monash.edu.au/~mongoose/lute.html>

(Psst... More tablature thoughts!)

The January 1998 newsletter was bursting with articles debating the validity of tablature. Since tablature is getting a workout in this lute-oriented issue, I thought I'd put in my last (ha!) 2 cents.

It's clear that the overriding objection to tablature is that it is not music. A player cranks out notes without any idea of what he's playing.

No argument there, but as is generally the case, the clear statement of a problem practically screams its own solution. Why not supply the harmony below the tablature staff in the conventional manner? For example,

D: I vi ii V iii vi ii₆ V ...

And while we're on the subject, why isn't the same done for guitar *music*? After all, is the situation there much better than with tablature? What fraction of guitarists playing from music give thought to what is really going on harmonically? Anyhow, I, for one, would be very appreciative if editors supplied this.

Secondly, you might have noticed that I use this newsletter as a dumping grounds for any sort of crackpot idea that passes through my head (*guitar* ideas, anyway). Now, not too many people may have use for this latest brainstorm, but here goes. Even after many attempts at getting used to reading upside-down tablature, it never clicked for me. Going through Francesco's *Libro Terzo*, I discovered that if I turned the *page* upside-down, I could read the tablature passably well from right to left. It's a slight bummer you have to pick up the rhythm values from below the staff, but overall, the experience is far less exasperating than poking at wrong strings in upside-down tablature. I didn't smash my guitar once.

Donald Sauter

Announcements

Annaburg Manor. As part of their recreation program, Annaburg Manor is looking for volunteer musicians to play for room-bound residents. Guitarists are about perfect since we travel well, take up little space, make stimulating and entertaining polyphonic music, and are easier on the nerves than bag pipers. Anyone who is interested can call Ada Kohn at 335-8396.

Classified

1985 Manuel Contreras 'double-top' concert guitar for sale. Spruce/ Brazilian, 65cm. A few cosmetic nicks, otherwise, a beauty with great action (never buzzing or slapping). Priced 20% below market value since not going through dealer--around \$3,700. Call Bev Ross at 301-927-7833.

Call for Volunteers

Like any volunteer organization, the Washington Guitar Society is in need of volunteers. If you are interested in helping in any fashion, we can more than likely use you. If you are interested in volunteering, please call John Rodgers at (202) 686-1020.

Newsletter Folding Session. As the newsletter can be a fairly large project for just two people (Don Sauter and Kevin Vigil), we are going to try something new. On the last Sunday of every other month, there will be a newsletter folding, stapling, labeling and stamping session. It should be quick, easy and fun for anyone who participates. The first scheduled session is for June 28. If you are interested in joining the team, please call John Rodgers at (202) 686-1020.

Lawyer Wanted. The Washington Guitar Society is currently incorporated in the state of Virginia. We would like to be incorporated in D.C. and Maryland as well. If you are a lawyer and you would be willing to help us out pro bono, please call John Rodgers at (202) 686-1020.

WGS MEETINGS**Meeting Dates**

May 15, 1998

June 19, 1998

July 17, 1998

Performers/Workshops

Dawn Culbertson (lute)

Members Recital

TBA

Dates and performers are subject to change.

The Washington Guitar Society has meetings one Friday of every month. Specific dates are listed below. Meetings begin with an open stage from 7:30-8:00 pm and continue with a planned performance or workshop at 8 pm. Meetings are free and open to the public.

All meetings take place at the Washington Conservatory of Music which is located at 5144 Mass. Ave, Bethesda, MD...just 1/2 block from the District line. Housed in the Briggs Memorial Baptist Church. Plenty of free parking.

As you enter the parking lot, drive around to the other side of the building. There is a sign above the entrance to the Washington Conservatory. Enter *only* through this door as the church doesn't appreciate people wandering around the rest of the building.

More Than Just A Newsletter

The Washington Guitar Society is more than just a newsletter. We have lots of fun at our monthly meetings and we invite you to come out and join us. Don't forget, our monthly meetings begin with an open stage, so bring your guitar or just yourself and expect to enjoy yourself!

Calendar of Events

If you know of a performance that does not appear, please send the information to us to include. This includes everything from professionals, degree recitals to teacher studio recitals.

May 10 (Sun) 7 pm - Opera Duets and Solos. Guitarist Kevin Vigil will be performing two pieces on a program of Opera Duets and Solos. He will accompany Jean Kellogg (soprano) and Stephanie Bramble-Butler (mezzo-soprano) on *Pur ti miro* from Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea* and will also perform Fernando Sor's *Variations on a Theme of Mozart, op. 9* which is based on a theme from the first act of The Magic Flute. This performance will take place at the Clarendon Baptist Church, 1210 N. Highland Street, Arlington, VA. Near the Clarendon Metro.

June 19 (Fri) 7:30 pm - Members Recital. See page 2.

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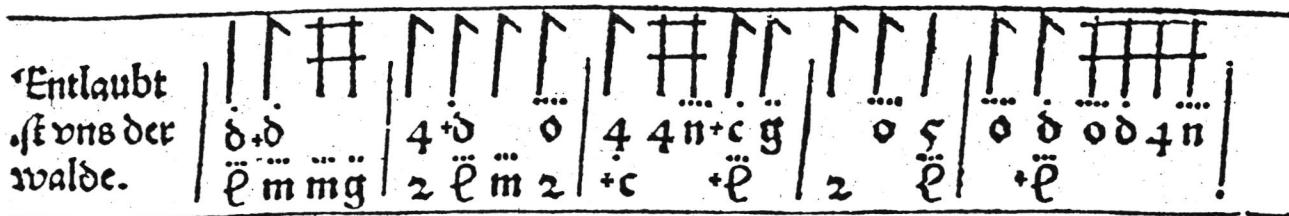
Dawn Culbertson will play the complete pieces for the WGS.



Italian Tablature (Vincenzo Capirola, c. 1525)



French Tablature (Pierre Attaignant, 1529)



German Tablature (Hans Newsidler, 1536)

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.	17.	18.	19.	20.	21.	22.	23.	24.	25.	26.	27.	28.	29.	30.	31.	32.	33.	34.	35.	36.	37.	38.	39.	40.	41.	42.	43.	44.	45.	46.	47.	48.	49.	50.	51.	52.	53.	54.	55.	56.	57.	58.	59.	60.	61.	62.	63.	64.	65.	66.	67.	68.	69.	70.	71.	72.	73.	74.	75.	76.	77.	78.	79.	80.	81.	82.	83.	84.	85.	86.	87.	88.	89.	90.	91.	92.	93.	94.	95.	96.	97.	98.	99.	100.
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