

# Washington Guitar Society

No. 60

June, July, August 2002

## The Alexandria Guitar Festival August 7 - 10

Concerts, classes and a vendors fair will take place from August 7-10 in the form of the 2002 Alexandria Guitar Festival, sponsored by the Northern Virginia Fine Arts Association. This is exciting news for the local guitar community. Aside from the annual Mid Atlantic Guitar Ensemble Festival (organized by the guitar teachers in the Fairfax County school system), it is the first all around guitar festival that I can think of since the 1986 Guitar Congress held at the University of Maryland.

### Featured Artists

**Nathan Fischer** is the festival director and will offer the first concert of the series on August 7 at 8 pm. Mr. Fischer is on the faculties of the Hochstein Music School and Finger Lakes College. His first recording, *Images*, was released in 2000.

**Joseph Mayes and the VCU Guitar Quartet** will present a concert on August 8 at 8 pm. Joseph Mayes will also be conducting a class on *The 19th Century Guitar* on August 9 from 10:30 - 11:30 am. Mr. Mayes is on the faculty of Rowan University. His latest CD, a collection entitled *Parlor Gems*, was performed on 19th century instruments.

**John Patykula** will be presenting a class on *The Music of Manuel Maria Ponce* on August 9 from 10:30 - 11:30 am. Mr. Patykula is the Assistant Chair and coordinator of the guitar program at the Virginia Commonwealth University. His recordings with classical banjoist John Bullard for the Darguson and Albany record labels and publications for Mel Bay have earned him a reputation for quality.

**Nicholas Goluses** will perform on August 9 at 8 pm. Mr. Goluses teaches and is director of the guitar programs at the world-renowned Eastman School of Music. Dr. Goluses has recorded for BMG, NAXOS, and Albany records, and is committed to performing new music for guitar by today's leading composers. [www.goluses.com](http://www.goluses.com).

**Larry Snitzler** will be performing the final concert on August 10 at 8 pm. He will also be offering a class Form and Analysis in Roland Dyens on August 8 from 10:30 - 11:30 am. Mr. Snitzler is on the faculties of American University and George Mason Universities. His recordings are available on the Concord Label.

**Peter Kodzas** holds degrees from the University of Belgrade in Yugoslavia, Ithaca College, and a DMA from the Eastman School of Music. He has performed throughout Europe and the eastern United States for guitar societies, universities, concert series and with orchestra. He is the first guitarist to hold the Jack L. Frank position as the Director of Community Education in guitar studies at the Eastman School of Music.

### Location

The Athenaeum at 201 Prince St. in Old Town Alexandria. The Athenaeum plays a small role in the history of Alexandria. It began as the Old Dominion Bank in 1851 and was later used as a library and a church. At the time of the Civil War, the Athenaeum was turned into a commissary headquarters for occupying Union Troops. It is now a gallery for the Northern Virginia Fine Arts Association and offers the perfect blend of intimacy and ambiance for salon guitar music.

### Students

Students of all levels (performing students, auditors, and beginners) are encouraged to participate in the Alexandria Guitar Festival. Please register for the course that best suits your ability. All individual master-classes and private lessons are forty minutes long.

**Performing Students** will receive three master-class lessons, entrance to the concerts, and entrance to the classes. It is required that performers be at the intermediate level with recommendation from their instructors. Master-class instructors will be assigned to you, but you may sign up for private lessons with select faculty. \$200 for Performers, \$50 for additional private lessons.

**Auditors** will receive admission to the master-classes, concerts, and the classes. If you choose, you may sign up for private lessons with select faculty. \$50 Auditor, \$50 for additional private lessons.

**Beginning Students** should register as auditors and then sign up for additional private lessons. Instructors will be assigned to best accommodate the ability of the students. A \$50 private lesson fee applies to each lesson.

## Contact Information

For questions contact Nathan  
Fischer at:

e-mail: [guitarnathan@hotmail.com](mailto:guitarnathan@hotmail.com)  
phone: (716) 546-5878.



**Stuart Weber Performs for WGS  
June 14, 2002**

Stuart Weber is a fourth generation Montana native whose passion for the land equals his passion for the guitar. He is among a new breed of classical guitarist, one of today's prophetic players shaping the future of the instrument. He performs the classics with uncompromising virtuosity while his original pieces interpret the natural environment with melodic inspiration and sensitivity. Honing his craft of guitar playing in relative isolation has produced a uniquely talented artist. Although his history with the guitar began at age eleven, he had no formal training until his apprenticeship with the legendary Christopher Parkening. In this fertile setting, Weber quickly developed classical sensibilities and techniques that would help define his individual style of guitar playing.

In addition to bringing to the concert stage guitar performances of traditional classical compositions including selections by Bach, Dvorak and Bartok, Stuart Weber's ability to draw out the unique character of the West in his original compositions has earned him a reputation as an artist of musical landscapes. His musical creations like The Gallatin Jig, The Missouri Breaks and Red, White and Yellowstone reflect the relationship between artist and nature. The Denver Post praised Weber as "a Western original". He has been featured in several publications including Acoustic Guitar Magazine and The Christian Science Monitor.

Mr. Weber has appeared as guest artist with symphony orchestras as well as chamber groups, and has collaborated with several renowned soloists both in the studio and on the concert stage. In addition to five highly acclaimed recordings on Bridger Records, Stuart Weber shares his talents with young people through his Master Classes and school presentations, designed to introduce students to the history and beauty of the classical guitar.

Mr. Weber's performance will take place at the Chevy Chase Community Center. For details, please see the calendar of events.

## **Bethlehem Guitar Festival Saturday, June 8**

The second annual Bethlehem Guitar Festival will take place on Saturday, June 8 at Moravian College in Bethlehem, PA. Recitals will be given by Chris Ladd, Ted Williams and Jason Vieaux. There will be a lectures on the *History of the Guitar* by Dr. Glenn Caluda, and *Rediscovering the roots of guitar making* by Michael Menkevich. There will also be a master class with Jason Vieaux and an Ensemble Play-in conducted by Randy Zwally (bring your guitar!).

This festival is a real deal at only \$45 for the entire day! Questions regarding festival content should be addressed to John Arnold at (610) 814-4809. The music department at Moravian College will be glad to answer questions regarding registration, (610) 861-1650.

## **WGS Orchestra Plays for the Whole Wide World!**

In our April meeting, WGS members and friends had a great time rehearsing, playing and recording "Tango Estampie" by Luc Lévesque. Now that the WGS has a website, thanks to Christine Fortin and Beverly Ross, the recording has been put up on the web in MP3 format. It sounds pretty darn good - you shoulda been part of it! Read about our session elsewhere in the newsletter. We apologize for not taking down full names of all 10 players, but here's a list of the WGS guitars "heard 'round the world!"

**Conductor:** Phyllis Fleming.

**Guitar 1:** Bob Wysong, Steve (???).

**Guitar 2:** Kate Majeski, Bev Ross.

**Guitar 3:** John Rodgers, Bill Dykes.

**Guitar 4:** Brian Kent, Debby Maatta

**Guitar 5:** Donald Sauter, Bob Nagle

The address of the WGS website is <http://home.att.net/~dcguitar/> You'll see a link that takes you to the "Tango Estampie" sound file. Or, if you're online and don't have the address at hand, just search for "washington guitar society" (in quotes) in Google. As of this writing, we come up second on the list of hits.

## **Media Watch:**

Isn't that the Sor Study in B minor from the Twenty Studies and Bach's Lute Prelude in those pill commercials? How about the Morgan Stanley commercial? That has to be Frank Vignola. Has everyone seen Woody Allen's "Sweet and Low Down" with Sean Penn? The Romeros have an hour long PBS documentary available with lots of good playing. Is it me or has anyone noticed how much solo classical guitar, group classical guitar, or classical guitar concerti playing lately on 103.5?

-Bill Dykes

## **Member Performances**

Since last going to press, there's only been one open stage opportunity. Eric Howard warmed up the audience for Yuri Liberzon's March 2002 recital with "Cavatina" (Stanley Myers) and "Venezolano Valz No. 2 (Antonio Lauro). Thanks Eric!

## THE JULY WGS PROGRAM

### Our Guitar Orchestra Keeps Rolling!

Haul yourself and your guitar to the Friday, July 19, meeting for another fun guitar orchestra session. It will start *promptly* at 7:30 pm at the Chevy Chase Community Center. (See the Calendar of Events for directions.) This time we will play four pieces by Michael Praetorius from his "Terpsichore" of 1612. These pieces were arranged for guitar ensemble by Gilbert Biberian. You probably already know how fresh and lively Praetorius' music is. If not, join in and find out!

All of the pieces are in five parts, and the parts themselves are all single-line. The good thing about playing single notes in an ensemble is that you can shape them up and punch them out in a way that just isn't possible in a multi-voiced part. For example, it's very difficult, if not impossible, to play a melody and bass line simultaneously with rest strokes.

All of the parts can be considered "easy". Only Guitar 1 gets near or above the 12th fret. The relative simplicity of the parts makes it possible to *fly* - L.A. Guitar Quartet, look out!

If you think you need a part in advance, I will mail it to you. See the contact information at the bottom; telephone much preferred over email. If you get my answering machine, or in your email, please tell me 3 things: your name; your complete mailing address; and whether you want a "high", "middle" or "low" part. Simple as that. But getting a part in advance is never a requirement - and even less necessary for these Praetorius pieces - so come on down in any case. As always, we welcome *everyone*, whether or not a WGS member.

As this newsletter goes to press, we don't know who will direct the guitar orchestra. We certainly don't want to burden the same people all the time. How about it, area teachers and performers? Here's a chance to join the fun *and* promote yourself at the same time. Give our president, John Rodgers, a call.

We'll record our performance as usual, and I promise we'll do a better job crediting the participants this time!

Donald Sauter  
 donaldsauter@email.com  
 301-577-5589

### WGS Members Recital

#### August 16

The WGS meeting for August will be a members recital. While the title suggests that only WGS members can participate, that is far from the truth. We would like to encourage members and non-members to come, play and/or listen to others. This is a great opportunity for amateurs and students. It is also a chance to meet others who share your interests, joys, and frustrations with our beloved instrument. Teachers are encouraged to invite your students to play. Our members recitals are always casual and fun; so come on out and play.

*For location information, please see the calendar of events in this issue.*

## Tango Revisited

As trumpeted ~~on~~ above, our guitar orchestra played and recorded "Tango Estampie" by Luq Lévesque at the April meeting. Almost everybody reading this missed a chance to be part of something that was not only a lot of fun, but much farther reaching and longer lasting than the event itself.

A very special thanks goes to Phyllis Fleming, D.C. area violinist (and tour guide extraordinaire) for directing the orchestra. You're going to have to find a better writer than me to describe what a great job Phyllis did pulling us together, and how enjoyable she made it for us all. The recording you hear on the web represents only about our third play-through of the Tango, if I remember rightly. Keep in mind that the orchestra consisted of players of all levels of ability - no more than two or three of whom had seen or played their part before (we'll get back to that.)

Tuning a bunch of guitars always seems to be a problem, but Phyllis came up with an effective and efficient method. The first step is for everybody to tune up as well as possible to some standard note. Then, a "concert-master" with trustworthy tuning gets the ball rolling by playing his open high E string. Then, going up and down the rows of the orchestra, everyone plays the same open string in rapid succession - ping, ping, ping, ping! When an out-of-tune note is heard, any keen-eared soul calls out "sharp!" or "flat!", and the process is halted for a moment while the note is fixed. The process continues until all the open string notes are right on. It goes quick.

Rehearsing and playing the Tango was, for me, as fun as the guitar gets. Still, there were some disappointments. The crowd was smaller than for our previous guitar orchestra. For "The Floating Ancillary Ants" in April we had 15 players; this time we had 10. Figuring everybody had had a great time then, I was hoping to see that group, plus more. Actually, I can't understand why we don't get numbers in the hundreds - not that we could accommodate that many, but if even a tiny percentage of the area's thousands of guitarists thought it was a fun thing to play with, and for, fellow guitarists, WGS orchestra sessions and members' recitals would burst at the seams. Teachers, this is a fantastic opportunity for your students.

I had distributed parts of the Tango in advance to more than 20 guitarists, about 5 of whom showed up. No doubt obligations arise that are more important than a guitar society get-together, but a better reliability rate would minimize people having to switch to a different part at the session.

We could do a *much* better job getting ourselves set up. It wasn't until 8:00 or so that everybody had finally settled into his spot in the orchestra. There were definite forces working against getting going - party types bent on socializing first - but I won't name names. If this was making me a little "uptight", you can understand I was having a flashback to the previous, "Ants" session, where we had also frittered away the first half hour - and got kicked out just as we were starting to pull the piece together. I could imagine - and would like to see - a hundred guitarists arriving and setting up within a few minutes. By the way, begging people who *do* show up to pull out their guitars and join



in is getting a bit wearisome.

It was unfortunate that the community center was somehow not expecting us that evening. I am very grateful that they wrestled a room away from a couple of ping-pongers for our sake, but still, it would be nice to have a meeting place where we can relax and have a good time, and not always feel like we're imposing and on the point of getting thrown out. Does anyone who digs guitar and enjoys entertaining have a ranch-style home with a large basement? All in all, though, the pluses beat the minuses by a country mile.

-Donald Sauter

## The Mystery of the Fisherman's Song

I have a guitar album called "John Williams Plays Spanish Music". There's a set of 3 transcriptions of pieces by Manuel de Falla on it: "Danse du Corregidor", "Fisherman's Song" and "The Miller's Dance". The liner notes identify the pieces as coming from Falla's ballet "The Three-Cornered Hat" (El Sombrero de Tres Picos). They claim, "The three featured dances of the ballet stand on their own as a short orchestral suite and are often heard in transcriptions for guitar." The same three pieces have been re-issued on a John Williams CD called "Spanish Guitar Music", and those liner notes also lead you to believe that the pieces all come from "The Three-Cornered Hat."

I have a recording of the complete ballet, performed by the Vienna Symphony Orchestra. ("The Three-Cornered Hat" also has a vocal part, sung here by Jean Madeira.) I was certain that when I played the album through the first few times that I had heard the music for the 3 pieces John Williams played. Later, when I wanted to note their exact locations in the recording, I easily found the Corregidor and the Miller, but not the "Fisherman's Song". At least twice I searched by skipping the needle forward little by little to the end. Then, just to be make sure, I played the whole ballet all the way through again - no luck.

I was baffled. Was I crazy to think I had already heard it in that recording? I also have several records with a suite of 3 dances from "The Three-Cornered Hat", the three being "The Neighbors", "The Miller's Dance" and "Finale Dance". Again, none of those are "The Fisherman's Song", or contain any part of it.

Then I turned to my book of musical themes by Barlow and Morgenstern. It very obligingly listed a big batch of themes under the heading, "3 Dances from El Sombrero de Tres Picos". There was "Dance of the Neighbors", "Danse du Corregidor" (Mayor's Dance) and "Miller's Dance". None of the printed themes were related to "The Fisherman's Song".

Notice how weird this is - everybody seems to have a different notion of what the so-called "3 dances" from "The Three-Cornered Hat" are! In the three sets mentioned here - the Williams record, the orchestral suite and the book of themes - only the "Miller's Dance" is common to all three. (Just to confuse me even more, the book of themes said "3 Dances", but then included themes from a 4th - a Jota!) Will the real "3 dances" please stand up!

On the flipside of my album with the "Three-Cornered Hat" suite is a suite from another Falla ballet called "El Amor Brujo" (Love

the Magician). Part 3 is called "The Magic Circle" and - guess what - it's the infamous "Fisherman's Song"! Crazy... but maybe now we're getting somewhere. I set out to nail down which ballet the "Fisherman's Song" is really from, and what it's really called.

Luckily, I have a complete recording of "El Amor Brujo". (This ballet also includes a vocal part, which is again sung by Jean Madeira. She also sings "Carmen" in my collection, and these roles fit her like a glove since Madeira's earthy, gypsy-like mezzo-soprano voice could only be the result of countless generations' worth of pure Hispanic blood gushing through her veins. Actually, she was born Jean Browning in Centralia, Illinois.)

In fact, my recording of "El Amor Brujo" is on the same record as my complete "Three-Cornered Hat". (I didn't mention that detail to make this more of a mystery!) Yes, I had heard the "Fisherman's Song" on my record with "The Three-Cornered Hat", but... I had heard it in "El Amor Brujo". (The album clocks in at a full 64 minutes, which should astonish anybody who remembers LPs.)

"The Fisherman's Song" occurs shortly before the well-known "Ritual Fire Dance" in the ballet, separated by a clock striking midnight. As for its real name, the liner notes on my album were no help. They give the story in brief (with no mention of a fisherman) but not a list of the musical sections within the work. Stranger yet, my book of musical themes supplies the themes to every section of "El Amor Brujo" - except for the "Fisherman's Song"! There's a conspiracy going on, I tell you. I decided this was a job for the Library of Congress.

I looked up Falla in the card catalog and found "El Amor Brujo". The card itself listed the sections of the piece. One section was titled "El circulo magico; romance del pescador." Bingo! Well, almost. Are those 2 names both applied to the same section of music, or does the "Fisherman's Song" follow, or form just a part of, "The Magic Circle"? I called up a piano transcription of "El Amor Brujo" published by J. and W. Chester (London and Geneva, 1921.) There we finally see that "Recit du Pecheur" is a subtitle that goes along with "Le Cercle Magique". (Flipping between English, Spanish and French doesn't slow us down, does it? Just recognize that the P-words mean "fisherman".) I've supplied a copy of the beginning of this section. It doesn't look like anyone's put the "El Amor Brujo" story up on the web (I'd've been pretty amazed to find such a thing), so I still don't know how the fisherman fits in or what a magic circle is.

I should note that my confusion (ignorance?) is not universal to all guitarists. At the Library of Congress I called up a copy of a guitar transcription by Emilio Pujol of "Recit du Pecheur". He knew right where he got it: "extrait de L'Amour Sorcier".

Thanks for bearing with me. I could've just said: Hey, ya know that Fisherman's song that the John Williams record says is from "The Three-Cornered Hat"? Well, it's really from "El Amor Brujo". But I thought I'd try to do it up right. As my main story-teller, O. Henry, says, "The art of narrative consists in concealing from your audience everything it wants to know until after you expose your favorite opinions on topics foreign to the subject. A good story is like a bitter pill with the sugar coating inside of it." So there you have it.

-Donald Sauter



## La soirée dans Grenade.

Claude Debussy, 1903

## Mouvement de Habanera

## Tempo giusto



## La Soirée dans Grenade

## Debussy

C# A D G B E

[illegible]

LE CERCLE MAGIQUE. (Récit du Pêcheur.)

From **El Amor Brujo**, Manuel de Falla, 1915

Andante molto tranquillo. (M ♩ = 44)

*m. d. Sopra*



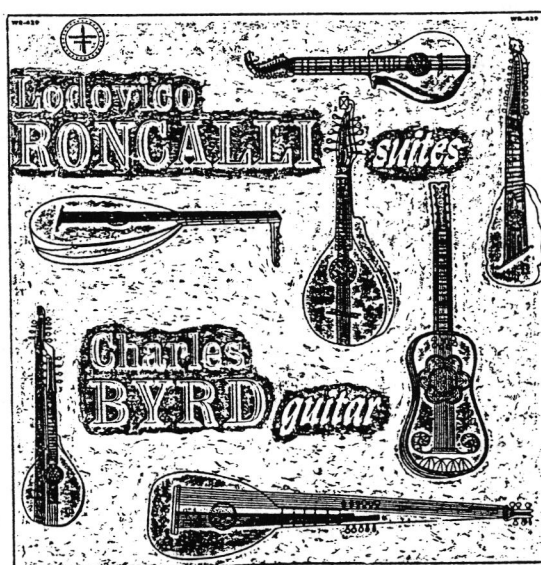
August 1958:

MARTHA SCHLAMME THEO BIKEL ODETTA  
JOSH WHITE JOMAPES GLEN YARBOROUGH  
BOB GIBSON MARILYN CHILD BIG BILL  
BROONZY SAM GARY GATEWAY SINGERS  
WILL HOLT PAUL CLAYTON STAN WILSON  
CARMENCITA TORRES BROWNIE MCGHEE  
ED MCCURDY SHELLY BERMAN FREDDY  
HELLERMAN GINA GLAZER PEGGY SEEGER  
GUY CARAWAN RAY BOGUSLAV ROBIN  
ROBERTS SONNY TERRY LUC PORET MYRA  
OJENIN WIN STRACKLE ELLY STONE RICHARD  
PICK PACO AMAYA DAVE SEAR KATIE LEE

# THE GATE OF HORN

July 1960:

Guitarist Charlie Byrd, heir to Charlie Christian's jazz throne, is primly known as Charles Byrd in a performance of *Four Suites by Ludovico Roncalli* (Washington), an intriguing offering of Seventeenth Century sounds. Byrd is no Segovia, but he plays with obvious skill and spirit. It's comforting to know that there are musicians who can cope with jazz and the classics without debasing either. Byrd lives, it seems, for just that.



November 1960:

There are only about ten Fleta guitars made each year in Barcelona, Spain. If the other nine are in as good hands as the one currently held by Charlie Byrd, the 1959 production has been well distributed. Byrd, who studied with Andres Segovia (he blows a Fleta, too), picked up the guitar during a European swing with the Woody Herman band last year; he's been strumming it impeccably ever since. Joined by bassist Keter Betts and drummer Bertell Knox — two of Byrd's cohorts in the Washington, D.C., jazz sphere — the guitarist devotes his latest LP, *Charlie Byrd Trio* (Offbeat), to a dilly of a dozen tunes. Among them are *Who Cares*, *How Long Has This Been Going On*, *Prelude to a Kiss*, *Gypsy in My Soul*, several blues and a *Funky Flamenco*. Free of the intruding horns that were present on his previous discs, Byrd zips and sighs in virtuoso fashion.





## The Guitar Strikes Again

Or should I say... for the first time? I've been searching early issues of a certain, well-known men's magazine, launched in 1953, for references to a topic of interest to me - all quite wholesome, I assure you. While I was at it, it occurred to me to dig out references to the guitar (meaning "classical guitar".) It's not surprising that guitar references were very rare, considering that the magazine's main music interest was jazz, and that the guitar's popularity was far below the heights it would reach later in the 1960s.

I count the absolute first, incontestable, bona fide reference to the classical guitar as appearing in the August 1958 issue (page 8.) The reference is tiny, and it doesn't even say "guitar", but it names a well-known and important American guitarist - Richard Pick. His name appears in an ad for a Chicago establishment, the Gate of Horn. (The magazine is also Chicago-based.) The ad doesn't say it, but the Gate of Horn was a folk music night club - the first one, actually. The ad crammed in a bunch of names of artists who perform there. Spotting this gave me particular pleasure, since Richard Pick still ranks as one of my all-time favorite guitar composers.

The first guitar mention of substance (as opposed to fleeting) should be of interest to Washington natives. It was in the July 1960 issue (page 15), and it was a review of a record album by - *not* Segovia, *not* Julian Bream - but one Charles Byrd. The album was called "Four Suites by Ludovico Roncalli" and was released on the local Washington Records label. (The logo incorporates the Washington Monument.) The next substantial classical guitar reference was in the November 1960 issue (page 32), and was also in a review of a Charlie Byrd album. This time it was a jazz record called "Charlie Byrd Trio".

You can find these 3 items reproduced here in the newsletter, along with a much-shrunk down copy of the "Ludovico Roncalli" album cover. (This cover is literally impossible to reproduce in black and white. We'll see how close we come after 4 generations of copying.) By the way, the back cover of the album has surprisingly informative and authoritative notes by Richard Keith on the Baroque guitar and Roncalli. Again, just because I haven't mentioned the name of this famous men's magazine doesn't mean I have anything to hide. The collection isn't mine, and those issues from the 1950s and '60s wouldn't even rate a PG-7 in this day and age. There is *nothing* to be embarrassed about.

(Name withheld by request)

## Debussy and De Falla

It's well-known that upon the death of Debussy, Manuel de Falla wrote the "Hommage pour le Tombeau de Debussy" (frequently called "Homenaje a Debussy".) This turned out to be Falla's only work for the guitar, and is considered by many to be the first quality work written for the guitar in the 20th century. The piece satisfied two requests made of Falla: a request for a guitar piece from Llobet; and a request for a contribution to an issue of "Revue Musicale" dedicated to the memory of Debussy. It's often pointed out that near the end of the "Homenaje" is a quote from a piano piece by Debussy called "Soiree dans Grenade". I thought some guitarists might like to see Debussy's original of those 4 measures. They represent a main theme of the "Soiree",

and begin at measure 17. I've supplied the next 2 measures to give a taste of Debussy's "Mouvement de Habanera".

I managed to work most of the notes into a little guitar transcription, presented in tablature. Tune string 6 down to C#. When nothing is shown under a rhythm stem, repeat the note or notes just played. You'll see that the same chord pattern is simply moved up the fingerboard. The small "h" indicates artificial harmonic.

DS

## Falls Church City Memorial Day Parade Monday May 27, 2002

Bill Dykes and the World's First Guitar Marching Band made the .8 mile parade again this year. One of only three musical groups listed, the small but hardy group played "Peter Gunn", "Yankee Doodle", and "The Star Spangled Banner" to rousing applause from the crowd lining the parade route.

This year the Band performed the "Star Spangled Banner" for the Reviewing Board, all of whom stood for the presentation. One of the few area parades that preserves the old small town feel, the audience represents one of the best and most receptive playing opportunities around.

"If you missed it this year, you'll have to play next year. Its fun!" says Andrew, the youngest player at seven years old.

-Bill Dykes

## Frank Vignola and the Hot Club USA.

One of the great things about living in D.C. is the Jazz and Blues influences present here for a long time. Django the Gypsy guitarist has haunted the air waves with his music since he actually played.

Mr. Vignola captured the essence of the character so well. From the line up right down to his instrument, he transports the audience back to the smoky little club at 2 in the wee hours of the morning.

No program, no tuxes, no excuses, he brought an equally masterful group to match the old Hot Club line up. James Cerrillo made up for the absent Bucky Pizzarelli displaying fire and reserve with maximum control along with neat fills and voicings that pumped the playing. Murry Wall on Bass stood out in his solos and layed down punchy lines to support the other jamming. Bob Meistro on fiddle hung in well and warmed to a frenzy, while rhythm guitarist Don Keeling held it together and provided a nifty vocal moment. I can imagine what a set must be like in a club in New York.

Mr. Vignola is no stranger to the MCing duties, he proved to be engaging and humorous. And wouldn't you know, Charlie Byrd is remembered again. No wonder when one considers just how much Mr. Byrd had to do with the promotion of guitar in D.C.

-Bill Dykes



### Carlos Barbosa-Lima Messenger from Brazil

A packed house greeted the guitarist as if he were home. And considering his contribution to The Washington Quintet and the influence of South American music in D.C., he could be.

This is one of those programs beyond familiar and one of the reasons people dig the scene here. At one time or another, most of the repertoire will find its way to you, especially with so many of the big time players and teachers so immersed. Its hard not to be taken with the catchy melodies and pervasive rhythm.

Presented in a laid back way, his intensity stood out instead in the playing

as Carlos made technically difficult parts sound easy. He took the stage to thunderous applause and played through half a set without a word. All the pieces were memorized. And toes never stopped tapping. In this case the guitar sounded like a whole band: distinct rhythm and bass comparable to a jazz group accompanying a hot guitar soloist. Classical and progressive at the same time.

Among all the South American music he brings the message. Gershwin. And Charlie Byrd. And like the Three Ladies played it last year, beat and rhythm.

Honorable mention has to go to the room. The setting was perfect for a traditional presentation with no microphones. The Westmoreland Church had acoustics that worked well. I'm sure Tim Healy put more than a little effort here in securing the Church for the performance.

Save those program notes. Richard Stover's write up was the best yet with enough to go on for a paper if you need to write one.

Over all, seeing the Series in its entirety was a privilege. As my friend Cory Whitehead says "I usually don't have that much time for going into concerts through the front door." Amen, we could all be starving. However, if there is the time, I've heard no better and find the state of our art alive and well and most inspiring. In my crowd there is always a lively debate of what guitar playing is and what styles of playing there are. The series covered the traditional classical to progressive classical, and while it may not seem revolutionary to modern media (the Washington Post chose the Vignola concert to highlight) the fact is that you too may run off with the Gypsies. As Tim says "Carry on and live in the Light." Lets see what Tim and Regis have next year and hope that we can all participate together again. If any of us have ever done any event arranging, then you know just how much those two have put into this.

-Bill Dykes

### Yuri Liberzon

At the WGS March Meeting at the Levine School John Rodgers told me to catch one of the players from Peabody about the second time I talked to him. Society Meetings are a good chance to hear one of them preparing for Juries. The same is true for the room at Levine's Music School. The good thing is the crowd leaves there pencils and grade books elsewhere.

Mr. Liberzon was terrific. Remember, you can play Bach for me anytime. Really well done Sonata in G-minor. His entire program was memorized with no minor weight pieces, either. World class mental acrobatics. My guess is that he killed his t.v. and swore off Nintendo. There is no way he's doing this without the time to train it right. Very pleasing results.

-Bill Dykes

### Three New CDs from Ben Verdery Music Beyond Categories

Benjamin Verdery has released three new CDs. Each could possibly be categorized in various sections of the typical record store. For example *Benjamin Verdery Soepa* could be labeled under classical guitar, but it also contains works by Prince (or is that 'the Artist' formerly known as Prince?). *Song for Our Ancestors* with steel string guitarist Will Coulter could be labeled under Classical Guitar because of Benjamin Verdery, Celtic Music because of Will Coulter, or even World Music as the title track is based on an African Mbira piece titled *Taireva* and the CD also features a *Tibetan Prayer Song*. Finally there is *Ben Verdery UFONIA*. In the liner notes, Ingram Marshall cannot define or categorize this music other than to say, "So let's not worry about what it is exactly, but admire the playing, dig the togetherness and enjoy the music. File, simply, under Ufonia".

*Benjamin Verdery Soepa* (MR200/Mushkatweek Records 200) is the 'sequel' recording to *Ride the Wind Horse: American Guitar Music* (Sony Classical). This CD features music by American composers: Prince, Jack Vees, Van Stiefel, Daniel Asia, John Anthony Lennon, Benjamin Verdery, and Ingram Marshall. Each composer was present for the recording of their piece. Unfortunately, there is not enough space to review each individual piece, but a few are featured here.

*4 the tears in your eyes* by Prince opens this collection of Music with a delicate introduction and the theme initially being stated in harmonics, then followed with further development by Mr. Verdery's silky smooth tone and keen sense of melodic line. Other compositions by Prince that are featured on this recording are *Purple Rain*, *Kiss* and *Let's Go Crazy*. All of these arrangements for classical guitar were made by Mr. Verdery. Each arrangement draws from the main thematic material by Prince, but seem to take on a new life with Mr. Verdery's interpretation. These compositions fit right in with the other compositions on this CD and should not be negated by their 'pop' influence. This is simply great music brought to life on solo classical guitar. This is not Mr. Verdery's first experience drawing from the world of rock influence. His previous CD *Ride the Wind Horse* included *Little Wing* and *Purple Haze* by Jimi Hendrix.

*Stummage* by Jack Vees was written for Ben after the composer saw him carrying around a strange looking guitar... a Soloette travel guitar. Mr. Vees chose to write a piece for this instrument and includes the use of a volume pedal and digital delay (with a delay of 18 seconds(!!!) which is repeated twice.) This allows the live performance to be far removed from the echoed sounds resulting in a sort of guitar trio. It is fascinating to listen to the various textures produced from this combination.

*On Wet Roads on Autumn Nights* by Van Stiefel is a wonderful

piece that sounds strongly influenced by the music of Augustine Barrios (admitted by the composer in the liner notes) and Nakita Koshkin. Mr. Stiefel writes, "The other, perhaps more recognizable, sound-image comes from John Barry's Midnight Cowboy score... a simple descending major mode pattern that remains bright as it spirals downward".

*Soepa* by Ingram Marshall is the title track of this recording. The word 'soepa' means "patience" in Tibetan according to the Dalai Lama. This composition is similar to Jack Vee's composition *Strummage* in that it is written for amplified guitar with digital delay. The delay is short in comparison with the 18 second delay of *Strummage*. The use of digital delay is not merely an effect, but an integral part of this composition. Its use creates layers of texture and harmony not possible with a single classical guitar. The second of the three movements features an absolutely beautiful melody with tremolo accompaniments.

When listening to the two compositions by Mr. Vees and Mr. Marshall, I am somewhat reminded of Steve Reich's composition *Electric Counterpoint*. Mr. Reich's piece lacks the real time performance of these two compositions as it is for solo guitar with tape. Listening to the carefully layered textures of these two compositions, knowing that they occur in real time adds much interest to the performance and would certainly add to a live performance.

*Song for Our Ancestors* (Solid Air Records) is a duo recording of Benjamin Verdery and William Colter. This recording blends the sounds of classical guitar (played by Mr. Verdery) and steel string guitar (played by Mr. Coulter).

This recording features arrangements of traditional Irish, Shaker, African, Scottish and Tibetan music. There are arrangements of music by Saint-Saëns, and Hans Hassler/J.S. Bach. This recording also features two original compositions; one is by Bill Coulter and the other by Ben Verdery. Of special interest is *Happy XMAS, War is Over* by the late John Lennon.

All the arrangements and composition make full use of the tonal contrasts between the two instruments. Both performers share parts in such a way that one doesn't discern "Guitar 1 and Guitar 2", instead the music is unified by the intertwining of these two great musicians. It is as if the two musicians are in full dialogue and agreement, simply sharing their common interests with each phrase of music they encounter.

My personal favorite from this collection is the *Tibetan Prayer Song*. I first became familiar with this tune from a previous arrangement for solo guitar by Benjamin Verdery. It is a melody that can be played repeatedly and produce a meditative atmosphere. When this piece is played by the steel and nylon stringed instruments, new dimensions of meditation arise, becoming almost hypnotic.

Both Mr. Coulter and Mr. Verdery deserve much credit not only for their masterful execution of this music, but for their arranging skills. This music simply works on a very organic level that suggests that this project was very personal and fulfilling.

**Ben Verdery UFONIA** (Mushkatweek Records 100) features compositions by Benjamin Verdery for his 'band'. UFONIA is made up of Vicki Bodner (oboes), John Marshall (percussion),

Harvie Swartz (bass), Keith Underwood (flutes) and Ben Verdery (guitars).

In the liner notes, Mr. Verdery states, "During a rehearsal in 1991 (for the CD *Some Towns and Cities*), I looked up and realized that strumming loudly in a rhythm section along with Harvie Swartz and John Marshall, accompanying Keith Underwood and Vicki Bodner was ridiculously fun!" This CD is as fun to listen to as I'm sure it is for all the members of this band to play.

UFONIA could be described as music and a group of chamber musicians who redefine chamber music. There is really no way to categorize this music. It is hybrid, borrowing from pop, folk, jazz, classical and world musics. *Seattle* features a lyrical melodies that are intertwined with a catchy, toe tapping motive. *Song before Spring* features a beautiful oboe melody in duo with alto flute. *Voices in the Pajaro Valley* sounds like a jazz combo, complete with a latin beat, solos and a familiar returning melody. *Prelude and Wedding Dance* is the only solo guitar composition on the CD. It is dedicated to Rie (Ben's wife). The prelude is made up of repeated notes and strumming chords that give hints of the main theme to appear in the dance. The dance has a very catchy tune that is made up of syncopated rhythms and repeated notes, which is complimented with improvisatory-like interludes. The melody is presented in various orchestrations (strumming, harmonics, and fragments). *In the Garden: The Girl and the Butterfly* is dedicated to Ben's daughter Mitsuko. It begins with every bird call imaginable in a tropical rain forest, followed by the entrance of congas and comments from 12-string steel string guitar. This leads to various episodes that seem to represent the journey of this young girl following (chasing) a butterfly through the rain forest. Every piece seems to have it's own special character. Other titles include: *Midnight Mango*, *Ellis Island*, *Ua Apuakea*, *Firefly* (for Ben's son, John), and *Groundhog Day*.

All three of these CDs show various views of Ben Verdery's versatility as a guitarist, musician, interpreter, and composer. Perhaps he should be called "The Artist". To quote Ingram Marshall again, "... let's not worry about what it is exactly, but admire the playing, dig the togetherness and enjoy the music".

-Kevin Vigil



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### WGS Meetings

The Washington Guitar Society (WGS) has meetings on Friday of every month. Specific dates and performers are listed in the calendar of events. Meetings with a featured performer begin with an open stage from 7:00 - 7:30 pm and continue with the featured performer at 7:30 pm. Meeting locations currently alternate between the Chevy Chase Community Center (5601 Connecticut Ave., NW, Washington, DC) and the Levine School of Music (2801 Upton St., NW, Washington, DC).

### WGS Open Stage

The WGS hosts an open stage at the start of those meetings which spotlight a featured performer. It's not a competition, just plain fun. The open stages start at 7:00 pm and are followed by the featured performer at 7:30 pm. WGS 'Members Recitals', 'Youth Concerts', and 'Ensemble Sessions' do not feature an open stage.

### Classified

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### WGS Web Site

The Washington Guitar Society now has a web site thanks to the generosity of Christine Fortin. At the site, you will find newsletter articles, links to other guitar sites and much more. Since the hard copy newsletter only comes out every three months, this is a way for the WGS to inform you of up to the minute events. Please visit our site at:

**<http://home.att.net/~dcguitar>**

**e-mail: [dcguitar@att.net](mailto:dcguitar@att.net)**

### Calendar of Events

**June 7 (Fri) 7:00 pm** - Kevin Vigil and Monika Gallegos (narrator) presented at Hidden Pond Nature Center, 8511 Greeley Boulevard, Springfield, VA. The performance will be held outside at the ampitheatre. The program will feature Vigil's Sketches of Children as well as works by other composers. There is no admission, but donations to benefit Hidden Pond will be accepted. For information call 703 451-9588 or visit [www.co.fairfax.va.us/parks/hidden.pond](http://www.co.fairfax.va.us/parks/hidden.pond).

**June 14 (Fri) 7:30 pm** - **Stuart Weber** presented by the Washington Guitar Society at the Chevy Chase Community Center, 5601 Connecticut Ave. NW, Washington, DC. It's just south of the intersection at Connecticut and McKinley St., across from the Avalon movie theatre. This performance is free and open to the public. Show up early (7 pm) with or without your guitar for the WGS open stage... it's lots of fun! For more information, please call John Rodgers at (301) 767-3383.

**June 23 (Sun) 7 pm** - **Duo Con Brio** Kevin Vigil (guitar), Barbara Vigil (flute) presented at Lake Anne Plaze in Reston, VA off of North Shore Drive. Free and open to the public. For information, call MSE Productions at (703) 620-5554.

**July 19 (Fri) - 7:30 pm** - **WGS Guitar Orchestra.** Come join the fun with the WGS Guitar Orchestra. For more info. on the session itself, please see Don Sauter's Article "**THE JULY WGS PROGRAM Our Guitar Orchestra Keeps Rolling!**" This will take place at the Chevy Chase Community Center, 5601 Connecticut Ave. NW, Washington, DC. It's just south of the intersection at Connecticut and McKinley St., across from the Avalon movie theatre. This performance is free and open to the public.

**August 16 (Fri) 7:30 pm** - **WGS Members Recital.** This will take place at the Chevy Chase Community Center, 5601 Connecticut Ave. NW, Washington, DC. It's just south of the intersection at Connecticut and McKinley St., across from the Avalon movie theatre. This is the perfect opportunity for WGS members and friends to perform for their piers. Feel free to perform in solos, duos, trios, etc... If you are interested in playing, please contact John Rodgers at (301) 767-3383.

### HELP WITH WGS NEWSLETTER

We need new people to take on the production of the WGS newsletter. Jay Juan is currently taking care of aging parents and Kevin Vigil is finding that time is very limited with the birth of his daughter. Bill Dykes will continue to work on the newsletter committee, but it is a big job for only one person. If you would like to help with the newsletter, please contact John Rodgers at (301) 767-3383.

### Officers/Editors

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Vice President:	Bill Carlson	(703) 548-3703
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