

Washington Guitar Society

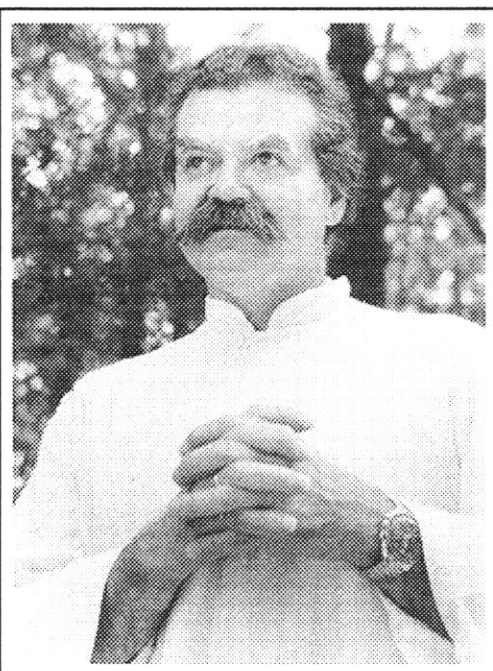
No. 36

January/February 1998

WGS January Meeting Features Yoga For Musicians Workshop

With the stress of the holiday season, you may want to unwind with this wonderful workshop by John Giunta. This workshop will be presented for the January WGS meeting on Friday, January 16, 1998 at 8:00 pm at the Washington Conservatory of Music. For further details see WGS Meetings on page 9.

John is a professional musician and certified yoga teacher. He holds an M.A. in guitar performance from George Mason University and has studied at the Mannes College of Music and at Juilliard in New York City. He has taught classical guitar since 1970 and has performed as a musician in solo recital, in off-Broadway productions, on



radio and television, on a national tour in musical theater. In addition to the classical guitar, he also plays flutes, recorder, mandolin, accordion and theremin. He has published articles on both music and yoga. John Giunta is also an improvisational composer who is always searching for new, experimental and spiritually driven venues. He currently teaches guitar at Mount Vernon College and is a member of the Musical Wellness Faculty of Levine School of Music in Washington, DC.

John Giunta has been a yoga practitioner and meditator since 1974. He teaches yoga classes in several Washington, DC and Northern Virginia locations to individual musicians, ensembles, actors, and anyone who must appear in public, as a tool for managing stress while performing. In his workshop for the Washington Guitar Society, John will discuss and demonstrate techniques for improving breathing and posture, enhancing memory and concentration and getting started with a meditation technique. There will be active participation in the workshop; exercises are optional but encouraged. Participants should wear loose clothing. The workshop is free and open to the public. For more information, contact John Rodgers at (202) 686-1020.

Paul Moeller Performs for WGS February Meeting

The Washington Guitar Society is pleased to present Paul Moeller as the featured performer for its February 20th meeting. The performance will take place at 8 pm following the WGS open stage. For more information, see WGS Meetings on page 9.

Here is some information on our featured performer...

On July 22, 1997 Paul Moeller of Wonder Lake, Illinois was the 1st Place winner of the 1997 International Guitar Concerto Competition sponsored by D'Addario Strings Corporation. Paul was awarded \$4000.00 and a performance of the concerto with the Connecticut Concerto Consort with McKenzie Albert conducting. The concert will be broadcast on public radio. The work performed was *Guitar Concerto* by the prolific English composer Lennox Berkeley (1903-1989).

Paul Moeller was born in 1972 in Woodstock, Illinois. He received his Bachelor's Degree in music from Northern Illinois University in 1995. Paul was the first place recipient of many major awards including the Northern Illinois University Concerto Competition, The Chandler Starr Scholarship Competition, and The National Federation of Music Clubs National Guitar Competition. In May of 1996, Paul was the first place winner of The First of America Midwest Young Artists National Bach Competition. In 1997 Paul received his Master's Degree in Music Performance and Literature from the prestigious Eastman School of Music in New York where he was awarded the honorary Performer's Certificate from Eastman, given only to students of the highest caliber. Paul's guitars were constructed in 1980 and 1992 by Miguel Rodriguez in Cordoba, Spain. He has performed throughout the United States as well as in Europe. In fall of 1997 Paul began his studies at Peabody Conservatory of Music in Baltimore, Maryland under the tutelage of Manuel Barrueco.

We look forward to hearing Paul perform and hope that you will join us.



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From the President

I have been in this job for about three months now and I've really been having a lot of fun. I've finally met a lot of you and I've been to more meetings than ever before. Most of the real work is still being done by those who have always done it, but we're making some progress toward spreading it around a little.

We've been having great programs at our meetings and really good attendance. I hope this continues. Our dues are still really low. I hope this will encourage you to make contributions to the John E. Marlow Guitar Series when you renew or join. We have been able to focus on everything but running a concert series and this is great for us.

So come on out and vote, volunteer your services and come to meetings. I hope to see you soon.

John Rodgers

WGS To Hold Special Elections on January 16

Please come vote in our election at our January 16 meeting (see WGS Meetings on page 9). The election will take place just prior to the "Yoga for Musicians" workshop to be presented by John Giunta. Our by-laws state that our officers are to be elected, and we now have candidates for vice president and secretary.

Morris Lancaster has agreed to run for secretary. I have known Morris for about a year. He is an avid student of the guitar and a member of our society. He is highly skilled with computers and, most importantly, willing and eager to volunteer his services.

Bill Carlson has agreed to run for vice-president. I have known Bill for over thirty years. He has been a teacher and performer for longer than that. He is well known and well liked in the guitar world, and his many contacts have been very helpful to us already.

If there are any others interested in being a candidate, please call me and let me know. So far as I know, our elections have always been uncontested, but additional candidates are always welcome.

I know my election as president took about two minutes and I won by one vote. Who says one vote can't make a difference?

John Rodgers

Risa Carlson - A Review

On November 21, Risa Carlson played a solo recital for our WGS main program. I have heard Risa play on several occasions, but not as a soloist. This was one of the finest performances I've attended in a long time.

Risa began with a sonata by Domenico Scarlatti followed by the well-known *Prelude, Fugue and Allegro* of J.S. Bach. The Scarlatti was a very nice opening and the Bach was played about as well as I've ever heard it. The *Prelude* was beautifully clear and well-phrased, with hardly a slur at all. The *Fugue* was clean and coherent with the *Allegro* as an exciting finish.

Next was Mauro Giuliani's *Sonata Eroica*. I'm not very familiar with the piece, but it was obviously very well played. The performer's comments were both amusing and informative. If indeed, as Risa suggested, Giuliani didn't write it, someone copied his style well, and in any case provided us with another nice big 19th century guitar work.

The program closed with the *Nocturnal* by Benjamin Britten. I often have a low tolerance for long 20th century guitar works, but this was just wonderful. Again Risa's comments were excellent and I think made the piece a lot more accessible to people who weren't familiar with it. I think we all experienced a few uncomfortable moments at time during this piece, but all was well when *Come Heavy Sleep* finally arrived.

This was a great performance by a wonderful young guitarist. I'm delighted we had such a large, enthusiastic audience for Risa on such a nasty, rainy night.

John Rodgers

RECENT WGS PROGRAMS

Kevin Vigil and Friends, September 13, 1997
Barbara Vigil flute, Maria Carroll de la Cerda flute
and John Graham guitar

Two Pieces	Alfredo Vianna
<i>Vou Vivendo & Pretencioso</i>	
Sonata in F	Giuseppe Sammartini
<i>Allegro ma non troppo, Adagio, Allegro</i>	
Early One Morning	arr. Thomas Brawn
Trio for two Flutes and Guitar	Hector Berlioz
Cinco Canciones	Alice Gomez
El Vaquero (The Cowboy)	
La Morena (The Cinnamon-skinned Woman)	
Las Montañas (The Mountains)	
Las Olas (Waves)	
El Pajarito Rojo (The Little Red Bird)	
Creeds	Kevin Vigil

Risa Carlson, November 21, 1997

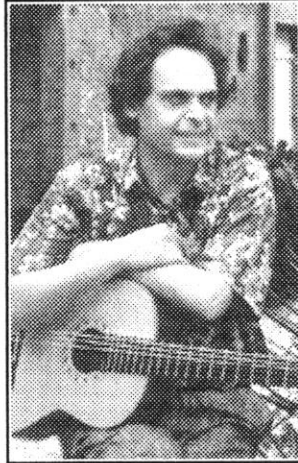
Sonata in A	Domenico Scarlatti
Prelude, Fugue & Allegro	J.S. Bach
Sonata Eroica	Mauro Giuliani
Nocturnal	Benjamin Britten

Roger Rutti, December 12, 1987

Lute Suite in e minor	Silvius Leopold Weiss
<i>Prelude, Allemande, Bourree, Courante, Gigue</i>	
Etude No. 1	Heitor Villa-Lobos
Prelude No. 4	
Choros No. 1	
3 Venezuelan Waltzes	Antonio Lauro
Julia Florida	Augustin Barrios
Waltz Opus 8, No. 3	
La Maja de Goya	Enrique Granados
Romanza	Antonio Rovira
Tango en Skai	Roland Dyens
Tico Tico	Zehirreau Abreu

Roland Dyens Concert/Masterclass

The John E. Marlow Guitar Recital Series will be featuring classical guitarist and composer Roland Dyens in a concert and masterclass. If you were unable to see his performance last season on the Marlow Series, you missed one of the greatest artists that has ever performed in Washington. You will, however, have another chance to see him perform and for those who are interested, you will have a chance to learn from this great artist in a master class format.



The concert will take place on Friday, February 13 at 8 pm at the WCCC Performing Arts Auditorium (see calendar of events). Tickets will be \$20 at the door, but are also available in advance from The Guitar Shop (1216 Connecticut Ave., NW) and the Guitar Gallery (3514 Connecticut Ave., NW)

The masterclass will take place at the Alliance Francaise on Saturday, February 14 from 12-4. It will cost \$15 to Audit the class and \$60 to perform. Players interested in performing for Mr. Dyens must submit an audition tape. For further information on the masterclass, please call Regis Ferruzza at (202) 265-3915.

Roland Dyens is a guitarist whose roots come from the early improvising virtuosos who were conversant with the classics of their time and who were in fact writing the classics of the future, sometimes right in front of the audience at the time.

Born on October 19, 1955 in Tunis, Roland Dyens started studying the guitar at the age of 9. At 14, he joined the Ecole Normale de Musique de Paris, in the class of the Spanish master Alberto Ponce and passed his Concert Degree with high honors in 1976. He then won several prizes, among which the Villa-Lobos Special Prize at the Alessandria International Contest (Italy,) and became a laureate of the Beracasa and Menuhin Foundations. Roland Dyens studied composition and orchestration with the master Désiré Dondeyne.

Roland Dyens is an interpreter, arranger, improviser and composer, simultaneously carrying on the double career of Professor and concert artist. He is a much sought-after participant in various festivals and prestigious places in France and abroad. He appeared in the Salle Cortot, Theatre de Paris, Espace Cardin, Salle Gaveau, Auditorium des Halles, International Guitar Festivals of Nice, Cannes, Paris, Liege (Belgium), Arvika (Sweden), Tychy (Poland), Esztergom (Hungary), Marktoberdorf (Germany), the Classical Guitar Festival of Great Britain, Festival du Marais (Paris), Aix en Provence, Radio France Festival at Montpellier, Midem, Printemps de Bourges, Musicora, Carrefour Mondial de la Guitare in Martinique and many more. He toured successfully in the Middle-East, Indonesia, Scandinavia, Poland, Brazil... He is regularly invited

on radio and TV shows. Teacher of high reputation of training courses and master classes, he is invited to also be part of the jury at the Scola Cantorum, Ecole Normale de Musique de Paris, Conservatoire National Supérieur de Paris, and great national and international contests (Montelimar, Geneva, Fort de France, Bari, etc.). In 1987, he won the Grand Prix du Disque of the Charles-Cros Academia during the celebration of the centenary of Heitor Villa-Lobos, and the year after, he was classified among the hundred best living guitarists, of all styles. In 1992 and 1995, he appeared on the cover of three major guitar magazines in the world (Les Cahiers de la Guitare, Classical Guitar, Gitarre & Laute). Roland Dyens has numerous artistic and teaching activities. As a soloist, he gives concerts, of course. As a composer he wrote several works for guitar solo, 2 octets, a concerto for guitar and string orchestra (Concerto Métis), a concerto for guitar and ensemble of 21 guitars (Concerto en Si) as well as a guitar duo, Coté Nord which he played with Alberto Ponce in 1993 and which is brilliantly and successfully performed by the famous Assad duo, to whom he dedicated this work. His arrangements raise a unanimous enthusiasm and shed new light on the possibilities of the guitar (French songs, Round Midnight, Berimbau, Bachianas Brasileiras N° 5, etc.). Because of his unique talent and the originality of his music, Roland Dyens is definitely classified among the most innovative and complete musicians of his generation.

Guitar on the 'Net: Is tablature still valid?

Recently there was a discussion about tablature on the USENET discussion group rec.music.classical.guitar. There were quite a few postings but, to be honest, not much was said that hasn't been heard a million times before. Still, you can't blame a guy, no matter which side he's on, for not letting what the boneheads on the other side say go unchallenged.

You have a choice: you may read the originals to the tune of 800 lines or so, or you can trust my little summary here (a risky proposition, at that.) [A bonus for sticking with me is you get an occasional extra 2 cents in brackets like this.]

The question was, is tablature still a valid system? SM was the first to respond, calmly listing tablature's advantages. It's easier and faster to sight-read; no sharps and flats to wrestle with; and no clutter from string numbers. An *apparent* problem is that modern tablatures are generally not complete, but that is not tablature's fault. It *could* contain note durations, dynamics, accents, fingerings, etc.

[This is one of my soap-box issues, and WGS newsletter readers have seen samples of complete and self-contained tablature. I'm not completely happy with fingerings in tablature. The best I can do is put them above the staff in red to distinguish them from the fret numbers, but, as is the case with music, they are not so instantly useful up there as right in front of the notehead. Fortunately, fingerings are needed far less in tablature.]

SM is puzzled why people claim it is harder to see the composer's intentions in tablature. After all, tablature is just another way of writing musical notes, "and has no *essential* differences from standard notation." [I want to agree with this 100 percent, and I almost do. If rhythm values are placed above

the tablature staff, the differentiation of musical lines *might* be obscured. How often is this a big deal, though? And when it is a problem, stems and flags could be attached to individual fret numbers.]

TS asks somewhat testily, how come the violin family doesn't use tablature? And if you put all that stuff in tablature, it'll be a complete mess. [I'd be glad to show anybody neat, readable tablature that is complete.] TS rants about classical guitarists being lousy readers [although he doesn't say it's *tablature* they're reading poorly.]

SW feels that tablature can stifle creativity. With music you can change the fingerings to personalize a piece. In tablature, you would have to rewrite the passage. [This is not hard, actually, and may be easier than changing fingerings. To move a note to the next higher string you just subtract the number of semitones separating the strings.]

CU, of the Lute Society of America, points out how handy it is that tablature works for a whole family of instruments. If the soprano lute player is sick, a tenor lute player can jump in. You won't see that in a modern string quartet, now will you?

But TS points out that some people can play 4 different saxophones and 2 flutes. [But the woodwind instruments all use the same fingerings. The *printed music* is transposed so that it comes out sounding at the correct pitch. This allows for a sax player to play the entire family of saxophones and also makes being a doubler much easier.] CU keeps reminding him that he is harping on monophonic instruments. Guitars and lutes have a lot more going on; check out the complexity of the music of Francesco da Milano, Dowland and Weiss for a start.

TS is incorrigible. He says that just because tablature may have worked for the lute doesn't make it valid today - any more than Egyptian hieroglyphics.

There, see what those of you without computers are missing?

Donald Sauter

More tablature talk - Let's all play violin!

In the USENET discussion on tablature, a point was made to the effect that, if tablature is bad enough for string players, it should be bad enough for us guitarists. That set off some warning buzzers in my head. The claim would seem to be based on the notion that the string world has attained divine perfection in every conceivable way.

I wonder if the violin family isn't doing itself a disfavor by shunning tablature. It would seem to have all the advantages for bowed strings that it has for guitar.

Lesson 1a shows a little tune I've put into violin tab. I'm not saying what it is. If you can see what the tune is, that would serve to refute the claim that tablature doesn't show music. It would support the claim that there is no essential difference between tablature and standard notation.

If you can't see the tune, then that gives you even extra incentive

to take a few seconds to tune the top 4 string of your guitar like a violin and play through it. I recommend everybody, particularly tablature-scoffers, try this. (To tune like a violin, match the 7th-fret note with the open string above it, giving intervals of a 5th.)

Back so soon? My suspicion is that most of you played it without error on the first shot, and everybody else got it on the second - even you who have never played from tablature before; even you who have never held a violin in your life.

Think of the implications. You walk into your first-ever violin lesson, the teacher puts a violin (with pencilled-in frets) in your hand, a page of tab on the music stand, and without a single word of instruction you are playing violin music. If that doesn't boggle your mind, you are unbogglable.

Oh, but that was in the key of C, you say. Kid's stuff! All right then, try lesson 1b: same tune, 5 sharps.

No big deal, right? And to think it also makes you an instant viola and cello player. Pretty amazing, huh?

Getting back to guitar, another point the above exercises demonstrate is how simple it is to play in altered tunings with tab. This *should* have huge implications in the area of guitar transcriptions, if not guitar composition in general, but that deserves a whole article in itself.

In a master class once, I heard a world-renowned guitarist - one of the biggest names - say, no, he couldn't read tablature. The best guitar reader I know personally also claims he can't read tablature. This always tickles my funny bone. It reminds me of a European friend who came over to the U.S. and went to rent a car. When they said none of the cars had a manual transmission, she exclaimed, "But I don't know how to drive an automatic!"

Once I put a piece of multi-voiced classical guitar tablature in front of clarinetist friend who had never played guitar before. She played it slowly, but without error note-wise or rhythm-wise. And then she *laughed* at what an easy instrument the guitar is. The wound still hasn't healed.

I know that when I started on tab, within minutes my reading was at a level that took 10 or 15 years to reach with music. (Of course, my tablature reading benefited from 20 years of guitar music reading. I also only deal with one easy-to-read modern tablature format.)

Despite the above pro-tablature observations, my point is not that tablature is superior in every way to music notation - just that it wins hands-down with respect to altered tunings, and that it wins hands-down for getting started.

This may come as a surprise based on the foregoing, but I *don't* make the blanket claim that tablature is easier to read than music. In the special case of our standard guitar tuning I find that reading music is easier - IF the music is fingered to my liking.

(If it's unfingered, or the fingerings are wrong for my hands, or the fingerings are notated in an unhelpful way, all bets are off. I make no apologies for this dependence on fingerings; without them I see *too* many possibilities to sort through on the fly.)

My experience indicates that with enough practice, you can reach

a point where it takes less brain power to recognize a pattern of notes than to read and process each and every fret number in tablature. Still, it takes many years to reach this point and, again, that's only for *one* tuning.

There's a lot more to say about the readability of tablature, and the comparative readability of tablature versus music, but that's enough for now. Try out the tablature pieces in this newsletter.

Donald Sauter

Minuet and Gavotte by François Campion

These two little pieces come from a manuscript by François Campion called *Pièces de Guitare* (1705). They are part of a 5-movement suite in F. We know that F is not such a great key in the standard tuning, but Campion uses an alternate tuning: A C F Bb E from low to high. Notice the lowest 3 strings are notes of an F major chord. Imagine trying to play these pieces on guitar from notes!

Baroque guitar tablature has a few quirks that perhaps make it less than ideal for demonstrating how simple tablature is to read, but you can handle it. Keep in mind:

- Arrows indicate strums.

- ~ is a trill from above; ^ is a lower grace note. It's not hard to determine which neighboring note to use. In the Gavotte, measure 8, beat 1, I wrote it in for your benefit (all right - for mine, I admit.)

- Only the *fingered* notes of a strummed chord might be shown. Add as many lower open strings as sound good to you. (Write them in, if that helps.)

- The 5th course on the Baroque guitar had a high octave (or was perhaps a pair of high octaves.) To respect this on the modern guitar, you might want to add the high octave in certain places. For example, in the Minuet, measures 12 and 13, there is a low A (open string 5). Consider adding or substituting the next higher A (string 3/fret 4.) Write in your solution.

In my tablature, quarter notes are the longest rhythm value used. If a stem shows no frets and no arrowhead, simply sustain the previously played chord or note.

Donald Sauter

Tablature Debated

After reading Don Sauter's articles on tablature (see "Guitar on the 'Net: Is tablature still valid?" and "More tablature talk - Let's all play violin!"), I am compelled to put my two cents in. Fortunately, I have the leisure of including my thoughts in this edition as I compile the newsletter on *my* computer. If others wish to continue the debate, please feel free to send something to me for the next issue.

Tablature is perhaps the largest reason why many of the great composers never wrote for the guitar or included it as an

orchestral instrument. Composers think in standard musical notation. In order to write for the lute, vihuela and other ancestors of the guitar, the composers would also have to be able to play the guitar and to think in tablature. Due to the lack of music written for us by the great common practice period composers, we guitarists have had to transcribe our way into mainstream musical society. If a pianist looked at tablature, they wouldn't waste their time! You don't see any other musicians scrambling to make transcriptions of guitar music for their instruments (especially if it is written in tablature).

Don't get me wrong, I love to play Dowland, Cutting, Weiss and other composers that wrote for our ancestor instruments using tablature. These were all great musicians, but I would love to see what Handel, Mozart, Brahms or Beethoven would have done for us.

In addition to the lack of repertoire (compared to violin and piano) that is a result of tablature, there are other things that I don't like about it. It is inconsistent! Every country had a different system. There is English tablature, Italian tablature, Spanish tablature, etc... Some use numbers while others use letters. Some use the top line as the first string and others use the bottom line. Some put the characters on the line, some place them above the line. Have you ever seen German tablature? Please explain to me any sense that that can make!

I also believe that while tablature is an easy way to get started playing, it prevents many from ever developing good sight reading and musical skills. Standard musical notation is important and universal. By reading standard notation, one can read music written for other instruments and play it on the guitar or at least be able to transcribe it for guitar. Standard notation also shows pitch relationships and makes musical phrasing much more apparent.

In all fairness to Don Sauter and all those who defend tablature, I don't think they are suggesting that tablature be the sole means of writing music for the guitar. I can read tablature and I depend on that ability for transcribing music from the Renaissance and Baroque. For some unknown reason, our guitar ancestors decided to keep us removed from the rest of the musical world and developed many systems of tablature. I consider it an ancient form of notation and while I think it is important to be able to read it, I do not encourage modern composers and publishers to continue this form of notation for the guitar.

Music certainly existed before it could be written down. How we chose to write it can either benefit a small populous of musicians or all the world. Tablature not only has prevented some of the great composers from writing for our instrument, but it has also kept some of our great plucked stringed composers from getting the recognition they may have otherwise received.

The guitar has finally earned a legitimate spot in musical society due to the efforts of many guitarists in this century. Juilliard finally started a guitar program within the last decade (a great victory). This has only come about because guitarists are now starting to think like musicians and not just guitar players. We are just now coming out of our musical infancy and we now have more composers than ever before writing for our beloved instrument (in standard notation).

Kevin Vigil

Lute Society of America

WGS Compilation Tape Update

If all the gab about tablature in this issue has given you an itch - or tingle, even - for early plucked string music, consider joining the Lute Society of America (LSA). They put out a yearly journal and quarterly newsletters. Contact the Administrator:

Mary Hinelypress (bhinely@liberty.uc.wlu.edu)
P.O. Box 1328
Lexington VA 24450

or the LSA President:

Caroline Usher (cpu@acpub.duke.edu)
2639 Lawndale Ave.
Durham NC 27705

Tablature - the debate rages on

Thanks for the feedback, Kevin! I can respond right now - since I do the final preparation of the newsletter for publication after it comes off your computer, ha!

Are you sure tablature gets so much of the blame for the lack of guitar works from great composers? Three of the 4 you name were composing after the guitar went to music notation.

I agree that the nonstandardization of tablature is totally unacceptable. Since nobody else has the guts, maybe the WGS should declare itself the tablature czar and impose a standardized tablature on the world. We could even slap fines on violators. I sort of like the tablature specified in my Web page <http://www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/Lobby/7049/tab.htm>. (What me biased?)

Regarding your concern about isolation from the rest of the music world, anything in tablature can also be presented in music notation. In fact, most modern tablature appears right along with the music. (I wish they'd keep it separate.)

And there are already barriers in the music world. How many guitarists and other G-clef instrument players are fluent on the F- and C-clefs? (There is a simple solution here - use the G-clef for *everything*.) How much use does the guitar hobbyist really have for music for other instruments? Virtually everything I play - which is a lot - is meant for the guitar.

Unfortunately, I agree tablature might be a big obstacle to good sight-reading skills. Since tablature is so easy, a student who has played it for some time might develop an even greater resistance to learning music. Yes, this would be a shame in the case of a student who has the potential to make a career in music - but what percentage is that?

I stick to my guns: if we drop our anti-tablature snobbery a lot more people could be a lot more happy playing a lot more guitar music a lot more quickly and easily. That's not bad, is it?
D.S.

In the September '97 WGS Newsletter we presented the idea of producing a cassette tape with members' recordings. While a number of individuals have expressed interest, actual submission of selections has been minimal. Thus, we've modified the deadlines - instead of trying to do this before the holiday season, we'll be accepting submissions through the winter (or longer, if necessary). Guidelines are listed below.

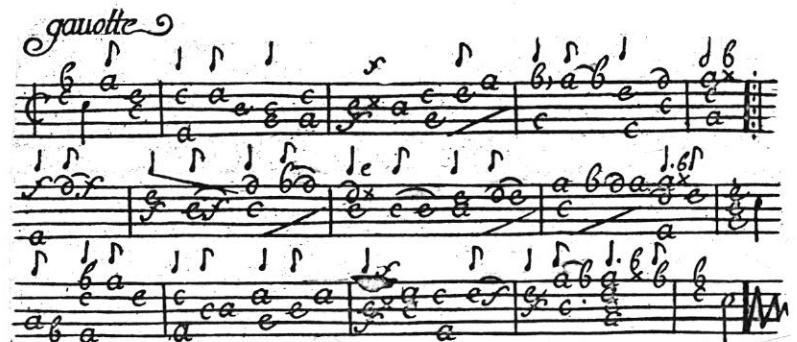
Submissions. For any member's solo recording, please submit a recording (DAT or cassette) no longer than around 5 minutes duration. Ensemble recordings performed by any two (or more) WGS members can be up to 8 minutes long. You can mail the tape to me or bring it to a WGS meeting. I can return the material to you at a WGS meeting or can mail it back if you provide a SASE. Note for cassette submissions: it would help if you cue-up the tape to start on the selection you want to contribute.

Send submissions to:

Bev Ross
4607 Guilford Pl.
College Park, MD 20740
Phone: 301-927-7833 (evenings and weekends)



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