

Washington Guitar Society

No. 61

September, October, November 2002



Piotr Zielinski Performs for WGS

Friday, September 20

Piotr Zielinski is currently pursuing a Graduate Performance Diploma under the mentorship of world renowned Manuel Barrueco at Peabody Conservatory, where he also studied with Ray Chester. In

2001, he was the recipient of the Sydney-Friedberg Prize for outstanding musical contribution to Peabody. Also during his studies, he has been a soloist with the Peabody Camerata, performing the virtuosic concerto for guitar by Richard Rodney Bennett. He is currently a soloist at St. Matthews Cathedral in Washington, D.C.

A native of Poland, Piotr was the first Polish citizen to be accepted at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique de Paris in classical guitar. Piotr received the Prix de Guitare and DNESS Diploma from the Paris Conservatory, where he studied with Alexandre Lagoya and Olivier Chassain. He also served as principal guitar teacher at the Academie Internationale de Musique de Paris and performed at numerous diverse venues, including Cité Internationale des Arts, Salon Chopin, and L'Eglise Sainte Marie. While living in France Piotr collaborated with chamber music ensembles, such as Opus 20. In another collaboration, Piotr and his sister, guitarist Kasia Zielinska, performed a whirlwind of lively duet concerts in France and Ireland.

Piotr began playing guitar at the age of seven and made his concert debut in Poland at age sixteen, playing the Consierto de Arajuez. As a teenager, he was broadcast on Polish television and radio and awarded concerts in Poland, Germany and France. During a recent visit to Poland, Piotr instructed a masterclass for students attending his first music school in Gliwice, Poland.

Piotr plays a guitar made by master German luthier Matthias Dammann.

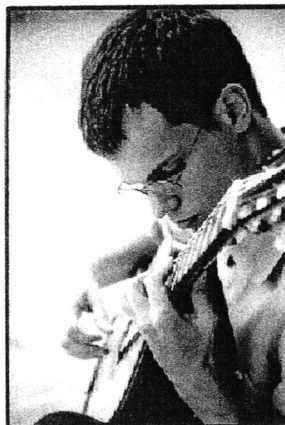
The October WGS Program Our Guitar Orchestra Keeps Rolling!

The WGS get-together on October 18 2002 will be a guitar orchestra led by Phyllis Fleming. We'll start at 7:30 sharp at the Chevy Chase Community Center. Phyllis is well-known to the WGS, having played violin and conducted for us frequently over the years. Most recently, Phyllis lent her talents to our Members' Recital in August. Before that, she conducted the WGS orchestra

playing Tango Estampie in April. You can still hear the fine results of that session on our website, <http://home.att.net/~dcguitar/> We'll record the upcoming performance, as usual, so you can be heard from Greenland to Antarctica. We will play "Somerset Follies" by John Duarte. The piece is in 6 parts, none of which are difficult. If you need a part in advance, the best thing to do is SHOW UP AT THE SEPTEMBER MEMBERS' RECITAL, where parts will be available. Failing that, I can send out parts. See the contact information at the bottom; telephone much preferred over email. If you get my answering machine, or if you send an 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 - come on down in any case. As always, we welcome *everyone*, whether or not a WGS member. Teachers, this is a great opportunity for your students.

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Vincent Airault Performs for WGS

Friday, November 1

Born in 1973, Vincent Airault studied the guitar in Niort with Daniel Pacault. From the age of 16, he continued his studies with Frank Nataf at the Conservatoire of Poitiers, Alexandre Lagoya at the Conservatoire of Paris and more recently Roberto Aussel at the MusikHochschule of Cologne. He has also followed the advice of a

number of other guitarists: Daniel Lavalie, Raymond Gratien, Carel Harms, Michel Sadanowski, David Starobin and Vicente Pradal, as well as other musicians such as Mickaël Lévinas, Micnèle Reverdy, Christian Lardé and Michel Moraguès. Since the age of 18, Vincent Airault has performed regularly as soloist or in a duo (with flute, singer, guitar, violin or cello) in a repertoire stretching from the 17th century to the present day. He recently performed at the Mozarteum in Salzburg, in Cartagena (Chili), Cologne, Weimar, Monterrey (Mexico) (where he also gave masterclasses) and numerous times in Paris and in his home region. He also played in the orchestra of the lyric festival in Saint-Céré and as soloist with the Orchestre National d'Île de France.

He was awarded first prize in the International Competition of Île de France in 1993, the Conservatoire of Paris in 1994, the public prize in the festival of Bourg-Madame in 1997, was among the prize winners in "Printemps de la Guitare" (Belgium) in 1998, awarded a first mention in Cologne in 2000, the second prize of

"The Guitar Foundation of America"(San Diego) in 2001 and the first prize of the "Concours Maurice Ohana" (Ville d'Avray) in 2002. Since 1993 he has taught at the Conservatoire of Livry-Gargan (suburbs of Paris).

Petar Kodzas - Elegant music

Rounding out the first evening of music, Mr. Kodzas continued with the modern classical theme .



Nicki Lehrer CD Release

WGS featured performer for December, Nicki, one of the hardest workers performing these days is releasing a new CD "Crescendo" at her December WGS concert. Appearing at the Kennedy Center's Millennium Stage, the French Embassy, and at Yosemite National Park, She is a

three-time Wammie nominee, an NGW Segovia Scholarship winner, and a 2002 ASTA national solo finalist, Nicki continues to study with Julian Gray from the Peabody Conservatory.

Col. Lehrer reported that the concert at Jammin' Java in Vienna VA was great. There were quite a few people who came to hear Nicki play who said that they had seen her in concert since she was twelve years old. They also commented that Nicki brings classical guitar to so many different venues, and how rewarding it is to see how well she, and the music are received.

Alexandria Guitar Festival - A Hit!

A bold statement for a troubled time.

As Kevin Vigil pointed out in the last edition, this event was the first time since the First Guitar Congress back in the early 80s that such a meeting of players, vendors, luthiers and aficionados has been organized. Participants unanimously agreed that Nathan Fischer masterfully orchestrated a smooth, well organized event, in what has to be a tough way to organize a spot for promoting his own as well as all the other players' efforts.

The Atheneum in Old Town Alexandria turned out to be the perfect place for the art form. The natural reverberation and the size of the venue made the presentation perfect for players and listeners. The hospitality of the management and the Alexandria Fine Arts Association was outstanding.

Seeing old friends and making new ones was what it was all about. The most common statement: "I fell in love with the music....." and then off to that person's particular story was repeated over and over.

The Shows

Nathan Fischer - Rising Star

In a set made for lovers of modern serious classical guitar Mr. Fischer displayed masterful technique and interpretation. His selections displayed a wide range of color and covered passages of sensitive emotion to fiery passion. An earnest and intense stage presense, he is a charming showman as well.

Mr. Kodzas possesses a wide range of dynamics, tones and interpretation. He played a sensitive and brilliant transcription of Granados pieces so well that a listener can forget how hard it is to perform such music. Completing the set with the Gran Jota was a bold move and entirely appropriate to bring the first day's festivity to a close. Bravo!

Joseph Mayes - Roots Rocker

Performing what can well be called "roots" classical guitar music from the stars of the 18th century, Mr. Mayes has an easy going, warm and humourous stage presence. To this reviewer, listeners don't often get a chance to hear this repertoire, making this set a rare treat. His approach of trying to minimize the parts of the music that now seem too repetitive by accenting melody and bass contrapuntal movement livened up the presentation. Enlisting Larry Snitzler as narrator for the Cinderella pieces is another of the good suggestions for stage time. Hey, there are other art forms that classical guitar goes well with.

An equally fun loving, and charming person off stage, he enthusiastically answered the many questions about the guitar he built and played. A small bodied instrument with a big voice, his stories of constructing and finishing the instrument were fascinating and informative.

John Patykula, David Robinson, Kathy Robinson, Grey Snead, the VCU Quartet with John Bullard
Papa John and the Three Bears + a Classical Banjo player

With what has to be a cool teaching position as a background, Dr. Patykula presented a tight knit and unique performance. Great playing by the professor and his grad students featured each player in various settings of single duo and quartet combinations. Classical banjo player John Bullard rounded out the show with original arrangements of Bach Inventions presented as a duo with the professor.

In that setting the banjo sounded like a harpsichord. With their next contribution of Romanian Folk Dances, also arranged by the pair, the Banjo called to mind Greek Bazuki music. Unless one is already familiar with such banjo players as Bella Fleck, this part of the show is very different and well played.

The VCU Quartet next presented many original and fine arrangements that featured duo and quartet settings displaying slick interplay of parts that featured each player to great advantage. Dr. Patykula is an engaging and charming performer and his work as a teacher showed well in skillful playing and arrangements his students David Robinson, Kathy Robinson, and Gray Snead performed.

They provided many bright moments to round out the second evening of performances.

Nichlas Goluses - Super Star from Eastman Music School

Possessor of the **BIG** sound, Dr. Goluses played selections from mostly modern serious classical composition. Never easy to interpret such works, he held the audience spellbound with a wide dynamic range from sensitive introspection to powerful, fiery displays.

Playing cleanly and perfectly was not an easy task that night. The performance was nearly interrupted several times by people who tried to enter after he began playing, no doubt drawn by the huge sound he generated. With his technique and instrument he sounded as if he were amplified and that there were several of him playing.

He capped his performance with Two Epitaphios by Theodorakis that made the third night as good as it gets.

Larry Snitzler - The Kahuna Speaks

“Batting clean up” in this crowd can’t be easy, but he made it look that way. As a long time fan, I couldn’t think of anyone more appropriate.

In the first half of the show Dr. Snitzler presented a few older pieces, unusual for a player known to this writer for interpretation of more modern music. As became clear when the night unfolded, he was reminiscing of friends he never knew except through the music, to friends he knew that have passed on, to our friend Larry with his own piece “II Romanza Siennesa”, an allusion to the oldest guitar school in the world in Sienna, Italy. His piece is a “must have” for the local players.

He pulled out all the tricks in his coloring book, as the human “Line 6” displayed a super attention to detail, relying more on conveying emotion, especially where his old friends Charlie Byrd and Segovia were concerned, rather than technical dazzling. A most charming performer with a sense of humour, he drew the audience into a relaxed evening of great playing and music, as if we were visiting in his living room.

His encore of Roland Dyen’s “Tango in Skai” pointed us to the future. Sooner or later someone had to come up with modern classical that absolutely rocked! Plenty of dazzle here!

The Vendors

Participants were fortunate indeed to have Mike Kirpatrick from Kirpatrick Guitar Studio in Baltimore and Robert Page from the Classical Guitar Store in Philadelphia, PA showing instruments from their collections as well as lists of guitars at their shops. Luthiers were represented by Tom Rodrigues of Richmond VA and Joe Mayes from Philadelphia PA. Three out of the VCU Quartet played a Rodriguez creation and Mayes played one of

his recreated 18th century guitars for his concert on Wednesday evening.

Poking them for information and then listening to them was almost as fun as hearing the various guitars. Obviously the world of construction is vastly changed from even a few years ago, but each of these gentlemen proved up to the task of informing a potential client about various aspects of construction-modern bracing techniques, types of wood, design, and finishing-varnish vs lacquer, and application techniques as well as where in the world guitars are now made. The amount of information was actually staggering. - Bill Dykes

Alexandria Guitar Festival Student Recital -

Allegro Spirito from Sonata, Op. 15	M. Giuliani
Mark Arnold	
Julia Florida	A. Barrios
song	Gloria Estefan
Nicki Lehrer	
Over the Rainbow	H. Arlen, arr. L. Almeida
John Politte	
medley: Cancion del Lladre/	arr. J. Duarte
just need... ONE spARK... to IGNITE!*&!@#!	
Greg Koenig a.k.a. Vicious	
Hommage to Dadi	R. Dyens
David Eskridge	
Courante, 2nd cello suite	J.S. Bach
Janel(?) (Mauricio's cello partner)	

Reflections on the Alexandria Guitar Festival

by John Politte

As a teenager, I fell in love with the sound of the nylon string guitar. Although the furthest I got playing was strumming a few basic chords, I immersed myself in listening to recordings, and attending performances. I remember the guitar scene in Wash, DC in the mid-60’s was quite vibrant. I could buy sheet music at Sophocles Papas’ shop, see Charlie Byrd if I was in the mood for jazz and bossa nova, and see the greats when they came to town. I’ll never forget seeing Segovia at Constitution Hall, and Lisner Auditorium.

Then, life events like college, career, marriage, kids, etc., took over, and for 35 years I did not even look at a guitar. So, two years ago, I began lessons, and practicing has become the most treasured part of my day. Now that my teenagers are out of the house more, I can enjoy some time for me. Therefore, I was thrilled to hear about the Alex. Guitar Festival, especially since it was about five minutes from my house!

I mentioned to Nathan Fischer in my registration that I could house some deserving, starving, struggling student guitarist who otherwise would not be able to attend. Imagine my surprise when I was asked to house one of the featured performing artists! I was so honored and privileged to host Petar Kodzas during the

week. After dinner the first night, we played a few simple duets (I'd been practicing them for months in anticipation), and had my first private master class in my own home. Petar gave me the confidence to face the next day, when I knew I'd have to actually play in front of a group (where's the valium?).

So the next day, after orientation, I'm in the first class with Larry Snitzler, and the room is packed. My first thoughts were, "what am I doing here?" Here are all these very talented players comprised of young music students playing some very technically difficult works, and along comes this older, relatively beginning player who has chosen to play three movie themes (different one for each master class), arranged by Laurindo Almeida. The fact is, I barely read music, and didn't even know the difference between a "tirando" and an "apoyando."

Well, I survived, thanks in part to Mr. Snitzler's gracious good humor, and genuine interest in both the music and in my playing. Not only did I survive, but I learned something, and got my nails done for the first time! By another guy, no less! And in front of an audience! Now how often does that happen?

My classes with Nathan Fischer and John Patykula were equally rewarding in terms of getting tips for improving my technique and my interpretation. These were held in the large hall, yet there was absolutely no audience. Where was everyone? It turns out, everyone was crammed in the smaller room to hear another student - a young woman playing a flawless "Leyenda." Well, I can't really blame anyone, even though I would have liked more practice in front of people. If you had a choice of seeing a beautiful young woman performing a "Leyenda"; or watching an old fart just barely manage the theme to "Dr. Zhivago," whom would you pick? No contest there. Now that I'm thinking about it, where were the women during the festival? This was a very male dominated event. Note to Nathan: Offer a discount to women next year.

I had the delightful experience of meeting Myrna Sisen downstairs at the vendor fair. Actually, I didn't know who she was. I was talking to Don Sauter, and he mentioned that she was downstairs. "So, who is she?" I cautiously asked, not wanting to appear ignorant. Well, Laurindo Almeida credits her in the book I'm using for my three movie themes, and she authored the book's guitar instructions. So, here I am thinking that few people will even know who Laurindo Almeida is, and I meet someone who knew and worked with him. Not only that, but I discovered that she and Mr. Snitzler were part of the Washington Guitar Quintet, whose version of "I Got Rhythm" from the CD, "Aquarelle" makes me dance every time I hear it. The evening performances were exceptional. To have four nights of outstanding talent, and such varied programming was an absolute treat. As a Marlow series subscriber, I look forward to the good-natured bantering between Tim and Regis at those concerts, so imagine my delight at seeing them at the festival concerts. All last year I faithfully bought my raffle ticket, and never won. You guessed it! I was a winner at the festival, and chose Nathan's CD, which I now play constantly. The concerts were perfectly

balanced, and diversified. Among traditional pieces, pieces played on period guitars, narrated pieces, classical banjo, a guitar quartet, sambas, etc., there was something for everyone. I confess I like the flashy stuff, and I'll always remember the Gran Jota (Tarrega), played by Petar Kodzas, and Tango En Skai (Dyens), played by Larry Snitzler, as literally giving me goose bumps. These are two pieces I wasn't familiar with, and I'm on a quest to find CDs that include them.

The tips and instruction I received at the festival are having a profound effect on my development. I'm going back to basics, working out of "Pumping Nylon" and I'm amazed at the new calluses on my fingers! That book has some wild stretches in it. I'm playing with nails and getting a much fuller tone. I even bought a practice guitar (they really work), so I can keep my practice going when I'm not at home.

I'm sure I speak for all of us in applauding Nathan Fischer for organizing this event. Rumor has it that there will be a repeat next year. I'm already preparing my pieces.

Alexandria Guitar Festival Miscellaneous Memories

Master class tip from John Patykula: Moving the right hand, besides giving a variety of tone colors, actually helps to relax the arm, in contrast to parking it in the same position for long stretches. * Carolyn Holbrook's performance of Sor's B-minor study for John Patykula's master class was her first public performance. Good going, Carolyn! * Master class tip from Nicholas Goluses: Leopold Mozart, in his violin method, said that nothing should go faster than you can sing it. * Student Mauricio Perdomo performed lovely compositions of his own with a cello partner. (Good one from Nick Goluses when making a performance suggestion to Mauricio: "I've met the composer; I think that's what he would want.") * It seemed like there was a prize for almost every raffle ticket bought at the evening concerts. * a buddy of mine won a copy of Joe Mayes' recording of Thomas Robinson's lute music (on lute.) We're not talking virtuosity here, but it yielded, for me, the most enjoyable listening experience of any guitar or guitar-related recording in memory. * From John Patykula's talk on Manuel Ponce: Ponce's first composition was "Dance of the Measles", written at age 5. Ponce wrote "Estrellita" at age 11 or 12 and never received royalties from it. He did, however, make use of the theme, much distorted, in movement 2 of his violin concerto. * Master class tips from Petar Kodzas: Practice in front of a mirror. Mute inging notes with both hands for a perfectly clean cut. (One hand may leave a harmonic ringing.) Use scales to work on legato. Play 4er notes slowly, but think 32nds, and make quick motions on the last of the 8 ticks. When you get nervous in performance, focus on the beat/pulse. * Student Erin Maloney played Villa-Lobos' "Mazurka-Choro" nicely to start with, but the improvement after coaching by three different teachers was quite remarkable. * Erin played a Rawdon-Hall guitar, which you may have seen advertised in Soundboard magazine. It sounded really good. * Petar Kodzas had a funny theory about the seemingly unrelated section of arpeggios at the end of the "Mazurka-Choro". Heitor says to himself, "Man, this piece sounds just like Tarrega, I