

Washington Guitar Society

No. 68

June, July, August 2004

WGS June 18 Concert



Gray Snead Kicks Off Summer Bike Tour Across Country For American Lung Association

Born in Richmond, VA, Gray has been performing classical guitar in the D.C. Metropolitan area for nearly a decade. He has studied with virtuosic figures of classical guitar, including Larry Snitzler, a protégé of Andres Segovia, and John Patykula, who studied extensively under the renowned Mexican guitarist Jesús Silva. He received his Bachelor of Music Education and Performance degrees from George Mason University and his Master of Music degree in Performance from Virginia Commonwealth University.

Recently, he was a guest artist with the McLean Symphony, playing Ponce's *Concierto del Sur*, and with the Mary Washington College Orchestra performing Rodrigo's *Concierto de Aranjuez*. He has also commissioned and premiered new works for guitar, including pieces for guitar and string bass, and guitar and voice by composer Glenn Smith. He is a member of the VCU Guitar Quartet that was a featured artist at the 2002 Alexandria Guitar Festival, and that premiered a piece of music from composer Frank Mullen Jr. for guitar quartet and classical banjo.

He teaches guitar and string bass at Mary Washington College in Fredericksburg, VA, and guitar and strings at Music Master's in Tyson Corner, VA. Gray plays a custom guitar by Virginia luthier Thomas W. Rodriguez. He is pursuing doctoral studies at George Mason University.

Contributions for the bike ride for the American Lung Association can be directed to Gray Snead. Contributors of \$50 or more will receive a DVD of the live performance of the Concerto.

Where: Chevy Chase Community Center
5601 Connecticut Ave., NW, Washington DC
When: June 18 at 8 p.m. Open stage at 7:30 pm

WGS July and August Meeting

Due to the number of guitar events in the Washington area, the July and August Meetings will not occur. The September show will be the **Pedrick Hutson Duo**. Watch your Newsletter and Web Site for updates.

Bill Dykes, your host for the last while of WGS regular meetings, will be away for July and attending the **Alexandria Guitar Festival** and **The Potomac Guitar Workshop** in August. WGS wants everyone to attend an event in place of the regular meetings. This summer offers many opportunities. Get out there and tell everyone WGS sent you.

You may continue to make arrangements to play at meetings through the web address or leaving a message at 703-536-6929.

The Master Works Festival June 20 – July 18, 2004

This is a classical music festival with a Christian atmosphere for dedicated musicians. This is our second summer to have a Classical Guitar Program. It is open to any serious student of classical guitar aged 14 - 26 wishing to pursue the development of their God-given artistic gifting. This program is designed to give the maximum encouragement to musical growth through private instruction, discussion and both formal and informal performance situations.

Each guitarist will receive private instruction from the guitar faculty, and participate in corporate classes with the purpose of learning from the constructive comment and performance analysis of peers and faculty. Students assessed to be appropriately prepared will be selected to perform in weekly student recitals, and a masterclass with **Christopher Parkening**.

Every weekday small ensembles and soloists perform for approximately an hour at various locations throughout the village of Winona Lake including the coffee house, ice cream parlor, and outdoor venues, and the retirement village, according to faculty-assessed readiness for such opportunities. Participants in the classical guitar program may also enter the concerto competition, the winners of which will perform a concerto movement with the MasterWorks Festival Orchestra.

Audition Requirements: Submit a recording (audio or video), representing your current capabilities, including: A study/etude, 2 works of contrasting styles and periods of your choice.

For further information, visit: www.MasterWorksFestival.org

2004 Alexandria Guitar Festival

It's that time once again for the annual Alexandria Guitar Festival. In the intimate setting of the Athenaeum, concerts will touch the hearts of the most faithful guitar enthusiasts. The inaugural event in 2002 was described as "guitar heaven" by the *Mount Vernon Gazette*, and the 2004 event promises to be better than ever.

The Alexandria Guitar Festival offers special thanks to Northern Virginia Fine Arts Association and the Washington Guitar Society for their continued support. The 2004 event will take place August 4-7, and will feature classes, concerts, seminars, and a vendors' fare. All activities will be located in the Athenaeum at 201 Prince Street in the heart of picturesque Old Town Alexandria. All concerts begin nightly at 8:00 PM. For a detailed schedule of the concerts, classes, and additional activities please visit our web site. If you wish to receive a brochure you may request one at 585-385-9729, or at www.alexandriaguitarfestival.com.

Adding to the success of last year, the Alexandria Guitar Festival will include guitarists of international stature. These performers include Denis Azabagic (Bosnia and Herzegovina), and Raphaëlla Smits (Belgium). Both guitarists have received highest honors in international guitar competitions. Our additional newcomer is Elliot Frank (East Carolina University). The program will also include the famed Nicholas Goluses (Eastman School of Music), Nathan Fischer and James Piorkowski (State University of New York in Fredonia), Risa Carlson (Levine School of Music), and Ken Meyer (Syracuse University). Each performer and teacher has been selected for their dedication to excellence in teaching and critical acclaim received as performers.

The Alexandria Guitar Festival remains committed to providing quality performances and education. All participants of the festival are advocates for the performance of new music and the expansion of the repertoire for the guitar. As the director of the Alexandria Guitar Festival, I am passionate about the guitar and I select performers and teachers who embrace and share my passion. I hope you will join us in our 2004 season, as I believe it will be the finest event yet.

Nathan Fischer

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79 Alaimo Dr.
Rochester, NY 14625 www.alexandriaguitarfestival.com

Potomac Guitar Workshop at George Mason University

August 21-24, 2004 is the official date for this end of summer offering and opportunity.

Guest artists include Larry Snitzler, Berta Rojas, Glen McCarthy, Roger Bennett, Corey Blake, Chuck Redd and Gray Snead. Master classes, concerts, and four day classes on:

Guitar in the public schools,

Guitar methods for undergraduate music majors and non-majors,

Recitals/ lectures

A one day class on mind/body synchronization and how it relates to the guitar.

Students are able to obtain one credit hour through GMU, and public school teachers can earn in-service credit. The cost is \$350 for students seeking credit and \$75 for observers. All are welcome!

-Gray Snead

For more information:

potomac_guitar_workshop@yahoo.com and/or
GMU Department of Music 703.993.1380

Aleksander Tansman 5th International Competition of Musical Personalities

The 5th International Musical Competition, organized by the Alexander Tansman's Association of the Culture Promotion, City of Lodz Office, Lodz History Museum, Lodz Philharmonic and the Musical Academy in Lodz, will be held in Lodz from November 14th-20th, 2004 in the following artistic disciplines: flute, bassoon, violin, cello, piano, and guitar. The competition will be held in the halls of Lodz History Museum.

For further information and application contact
Stowarzyszenie Promocji Kultury im. Aleksandra
Tansmanaul. Krzywowa 14/5191- 457 Lodz, Polska
Tel./fax +48 42 65 78 666
mobile + 48 601 295 495

<http://www.tansman.lodz.pl>

E-mail: wendland@tansman.lodz.pl

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before the **closing date of September 9th 2004** Prizes

Grand Prix -	12.000 USD
2nd Prize -	7.000 USD
3rd Prize -	4.000 USD
4th Prize -	2.000 USD

Special prize for the best performance of a piece composed by Alexander Tansman - 1.000 USD.

For information on the requirements to participate use the information provided. Included in this article are the guitar pieces participants must play:

1. Aleksander Tansman - Cavatina (1950) - æa
12 min.

¹ Andres Segovia

I Preludio - allegro con moto

II Sarabande - lento

III Scherzino - allegro con moto

IV Barcarole - andantino grazioso e cantabile

V Danza pomposa - andante pomposo

B.Schott's Söhne, Mainz GA 105

2. Competitor's choice of compositions from the world concert repertoire.

3. The performance is to last 40 (+ -2) minutes (including A. Tansman's piece); all pieces to be played from memory.

Music is to be supplied at the jury's request.

The Berta Rojas & Friends Terrace Theater Concert, March 17, 2004

✓ *A Presenter's Perspective*

By Tim Healy

President, International Conservatory of Music

Director, John E. Marlow Guitar Series

with editing by Larry Snitzler

We knew going in to meet with Derek Gordon, (Vice-President of the Kennedy Center and head of the Education department, who co-sponsored this event with the John E. Marlow Guitar Series), that we were going to do it: present Berta Rojas and her friends of the Quarteto del Sur, at the Terrace Theater. Following the meeting, we were a bit troubled by the timing. The performance was to be on a Wednesday, in the middle of a school week, and on the feast of St. Patrick as well! After some agonizing and consultation with our Board of Directors, we decided to accept the date, despite these concerns.

Of all of the concerts we did in our 10th season, this one took the most energy, mainly because of the surprises that appeared one by one and for which we hadn't planned in our budget. When Regis set up the guitar series in the 60's he organized the work visas for out of country artists and it was easy. Now, it is hard, the office is in Vermont with an unlisted phone number and it costs \$1,000 to have your case "considered." Couple that with an insurance policy which costs a cool \$660 for one evening and you begin to sense some of the problems. I won't go into the per-ticket surcharges of the Ticket office of the Kennedy Center except to mention them here lightly.

In the end, notwithstanding a knockout performance consisting of wonderful solos, fabulous ensemble playing and "smoldering" tango dancers, and even with a *sold-out* house, the John E. Marlow Series was not even able to cover expenses, let alone contribute anything to its non-profit coffers to allow for a reserve fund against the unforeseen, like 9/11 or the sniper.

For a presenting organization, what could possibly be better than having sold every ticket before the doors even open? The answer is having about 20 tickets still available at the last

moment, so that you don't have to listen to plaintive stories about someone having driven all night to get here from West Podunk and, why should they have to reserve in advance, because that would have cost them a long distance call!

One "rose amongst the many thorns" of being a concert promoter is the joy of being able to watch performers fulfill long held dreams. That evening, watching Berta Rojas and her many, talented friends perform so marvelously before a hushed, spellbound audience, Regis Ferruzza, Artistic Director of the Marlow Guitar Series and I were able, for a brief moment, to simply enjoy the fact that we had enabled these wonderful performers share their artistry with all of us.

The program opened with a set of dazzling solos, sensitively presented by the star of the evening, Berta Rojas. Following this, fellow guitarist, Magdalena Duhagon, joined Berta to form the Rojas-Duhagon guitar duo. They regaled their audience with sounds from Brazil, offered up with musical charm and flawless precision.

Following this, the guitaristic talents of Nestor Ausqui and Marcelo Cornut augmented the musical resources of the Rojas-Duhagon duo. Suddenly, faster than your nephew can say, "transformer-robot", we were presented with the *Quarteto del Sur*.

Nestor Ausqui's arrangements for the quartet were masterful, taking full advantage of *scordatura*, (altered tunings), and of an oversized bass guitar, played with such expertise by Marcelo Cornut. Listening to the ensemble's interpretation of selections from Bizet's *Carmen* was a treat. As the quartet moved onto the Washington premiere of their arrangement of Rodrigo's *Concierto de Aranjuez*, the music became more involved, though never tangled, just pierced by notes darting in and out, reminding us of melodies otherwise played by brass, strings and winds. Most guitarists feel they have more than enough to do while playing the Aranjuez guitar part, *as written*. So, Berta's performance was even more stunning when you consider that she had to fill in with extra orchestral parts that couldn't be handled by the other three members of the quartet!

Things took a dramatic turn when a beautiful, sensuously clad Maria Gonzalez appeared on stage. After a few moments of tantalizing twists and turns, accompanied all the while by tango music knowingly played by the Quarteto del Sur, Maria was joined by Luis Olivera. Decked out in a dark pin-stripe suit, and replete with a jauntily angled fedora, he seemed the very embodiment of a 1930's tough guy: elegant with an undertone of danger. He and Maria had come all the way from Uruguay to dance the tango and *dance they did!* Fortunately, they allowed the rest of us to watch.

Later, the musicians asked me if I thought the dancers drew attention away from the music, to which I replied, "What music?"

Of course! How could anyone's blood not be stirred by such an incendiary performance? They all laughed as each recognized the truth of the matter.

What Is a Cuatros

What an experience: both difficult and rewarding. Nonetheless, next time the Marlow Series presents someone at the Kennedy Center, we'll walk in with our eyes open and better prepared to deal with the myriad difficulties, *in advance!* The audience loved it and the musicians had a great time. What more could you want? Well, a newspaper review reflecting that fact so that, on the next occasion, even more Washington area music lovers would know the performer's names and want to come. Speaking of newspaper reviews, the Washington Post told us they were sending a critic. They even told us his name, and we saved two front row seats for him. He never showed up. Later, when I inquired about it, they simply said, "He just forgot." What a pity for the performers, for the guitar community, for the Washington Post and for the critic: he missed a great concert!

WGS Newsletters at the Library of Congress

The Library of Congress now has a complete set of Washington Guitar Society newsletters from No. 1 (September 1992) through No. 65 (September 2003). While they politely declined my request to build a new wing for the collection, or at least install a fancy case for it where everybody walks in, they were very appreciative. They wrote,

"The Library is delighted to have the complete run of your newsletter. While we are national in scope, it is good that we can offer local materials as well, especially our hometown."

Patricia Baughman, reference librarian in the music division, spelled out what's in store for the newsletters. She has "forwarded the issues to the cataloging section of Serial Record. There it will be officially accessioned and a cataloging record completed. This means a record is generated which will eventually show up in the on-line catalog. I have no way of knowing how long this process may take, it depends on the work flow and how many other titles are ahead of it in the queue. Then, when it returns to me, I will prepare it for binding and six weeks after it gets to the bindery it will be returned to Music Division and be ready for use."

I think everyone who has had a hand in the newsletter over the years has a right to feel proud. If you're going to end up in a library somewhere, LC is a tough act to beat.

Looking at it from "the glass is half empty" point of view, I admit to a touch of disappointment that there was never any support for my idea that the newsletter document all known guitar performances, WGS and non-WGS, in the Washington area by printing the concert programs. How interesting that would be in the here and now, and how fascinating for future music historians. And what a great "equalizer" - your own on-stage performance could have appeared right beside a Pepe Romero program, and who from the year 2525 would know the difference?

Still, the WGS newsletter has always been in a class by itself. No brag; just fact.

Donald Sauter

There are at least two kinds of cuatros, one from Puerto Rico and one from Venezuela. The Puerto Rican one is five courses, double strung and is played mostly with a plectrum. The Venezuelan cuatro, which we presume is the one Gustavo Colina played with Carlos Barbosa-Lima, has four strings, mostly tuned like the inside four strings of the guitar, that is A D F# and B. This tuning is more like what we see in the Vihuela tuning of the 1500's in Spain, in the music of Milan, Narvaez, Valderabano, etc., and is simply the lowering of our g string (string 3) to F#. I am not sure if they are all tuned up an octave or what to expect, but I think it is conventional pitch orientation.

I fielded a call the other day from a fellow who has written a treatise on the cuatro. He was calling because we had written the word "Quatro" on the website and he wanted clarification. He asked what a "Quatro" was. I told him "...apparently a mistake." In the meantime, just to show you that grass doesn't grow under our feet over here, we have corrected this malaprop and are now more secure in our guitar presentations.

Onward and upward

-Tim Healey

A Special Report on Los Romeros

For those of you who are fans of "The Royal Family of the Guitar" aka "Los Romeros", this past weekend in Pittsburgh was quite a thrill.

The hosts of the Romeros family, the Guitar Society of Fine Art, <http://www.gsfapittsburgh.org> was started at Duquesne University in September, 2001 and has grown rapidly with several grants and assistance from local arts societies. Pepe Romero will be returning this October for a solo performance sponsored again by the GSFA in Pittsburgh for their 2004-2005 season.

Friday evening started the weekend off with a radio show on local WQED followed by a workshop with all four of the Romeros: Celin, Pepe, Celino and Lito at the music building on Duquesne University's campus. Guitar students and enthusiasts were welcomed to perform a piece for the honorable guests, if they dared. In a room of about 30 people, the majority having a guitar in hand, only about 3 people volunteered to play, myself included. For those guitarists who have difficulty with nervousness during performances, there was no better time to "face your fear" than this. It was an honor to perform for such first-class artists and not an opportunity to be missed. A half an hour later, approximately 10-12 guitarists had finally performed, and the Romeros thanked all of those performing. The Romeros' all gave their valuable advice, guidance, insights and practice suggestions for the next hour as well as entertaining anecdotes of growing up with their father and grandfather, Celedonio.