



Colorado Springs Guitar Society Newsletter

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!

January 2012

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Last Month's Meeting

Last month's CSGS meeting was held Monday, December 12th at ASUUC. The performers and pieces played were:

- Group pieces : "Jolly Old St. Nick", "Up on the Housetop", "I Saw Three Ships", and "Leise Rieselt der Schnee"
- Bonnie Clark (guitar) and Richard Clark (keyboard), duets: "Prelude in the Classic Style--Hymn of Christian Joy" (Gordon Young), "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear" (Edmund Sears), and "O Holy Night" (Adolphe Adam)
- Rock Goldberg: Etude in A minor (Ferdinando Carulli), "What Child is This" (William Chatterton Dix), and Tempo de Valse (Julio Sagreras)
- Bert Bradford: Study number 19 in B flat (Fernando Sor) and Renaissance Lute Piece #5 (Anon., arr. O. Chillessotti)
- Cliff Bryant and Tom Stringer, guitar duet: Pavane (Gabriel Faure)
- Tom Stringer: Sonatina Opus 1, no. 1 (Matteo Carcassi)
- Jim Bosse: "I Can't Help falling in Love with You" (Peretti, Creatore, and Weiss, arr. J. Bosse), and "She's Got a Way" (Billy Joel, arr. J. Bosse)
- Jim Bosse and Tom Stringer, guitar duet: Prelude and Allemande from the B flat Partita (J. S. Bach)
- Larry Breslin, luthier: Demo and discussion of his new nylon string bass guitar (double top, Brazilian Rosewood)*
- Blues jam session using Larry's new bass guitar: Jim Bosse on bass, Bonnie Clark and Tom Stringer on guitars, Richard Clark on keyboard

*For information on this or other Larry Breslin guitars, see his web site at www.deerheadguitars.com, ph 719-576-4567, or email: larry@deerheadguitars.com

The Next Meeting of the CSGS

Meetings are the **second Monday of each month**, at All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church (ASUUC), 730 North Tejon, at **7:30 PM**, and are *free and open to the public*. The next meeting is **Monday January 9th**.

All guitarists that wish to do so may join in playing a set of easy group pieces (all posted on the CSGS website at <http://www.coloradospringsguitarsociety.org/> --click on the "Events" tab to find pdf's of these pieces):

- Minuet (G. F. Handel)
- Wind from the South, or "Southwind" (Irish trad.)
- Allemandes I and II (Tielman Susato)
- Pavane of Welburn (anon., arr. Forrest)
- Bouree (G. F. Handel)

This will be a group activity at the start of the meeting. If you are going to join in, please pick and practice the parts you would like to play. If possible please print and bring the sheet music, and also please have your guitar tuned to standard pitch before the meeting begins.

Editor's note: We have gotten many comments that attendees would welcome some fresh new group pieces other than the 17 that are posted on the CSGS website (under the "Events" tab). If you have made any arrangements with two or more parts of non-copyrighted pieces, and would like to submit them as possible group performance pieces, please send them to the website given below, care of the editor---TAS.

CSGS Officers:

- **Mike Zimmerman**, President
- **Jim Bosse**, Vice President
- **Bruce Downs**, Secretary
- **Greg Playle**, Webmaster
- **Tom Stringer**, Newsletter Editor
- **Mark Mathews**, Member at Large

Contact information:

<http://www.coloradospringsguitarsociety.org/>

Upcoming Concerts and Workshops

Classical guitar recital by Laura Husbands

Sponsored by the Denver Guitar Society. Date: Saturday, **February 4, 2012, at 7:30 pm** at South Broadway Christian Church, 23 Lincoln Street, Denver, Tickets are \$20, available online or at the door.

See <http://denverclassicalguitarsociety.org/dcgs/node/1908>

Classical guitar recital by Berta Rojas

Sponsored by the Denver Guitar Society. Date: Saturday, **March 31, 2012, at 7:30 pm** at South Broadway Christian Church, 23 Lincoln Street, Denver, Tickets are \$20, available online or at the door.

See <http://denverclassicalguitarsociety.org/dcgs/node/1908>

Stargazers Theater, at 10 S. Parkside Dr., Colorado Springs <http://www.stargazerstheatre.com/> brings in a number of music concerts potentially of great interest to CSGS newsletter readers. See the web site above for a list of their concerts and other events. Stargazers Theatre and Event Center is a multi use indoor facility with a seating capacity of 500 people concert style and 220 people banquet style. They feature concert events ranging from rock, country, blues, jazz, classic rock, folk, Celtic, bluegrass, comedy and more.

Larry Breslin Classical and Flamenco Guitars/ Restorations



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GUITAR MUSE - January 2012

-by Mark Mathews

"Joe Pass, Guitar From The Heart"

Julius Caesar's last words resounded through the world of music with an unintended, but not undesirable, consequence that probably contributed to the advancement of the music publishing industry like no other words ever spoken. When he died on the 15th of March, 44 BC he was purported to say to Brutus, his friend and inner-circle member, "Etudes, Brutus, etudes". Thus the idea of practice that Aristotle had expounded many years before, "We are what we repeatedly do." was reinforced yet again. (There are those who may not agree with this casual reading of history, but, whatever ...)

Leadership guru, Richard Strozzi-Heckler, contends: "Practice is a conscious choice we make to train ourselves so we will behave and act in a particular way so that it becomes embodied, or part of who we are. To choose a practice is to have a narrative why one is committing to this practice."

Practice to develop a narrative? So what is the narrative for guitar players and what kind of practice would guide the player to achieve it. I submit that an acceptable narrative for any guitar style is to attain an intimacy with the guitar such that music flows from the heart without the encumbrance of the fingers fumbling on the fretboard.

So how do you get to this "nirvana" state of guitar skill. Let's look at the philosophy and work of Jazz guitarist, Joe Pass. Joe gave several interviews and made a few instructional videos during his career where he described an intense level of practice as a young guitarist, and his eventual realization that one has to present Jazz music as spontaneous composition from the heart rather than the head.

Joe Pass was born in New Jersey in 1929 of Italian-American descent and is considered to be one of the greatest Jazz guitarist of the 20th century. Son of a steelworker, he was "strongly" encouraged to pursue the talent that he expressed at a rather early age by his non-musician father who must have had an intuitive feel for the value of practice. In a Guitar Magazine interview, Joe related his early practice regimen. "... I grew up playing the guitar. I started when I was nine, and by the time I was nine and a half or ten, I was doing seven or eight hours' practice every day. I did two hours' practice at six o'clock in the morning before I went to school, and another two hours as soon as I got home from school in the afternoon. Then I did four hours at night before I went to bed."

(continued next page)

So practice like crazy, but how do you play from the heart? Joe related in a Downbeat interview: "You have to eliminate your own consciousness because once you begin thinking about what you're doing, you're not allowing the music to take on its own shape and form and momentum. You're trying to direct the music. The idea is to get away from directing the music, and just allow it to flow out by itself. Sometimes I'm on the stand and I feel pretty good, and the music just starts coming out. When it's like that, I'm not making the music go places. It just goes."

Joe thought of a song's harmonic structure in a relatively simple way. All chords are placed in one of three sonorities, the major chord, the minor chord, and the dominant seventh chord. All alterations and extensions of the chords are thought of as "color tones" and don't affect the basic harmonic movement of the piece, but add a large dose of that "je ne sais quoi" that gives Jazz it's characteristic hipness. If you listen to Joe's playing, there is a certain purity to his sound; his chord-melody style incorporates walking bass lines, melodic counterpoint, spontaneous chromatic and cyclical modulations, and a sophisticated harmonic and rhythmic sense. He was clearly playing from the heart, enabled by hours of practice in which he filled his guitar skills bag with the scales, chord vocabulary, and repertoire that has become standard fare in the Jazz guitar world.

So how much can you practice to create a personal narrative to play guitar not from the head, but from the heart? While you're thinking about it, I'll go and run some scales and polish some etudes, and maybe read some Plutarch.

Joe Pass died in 1994, a very sad day for the world of Jazz guitar. Here's a selection of video clips of Joe Pass demonstrating why he is so revered:

Joe Pass interview

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OIOP4TLTPYg>

Joe Pass - "Nuages" 1975

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SbaODIgvWFc&feature=related>

Joe Pass - "Summertime" 1992

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jkInLvUrUYE&feature=related>

Joe Pass, N-H Orsted Pedersen - "Oleo" 1992

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mUWUTvkR1Ko&feature=related>

Joe Pass, N-H Orsted Pedersen - "I Can't Get Started" 1992

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=endscreen&NR=1&v=fz3s-ZtgrvI>

Ella Fitzgerald, Joe Pass, "Stormy Weather", 1975

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=teXOPAFMOp0&feature=related>

Until next time,
Mark Mathews

QUOTES and ANECDOTES

by Mark Mathews

"I don't play the same piece twice ... I never know where I'm gonna' start, or where I'm gonna' end."

- *Joe Pass*

"Jazz is just down-home pickin' with the mistakes left in."

- *Roy Clark*

"Life can't be all bad when for ten dollars you can buy all the Beethoven sonatas and listen to them for ten years."

- *William F. Buckley, Jr.*



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Status of the New CSGS Website

Greg Playle continues to work on and update the CSGS website. Note that the newsletters are posted on the web, along with an archive of the various group pieces we will be drawing from. If you have any ideas about what you would like to see added to the website, please contact him at Webmaster@ColoradoSpringsGuitarSociety.org or discuss them with him at the next meeting.



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By Randy Reynolds

- Double Top and traditional guitars
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Master luthier Randy Reynolds (see his ad above) has a blog with a number of great, informative articles that will of interest to guitarists. You can read all of these articles at <http://www.reynoldsguitars.com/blog.shtml>. Articles that can be read on his site deal with, to give a couple of examples, evaluating the tone and dynamic range of a new guitar, and the pros and cons of choosing a luthier-built guitar.

Musicians wanted for Sunday Services at ASUUC

ASUUC occasionally requests classical guitarists for their Sunday services. The agreement is that the CSGS is allowed use of the church facilities for the meetings in exchange for providing music during their services. Solos, duets, etc are welcome. Please contact Mike Zimmerman if you would like to perform occasionally at ASUUC services. *(Editor's note: if you play for a service, we will, if you wish, include a photo and a brief note about the pieces you played.---TAS).*