

Guitarist

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VOL. 21 NO. 5

Sundin Hall Concerts

Maccari-Pugliese Duo
Saturday, September 17
8 pm



Muriel Anderson
Saturday, October 15
8 pm



In This Issue

Profile of Maccari-Pugliese Duo,
Interview with Muriel Anderson, Guitar and the MMTA

Society News & Notes

New Season, and Other Changes

by Paul Hintz

This is always an exciting time of year for our Guitar Society, as a new concert season gets underway. In the following pages, you'll learn about the performers who will visit us in September and October. We're also featuring an article about the value of musical notation literacy and the role of the Minnesota Music Teachers Association, by MMTA activist and MGS member Kevin Carlson.

Regular readers will notice changes in this issue: Jerry Kosak, editor for the last two years, and Dan Sturm, production person for the last five years, have both moved on to other guitaristic pursuits. We thank them for all their hard work. It's my pleasure to return to the editor's chair. Let me know what you'd like to see in the newsletter in coming months, or volunteer to help. I'm looking for another writer or two, and one or two assistant distributors. I can be reached at phintz@divcs.org.

OpenStage

by Dennis Burns

The Society will once again organize OpenStage events for the 2005/6 season. Details regarding locations, dates and times are still being finalized, but you can expect an interesting mix. The final schedule will be published on the Society website, distributed at Society events, and emailed to prior OpenStage participants. The first event will be in September or October. OpenStage is a monthly event sponsored by the Minnesota Guitar Society, with generous help from local community sponsors. It gives players of all styles and abilities (and instruments) a chance to perform for others in a friendly atmosphere. OpenStage welcomes all MGS members, their family members and friends. There is no charge to attend.

Guitar Events Calendar Online

by Al Norton

Did you know that there were more than a dozen guitar concerts, recitals and other gigs last August alone? That's right. All were listed on the Minnesota Guitar Society website calendar. From the homepage, just click on "Calendar" and you'll see a listing of events for the next 90 days. And, since it is updated weekly, it is current and comprehensive. While it covers our society concerts, it also includes events featuring our members, and other guitarists of note.

We'd like to see this calendar become the source to check for guitar events in the metro area. Be sure to get your events listed, and let us know if we've missed other important events by emailing Al Norton at calendar@mnguitar.org.

As a member of the Minnesota Guitar Society, you receive ticket discounts on all MGS-sponsored events, a year's subscription to the *Guitarist* and the opportunity to place free classifieds in each issue. To join the Minnesota Guitar Society, please fill out the information on this coupon and mail it to:
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To serve as an educational and social link between amateur and professional guitarists and the community.

To promote and help create opportunities for Minnesota guitarists and players of related instruments.

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Concert Artist Spotlight

Maccari-Pugliese Duo

by Joe Haus and Nancy Frederiksen

On Saturday, September 17, at 8:00 p.m., for the first concert of its 2005-2006 Sundin Hall Series, the Minnesota Guitar Society is pleased to present the internationally acclaimed Maccari-Pugliese Duo. Visiting from Italy, the duo are well known for their period instrument performances of 19th century guitar repertoire and will be performing on instruments built in 1812 (Maccari) and 1830 (Pugliese).

Both Claudio Maccari and Paolo Pugliese were born in 1970. Since 1988, they have researched and studied the music of the great 19th century guitar masters.

Since playing at Carnegie Recital Hall in New York in 1992, they have been asked to give concerts and masterclasses at institutions and festivals in Italy, Britain, Holland, and Australia.

Their natural artistic talent, together with constant musicological research, has allowed them to cooperate with world-famous artists such as guitarist John Williams, and to perform as soloists the concerti for guitar and orchestra by Mauro Giuliani, Ferdinando Carulli, and Francesco Molino.

They are artistic directors of "Ensemble Ottocento," a new Italian orchestra that specializes in 19th century music performed on authentic instruments.

They have recorded for RAI, ABC, SBS, RTSI radio and television and in 1994 they recorded their first CD dedicated to Mauro Giuliani. They have recorded the music for guitar and terz guitar by the Hungarian composer Johann Kaspar Mertz and they have recorded for the first time in the world with period instruments the opera omnia for guitar and orchestra by Mauro Giuliani.

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Muriel Anderson

by Julia Crowe

Editor's Note: this article is excerpted and reprinted with permission from the February 2005 issue of Classical Guitar Magazine, on the web at: www.classicalguitarmagazine.com

The fingerstyle guitarist Muriel Anderson has the distinction of having studied with both Chet Atkins and Christopher Parkening, as well as being the only woman to win the National Fingerpicking Championship. She is an inquisitive collector of diverse cultural and musical styles, which inspire many of her compositions for solo guitar, other instruments and for orchestras. Anderson is a slight woman with penetrating blue eyes, who speaks with thoughtful deliberation and a gentle sense of humour.

Anderson grew up in Downers Grove, Illinois. As a child, she frequently listened to an album she had received from her parents on Christmas, *Doc Watson Live in Nashville*. Watson's lightening fast, folksy bluegrass style inspired her to pluck a family friend's barely playable nylon string guitar from the dustbin. This instrument was soon swapped for a Guild steel string. On graduation from high school, she went to study classical guitar at DePaul University in Chicago. Initially, she had discounted this idea, dismissing nylon strings after the experience of that first instrument rescued from the rubbish, a guitar "with no tone and the strings kind of flapped." But during a summer trip to Spain, she swapped her Guild steel string for a nylon-string guitar, and revelation struck when she returned to the US and heard Christopher Parkening performing *Capricho Arabe* on a radio programme.

"In college, I discovered the richness of the classical guitar and learned just how much you can shape the emotion, tone and phrasing. When I started listening to Christopher Parkening and studying at his masterclasses in Bozeman, Montana, it opened up a whole new world in terms of focusing on the phrasing, tone quality and volume of every note. It was nothing like fingerstyle guitar. The discovery opened up my ears to get different sounds, such as the sound of the Japanese koto. Other fingerstyle guitarists often call me a classical guitarist while classical guitarists will call me a fingerstyle guitarist.

"Fingerstyle is playing without a flatpick. It has moved beyond the tradition and has become music without boundaries now. Fingerstyle guitar first evolved with players like Mose Reager, Merle Travis and Chet Atkins and uses an alternating bass with the thumb while the fingers play the melody on the treble strings. The thumb plays a separate bass line so there are two distinct sounds.

Anderson, continued on p. 4

“Fingerstyle has evolved so that players today have developed different ways of playing. What we are seeing now is the real renaissance of fingerstyle guitar. Among the current touring artists, each player has a distinctively different way of approaching the instrument.”

Anderson’s latest CD release, *New Classics for Guitar and Cello*, features many of her original compositions in performance with cellist Julie Adams. The pieces on this album are fresh and inspired, with the guitar intertwining melodically between the soaring and soothing tones of the cello. Two tracks, in particular, stand out: *Minstrel’s Courtyard*, a lively and mesmerizing, rhythmical dance in the Renaissance style, and *Parisian Waltz*, which evokes the street sounds delivered in a gently humorous dialogue between the guitar and cello. The album includes two of Anderson’s arrangements—Tárrega’s *Estudio Brillante* and *Recuerdos de la Alhambra*—for guitar and cello. Mel Bay will be publishing a score of all the compositions on this CD in 2005, with the music also transcribed for viola.

When asked to describe her inspiration for writing the pieces on this recording, Anderson said “My composing is grounded in traditional music, inspired by Bach and Mozart and the Impressionists. It’s also steeped in international folk music. I was teaching a workshop in South Carolina when a hurricane passed, and I heard in my head a beautiful low sound of a melody together with arpeggios on the guitar. I thought the sound of a cello would work to express that low register of the melody.” This piece would become the track entitled *Calm Before the Storm*.

“You can get sustain on the cello that complements the percussive warmth of the guitar,” Anderson said. “I have also composed pieces for viola, as the viola’s register fits beautifully with the guitar.”

When Anderson began listening to cello transcriptions, she was inspired to find a way to create a lower register of strings for the guitar. After recording *New Classics for Guitar and Cello*, it occurred to her that a harp guitar might provide a solution.

“The bass strings, which are steel, can be tuned to the low end of whatever key you happen to be playing. Most harp guitars are too big to be carried by aeroplane, so I had a smaller, requinto-sized, travel harp guitar

custom made with extra bass strings made of nylon, half-step tuners and an elbow mute for my arm so I can mute the bass strings.” Anderson’s harp guitar can be heard on her *Journey Through Time* CD.

Of her performing and composing, Anderson said, “In my concerts, I am moving more into eclectic styles and rediscovering songwriting. I’ll often play in concert something I have written only days ago. However, as a composer I am writing more in the classical style. That is where I am inspired right now. I am drawn to great

melodies and I love orchestrating for different instruments. What I hope to do is bring in some new repertoire for the classical guitar that is both respectable and melodic.

“I’d like guitarists to feel that when they play one of my compositions in a concert programme alongside pieces by the historic great composer, they are taking a fresh step sideways in the genre and giving their listeners something valuable and emotional.”

Anderson cites composer and guitarist Jorge Morel as a personal source of inspiration. “He wrote *A Dance for Muriel* and I love this piece. It’s a great addition to the repertoire and I really aspire to learn from him as a composer.”

Anderson teaches an annual summer workshop in North Carolina that

helps students focus on learning to grasp and express the essence of a piece with their playing. She said, “Getting to the heart of music is driven by listening. When you listen, try to hear what it is about the music that you find intriguing or special. Also listen closely to the timing; do you push ahead of the beat or pull at the back of it? Find different ways to imitate that sound and then play and experiment with those sounds.”

For classical guitarists wishing to venture into new territory, she recommends exploring international folk music for the diversity of new sounds and interesting rhythms that can be applied to the guitar.

“My advice is to be careful about adapting pop music on the guitar so you don’t lose the quality that made the piece great in the first place. Ask yourself first what it is that makes that music fascinating—whether it is the placement of the beat, the inflections of the vocal, the weird sounds—and try to capture that on the guitar. With a good sense of humor, this style of arranging can be fun.”



Guitar Education and the Minnesota Music Teachers Association

by Kevin Carlson

As the Minnesota Guitar Society starts another season of great concerts, there is a lot to be excited about in the world of guitar. Seemingly the most popular instrument ever, the guitar continues to grow in popularity. Great guitarists can be found in virtually every style of music. Quality music books and teaching methods for guitar abound, and must sell well due to their easy access in the marketplace. But there is one area I've seen as a guitar player/teacher that troubles me: the negative rap on musical literacy.

In academia, guitar music literacy abounds in colleges and conservatories everywhere, but before they ever get to that level, the young guitarist will find advice on learning from popular guitar magazines. Interviews with the most popular guitarists often convey pride in saying "I never took a lesson" or "I only read enough to not hurt my playing." For me, reading guitar music has been my largest source of strength as a player. Because of my ability to read music, I've gotten some good paying jobs and I've met and even worked with great musicians like piano legend Roger Williams and studio guitar ace Tommy Tedesco. I've spent a lot of afternoons having FUN reading through music alone, and with others improving my ensemble skills. I would say that not reading (or refusing to read) music makes it 10 times as likely that (1) a person will give up playing, (2) \$16 in a tip jar will be your biggest payday, and (3) you will never try and learn.

Reading guitar music is a basic form of guitar playing. Unfortunately our revered entertainment culture has turned this skill into a "badge of dis-honor." I'm shocked when I hear comments like "Reading music isn't professional" or "You just don't know the music well enough to play it without music."

I proudly attribute any degree of versatility and musicianship I possess as a guitarist to the skill cultivated by reading traditional music notation. I also read and use chord symbol rhythm parts, notes with tab below, and rhythmic tab, but of all these, music notation only (with thoughtful fingerings and position markings) is the ultimate way to go. With a notes-only approach, the layout for most pieces is reasonable, and you can appreciate the music harmonically and rhythmically in ways that simple fret indicators (like tab-only) could never convey. In fact, no matter how pretty it is on the page, reading tab is a laborious chore that yields few practical or musical reinforcements. Music notation makes up the universal language of the guitarist and most other musicians. I don't know anyone who would advocate a school system where reading and writing the language is not useful for success. Nevertheless it is easy to find "cave-man" guitar lessons where one might hear "Of

course you can learn to play your favorite riff on day 1, just wait right here and noodle while I graph it out on these two rocks!"

We all know that repeating fills and memorizing is great, but how about grabbing your guitar and some of your favorite music books / arrangements to practice READING? Add other players to compound the fun. The more you read, the more confident, accurate and versatile of a player you will become. Performers: Don't be afraid or embarrassed to read guitar music in front of audiences. Teachers: Keep literacy and musicianship on the front burner—your students will thank you someday. I would like to thank my most influential guitar mentors: Chris Kachian, Scott Fraser, James McGuire, and Rick Cornish for keeping the flame of literacy alive in guitar education. In conclusion, guitar music reading provides the hope of meaningful discovery in our playing and an important hope in preserving and re-discovering the vast contributions of the past, regardless of style.

Here are some wonderful books currently available by MN guitar educators:

Exploring the Blues by Scott Fraser

Major Scales and Music Fundamentals for Guitar by Craig Anderson (see www.reallygoodmusic.com)

Guitar Sessions by Kevin Daley (Kjos)

Contemporary Chord Solos 1 & 2 by Mike Elliot (Hal Leonard)

I'd also like to extend a warm invitation to any guitar teachers out there to consider joining the MN Music Teachers Association (MMTA) Guitar Program. Our support network and programs strive to improve the art of guitar teaching and offer some common guidelines for progressive learning. We hold two teacher support meetings per year and offer a syllabus exam program for beginners through college-prep, though many adult players participate as well. There are 2 syllabus guidebooks to follow for teachers – one for Classical guitar and one for Pick-style / Finger-style guitar. There is also a wonderful Classical Guitar Contest each winter with 3 age categories culminating in a state Performance Festival concert. If you want to learn more about the MMTA Guitar Program, you can contact me at kccarlson1@mn.astound.net or www.mnmusicteachers.com to download a membership application.

Kevin Carlson is a longtime member of the MN Guitar Society, current MMTA guitar program chair, and a guitarist / teacher / church musician in St. Cloud. Through his studio, PMI, he offers private lessons as well as the unique ChildBloom Guitar Program for kids.

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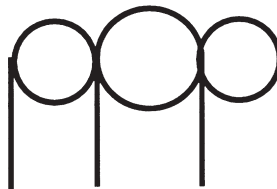
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