

Guitarist

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VOL. 22 NO. 1

Sundin Hall Concert



The Katona Twins

Friday, January 20

8 pm

Also In This Issue

Build Your Own Guitar by Gene Bard, *A Guitarist's Paradise* by Max Hoiland, *Masterclass* article by Paul Markert, and Local News

Editor's Notes

Upcoming Events

Plan now for the remainder of the exciting Sundin Hall Concert Series. On page 3 of this issue, learn about the astonishing Katona Twins, who will perform on Friday, January 20th. Subsequent concerts at Sundin Hall include the following:

Saturday, March 4th, Denis Azabagic

Saturday, April 8th, Xuefei Yang

Saturday, April 29th, Gilbert Biberian

Saturday, May 27th, our season ends with the annual Classical Guitarathon featuring friends and members of the Society.

All concerts start at 8 pm. See the Society website <www.mnguitar.org> or call 612-677-1151 for more information. The next issue of the newsletter will profile our March and April performers.

Contributions Welcome

We want to receive your news—upcoming gigs, concerts, CDs, books, teaching positions—for inclusion in our “Society and Local News” pages. Also, we hope area teachers interested in writing articles with an educational flavor will contribute to the “Master-class” pages. Please contact the editor for more information.

MGS Online

Remember, up-to-the-minute information about area concerts, gigs, and other guitar-related events can be found at the Minnesota Guitar Society website calendar. Included is a complete list of the Sundin Hall concerts and our Local Artists series of events. The web address is <www.mnguitar.org>. From the homepage, click on “Calendar” and you’ll see a listing of events for the next 90 days. While it covers our Society concerts, it also includes other 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 <apnorton@msn.com>.

Distributors Needed

We want the newsletter to reach more guitar students. If you teach, through a home studio, store, private music school, or music department at an area college, please contact us to receive a bundle of newsletters. We also need distributors willing to drop off bundles in Stillwater and in the southwestern part of the metro. Time commitment is 1 hour, every other month.

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MINNESOTA GUITAR SOCIETY MISSION STATEMENT

To promote the guitar, in all its stylistic and cultural diversity, through our newsletter and through our sponsorship of public forums, concerts, and workshops.

To commission new music and to aid in its promotion, publication, and recording.

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.

Concert Spotlight

The Katona Twins

On Friday, January 20th, the Minnesota Guitar Society is pleased to present the Katona Twins classical guitar duo in concert at Sundin Hall. The concert is the first stop in a tour that will also take the duo to San Francisco and Seattle.

The Hungarian-born Katona Twins, Peter and Zoltán, have given recitals throughout the world including performances at Carnegie Hall in New York; the Purcell Room of the Royal Festival Hall and Wigmore Hall in London; the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam; the Konzerthaus in Vienna, Suntory Hall in Tokyo; the Forbidden City in Beijing; the Alte Oper in Frankfurt, and the Philharmonie in Cologne. Their performances and recordings have received glowing reviews in publications throughout Europe and the U.S.

The twins have won numerous prizes, both individually and together. In 2004 they were awarded the prestigious Borletti-Buitoni prize, the first guitarists in the trust's history. In 1998 they won the Concert Artists Guild Competition held in New York, thereby securing management throughout the U.S.; tours soon followed as did their Carnegie Hall debut. In 1997 they were winners at the Young Concert Artist Trust auditions in London, which brought with it London-based worldwide management. In the same year they successfully auditioned for the Park Lane contemporary music group. Earlier in their careers the twins won the S.T. Johnson Foundation prize in 1995 and The Laura Ashley prize in 1996. In 1993 they won first prize at the most prestigious guitar duo competition in Montelimar, France. In the same year Peter and Zoltán won first prize at the international guitar duo competition held in Bubenreuth, Germany and were awarded the Cultural Prize of the City of Kassel, Germany.

The wide repertoire of the duo spans from Scarlatti to Piazzolla's tango music. Their programs also include concertos for two guitars and orchestra by Rodrigo, Vivaldi, Piazzolla, and Tedesco. Michael Berkeley, Judith Bingham, Carlos Sanchez-Gutierrez, and several other contemporary composers have written for and dedicated works to the Katona Twins.

From the age of 10, the twins have studied both individually and as a guitar duo in Budapest and Frankfurt, and at the Royal Academy of Music in London. During their studies they benefitted from classes with Julian Bream and John Williams.

The Katona Twins have been invited on numerous occasions to record for the BBC and other international television and radio stations. Their CD releases include music by Scarlatti, Handel, Rodrigo, Albéniz, Piazzolla, Granados, de Falla, and Mozart. Information about their recordings can be found at their website, <www.katonatwins.com>

Future Concerts

On Saturday, March 4th, Denis Azabagic returns to the Sundin Hall stage as a soloist after his tremendously successful concert here a few seasons ago in the Cavatina Duo with flutist Eugenia Moliner. Born in 1972, Azabagic is one of the leading guitarists of his generation, and has received more than 20 awards from international competitions, including First Prize in the Guitar Foundation of America competition in 1998. He has published books for Mel Bay and recorded 6 CDs for various international labels.

The month of April brings two fine concerts. On Saturday, April 8th, Xuefei Yang makes her Twin Cities debut. Within the last year she has been featured in *Classical Guitar* (cover story), *Frets*, and *Acoustic Guitar* magazines. Her second CD on the GSP label was also released last year. A native of Beijing, China, she has toured the world.

At the end of April, on Saturday the 29th, Gilbert Biberian comes to town for a concert and masterclass. Known worldwide as a composer as well as performer, his background (born in Istanbul, of Greek / American descent) is an integral part of his compositions, which are sure to be featured in his concert.

On Saturday, May 27th, we close our season, as always, with the ever-popular annual Classical Guitarathon. Society members and friends, familiar faces and newcomers, perform as part of this celebration of classical guitar and Society fundraiser.

All concerts start at 8 pm. Visit <www.mnguitar.org> or call 612-677-1151 for more information.

Directions to Sundin Hall on the Hamline University Campus

From I-94, head north on Snelling Avenue in St. Paul, past University Avenue to Hewitt Avenue. Turn right, the Hall is on your left, a half-block east of Snelling. Free parking is available one block past the hall, in lots off Hewitt (on your right) or off Pascal (1 block north).

For concert and ticket information, call 612-677-1151.

Special Feature

Build Your Own Guitar

by Gene Bard

As an amateur player of classical guitar and woodworker with some skill, I had an interest in building a guitar. Back in 1984 or so I purchased the book *Classical Guitar Construction* by Irving Sloane. The task looked overwhelming.

Time marched on. My children were raised. I quit working, and found my schedule no longer dictated by a leader calling out a strict cadence. Consequently, the overwhelming task of building a guitar became more reasonable. Then I came upon a fellow, David Schramm, who was going to mentor a group of people in the building of a Hauser guitar as copied from the 1937 model favored by Segovia.

I inquired about Schramm's credentials and found that he had successfully built several guitars. He was located in California and would provide instruction via a web site and a Yahoo Group. He was accepting 25 students and had only one or two openings left when I came upon his invitation listed in an Internet newsgroup. I estimated cost of materials and my time and dedication, then signed on and ordered the plans.

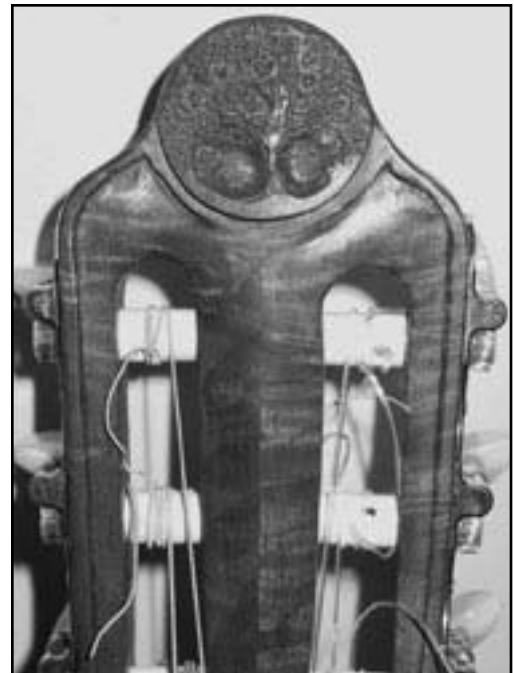
Taking instruction via the Web and with a group of others was interesting in itself. I lived in the state of Virginia at the time; the group was all over the U.S. (including Minnesotan David Hajicek) and in other countries.

Plans alone will not build a guitar. The next step was to gather the materials. Special woods, tools, and other parts are available at a variety of sites and at a variety of costs. In considering the parts and pieces I considered the argument that a first-time builder should use less expensive materials. But, as a one-time builder, I decided to go for high quality materials. Either I would end up with very expensive firewood or I would produce an instrument of some quality.

Top woods include cedar, spruce, and redwood. The cost for a high quality top can range from ten to several hundred dollars. Woods for backs and sides include padauk, mahogany, koa, walnut, and rosewood. The cost there can range from \$25 to more than \$500. I read about the advantages and disadvantages of the added expense. Of course, very expensive materials/woods provide an incentive to be very, very careful. What happens if I miscut an expensive piece of wood? Well, making a parlor guitar or maybe a uke could be a solution. Or if the piece is even smaller (but sturdy) I could drive it into my heart.

In the end I chose the high road, but not a super expensive tollway. I used premium Madagascar rosewood for back and sides and a similar high grade of Engelmann spruce for the top. When the boards arrived I just admired them. Maybe, to interested visitors, I could just haul out the boards and ask them to admire the guitar I was building.

The back and sides were stored while the first steps were undertaken: making the neck and headpiece, drilling holes for the tuners, making the headpiece veneer, and making the heel. Relatively speaking these are the less expensive materials so the anxiety is not so high. In the comfort of this task I found myself dwelling on details. In part this was a way of staying with the familiar. I found some nice burly walnut to use for the headpiece veneer and carved a little tree with some hearts hanging from it.



Bending the sides and other pieces proved to be an adventure. With proper heat and humidity, wood bends fairly easily but care must be taken not to char it. Also, one bad bend can easily bring a series of bad bends.

Both the back and the top must be curved, so a mold must be made with a radius curve of about 20 feet. Out in the driveway I pounded in a nail, attached a 23-foot string to one end and pencil to another, and then drew a curve. Explain this to your neighbors when they inquire about your activity—"Oh, I am building a guitar."

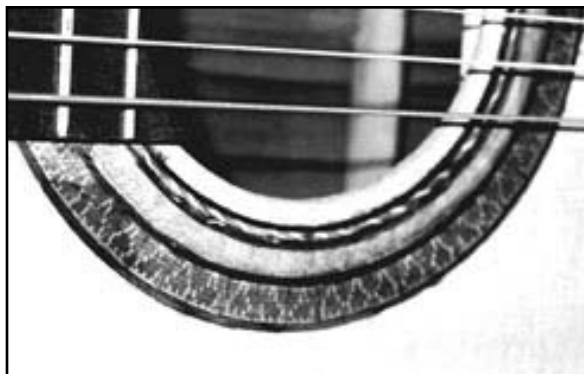
The top and back must be thinned to a few millimeters. Sanding a hole in a valuable piece of wood is something to avoid of course. Then the rosette needs to be set into this thin and fragile top.

Well, the rosette needs to be constructed first and this is a job for an obsessive-compulsive artist. I compare it to the ice cream log my parents purchased each

Build, continued on p. 5

Build, *continued from p. 4*

Christmas with the outline of a tree imbedded in it. Keep slicing that ice cream log and keep getting green trees surrounded by vanilla ice cream. But this rosette is made up of many, many little strips of wood laid out as planks, then stacked on top of each other in a desired order, then glued together and finally sliced into tiles of, in this case, little hearts.



Next, as big parts on which I've done a lot of work must be glued to other big parts on which I've also done a lot of work, the anxiety really begins. What happens if the perfect back with the perfect sides is glued to the perfect top but things get out of alignment? It went well enough thank goodness. My biggest problem was getting the neck at a correct angle to the rest of the guitar. That caused me anguish but it too came out okay.

In short, the guitar came together and I've had professional performers play it and they have been very complimentary. It was impossible not to have my ego involved—I felt joy as they played that came not only from their skill but also from the good sound of the guitar. Of course, I didn't make the trees that provided the wood, or the basic design. I was the assembler and added some of my artistic and woodworking touches. It was a great experience.



I haven't put on a varnish yet. Some say French polish. Some say polyurethane. Some have other ideas. I need to get to that soon but in the meantime I play carefully and happily. If you would like to build your own guitar, borrow or buy some of my jigs, or commiserate about a guitar you have been building, please let me know at 651 695 1296 or <gpbard1@msn.com>.

Peter Lang
7:30 pm, Saturday, January 14!
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Special Feature

A Guitarist's Paradise

by Max Hoiland

The practice rooms at the University of Southern California are cold, smelly, and usually occupied. Tuba players, French horn players, and guitarists are often found practicing on benches around the music building. Guitar professor Scott Tennant boasts that during his six years as a student at USC, he practiced outside everyday.

My name is Max Hoiland and I am a freshman starting my undergraduate classical guitar studies at USC. Other than the inconvenience of finding a decent place to practice, USC is a guitarist's paradise. Of my eight classes, seven are music related, and three concentrate on guitar. I spent most of high school figuring out ways not to do work, pretending to work, or playing guitar. Now, I pretty much just play guitar.

The two classes I look forward to most are Bill Kanengiser's "Performance" class and Scott's "Pumping Nylon" class. Both include technique, musicianship, student performances, and many corny guitar jokes. These two teachers are probably the biggest draw to the USC guitar program. Both are members of the infamous Los Angeles Guitar Quartet and are also very well known as soloists and teachers.

One of the best things about USC is being around people who are passionate about the same things you are. Everybody's here to learn how to become a better musician. USC's program has drawn kids from around the world. The other freshmen are from Australia, Thailand, Hawaii, Michigan, Seattle, Cleveland, and of course Los Angeles. On the first day of Bill's class, we had a small recital where all the freshmen played a piece. Here are the kids you'll be playing, talking, and competing with for the next four years—don't screw up the first impression! I'm a pretty competitive person, so naturally I'm trying to be the best. Of the nine freshmen, I've seeded myself somewhere in the middle. Iren Arutyunyan is starting college a year early, studied previously with Brian Head, is originally from Armenia, and is really good at guitar. Colin Davin is from Cleveland and studied there under Jason Vieaux. His playing is also solid and beautiful. He was a semi-finalist in last year's Guitar Foundation of America Competition and hopes to improve at this year's competition.

My private instructor is Bill Kanengiser. He's a great teacher and a hilarious person. Both of my lessons so far have mostly focused on relearning how to pluck the strings. I guess I expected something else, not sure what though. But I nevertheless enjoy this back-to-basics approach. If I'm going to learn how to play music, I may as well learn how to play the notes first.

During the first week of every semester, everyone gets a half-hour private lesson with Pepe Romero. I

played Agustin Barrios' "Una Limosna Por el Amor de Dios." He told me to untie all the knots in my playing, and then we spent the rest of the lesson trying to fix my right hand wrist and my playing position. I was looking forward to some profound message or complex musical approach, but I guess learning how to hold the guitar is necessary before any advanced techniques can be implemented.

At the end of September, composer/guitarist Roland Dyens is coming to USC to give a series of masterclasses. Everyone is learning a piece of his for the masterclasses. Bill is having me learn "Lettre a la vieille Angleterre," part of a set of 20 short pieces. For ensemble class, we're learning Dyens' "Cote Sud," originally for eight guitars. We're doubling all the parts to include everyone in the class. Currently, it sounds like mush, but I'm confident we'll get it eventually.

When I'm not playing guitar, I often hang out with my fellow guitar players. I am the official founder of the USC guitar department intramural soccer team. As of now, our team name is "The Widowmakers," but I would consider us lucky if we win a single game all season.

I hope the weather isn't too cold back home. Until next time, keep the music flowing.

(Editor's Note: Max Hoiland is a former student of Alan Johnston's. We received this report on Max's first impressions of USC last October, and hope to hear more from him later in the year.)

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Society & Local News

OpenStage

OpenStage is a monthly event sponsored by our Society. 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 families, and friends. There is no charge to attend. Our next gathering will be at Audobon Coffee, at 2852 Johnson St. NE in Minneapolis, on Sunday, January 15th at 3 pm. In February, we meet at the University of St. Thomas Brady Education Center on Sunday the 19th at 3 pm. The Brady Center is on the UST St. Paul campus, west of Cretin Ave. and north of Goodrich Ave. For more information about OpenStage, visit the Society website at <www.mnguitar.org>

Local Artists Series

In addition to our main Sundin Hall concert series, the Society sponsors an annual series of concerts presented throughout the area that feature great locally based classical, fingerstyle, and jazz guitarists. These concerts are always free and open to the public. Upcoming are Alan Johnston (classical guitar) and the duo of Kim Sueoka (voice) and Wade Oden (classical guitar) at the University of St. Thomas Brady Center on Sunday, January 8th at 2 pm. Next, the duo "Wind and String" (Kay Miller, flute, and Joe Haus, guitars) will perform at St. Andrews Village, 240 East Ave. in Mahtomedi, on Saturday, February 11th at 2 pm.

Benefit Concert for Moms

Guitarists Dean Magraw, Dylan McKinstry, Elgin Foster, and Dan Schwartz will perform a night of acoustic guitar music in the fourth annual benefit concert for The M.O.M.S. Program. The concert will be at acoustically superb Faith Covenant Church, 12921 Nicollet Ave. So. in Burnsville, on March 25th at 7 pm. Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$5 for children under 12. M.O.M.S. (Making Our Moms Successful) is a non-denominational, non-profit, tax-exempt corporation serving the needs of children. Children need to be raised in a stable, nurturing environment. To that end The M.O.M.S. Program helps mothers become stable and secure emotionally, physically, economically, and spiritually. The M.O.M.S. Program helps them find reliable transportation, housing, childcare, education, etc. The M.O.M.S. Program works with them to set goals, and helps them connect to the resources they need to become self supporting. The M.O.M.S. Program is a mentoring program for Dakota County and has been in existence for 17 years. For more information call M.O.M.S. at 952-890-5072.



Curtis & Loretta

Curtis & Loretta CD Release Concert

Minneapolis-based folk duo Curtis & Loretta will release their new CD at a concert at the Cedar Cultural Center (416 S Cedar Ave., Minneapolis) on February 24. The concert starts at 8:00 pm. Tickets are \$12 advance, \$15 day of show. For more info call 612-338-2674 or visit www.thecedar.org. The recording features several originals and showcases the duo's tight vocal harmonies and skill on an array of stringed instruments, including guitars, Celtic harp, mandolin, mandocello, clawhammer banjo, and National steel ukulele.

Members & Friends

Attract multitudes to your next event! Sell copies of your new CD! Attract students to your new teaching job! Send information to <phintz@divcs.org>. Information must be received by the 1st of any even-numbered month for inclusion in the next issue (e.g., March and April information needs to reach us by February 1st).

Masterclass

Classical Guitars, Etc. is sponsoring a guitar masterclass with classical virtuoso Joe Hagedorn, winner of the Guitar Foundation of America solo competition. A January-March date will be set when we receive 10 registrations. The admission fee is \$20. Call Classical Guitars, Etc. at 952-322-1310 for more information.

Visit the MGS website:
<<http://www.mnguitar.org>>

Masterclass: Musical Typing vs. Interpretation

by Paul Markert

Musical typing, or playing a piece exactly as written, is acceptable when first learning it. When performing publicly or making commercial recordings, however, this approach is inadequate. To illustrate this, play an intermediate solo as written, i.e., with strict rhythm, legato, and the same tempo, volume, and tone throughout. Then listen to a professional CD of it. Specifically, you will notice:

- Effects the composer didn't specify, such as vibrato and accents.
- Alterations of the music, such as playing certain notes longer than written, slowing down at the end of a phrase, etc.

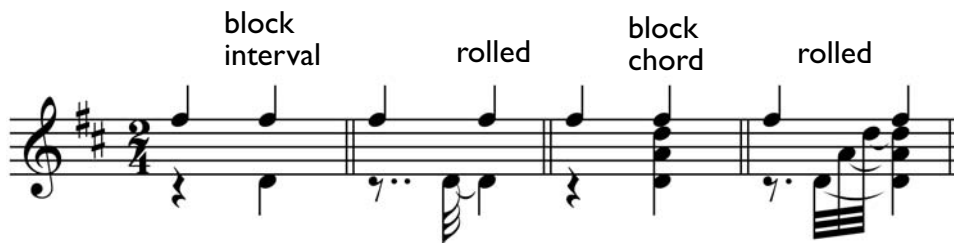
Below is a list of these and other common interpretive devices. They are organized according to the six dimensions of musical sound that are manipulated when creating an interpretation.

Pitch

- Vibrato—a wavering sound created by moving a left-hand finger rapidly back and forth. The finger must remain anchored firmly behind the fret.
- Slide—a rushing sound created by moving a left-hand finger quickly from one fret to another while applying pressure to the string. The first note of a slide is plucked with the right hand. The second note is sounded when the slide finger arrives at the destination fret. To give this note more clarity and sustain, play it with vibrato.
- Portamento—a moderately fast sliding sound created by applying firm pressure with a left-hand finger as it moves from one fretted note to another. Unlike a slide, the ending note is plucked with the right hand, and the portamento “notes” at each intervening fret can be briefly heard.

Rhythm and Tempo

- Sustain a note longer than written (usually referred to as tenuto).
- Pause very briefly before a note (a “breath pause”).
- Slow down gradually (ritardando).
- Play the notes of a harmonic interval or chord in rapid succession, i.e. “rolled” rather than in block form. In most cases, the last note of the interval or chord is played on the beat, and the preceding notes borrow a small amount of time from the previous note or rest.



Articulation

- Cut a note short and play the following note on time (staccato). For example, a quarter note played staccato is typically the equivalent of an eighth note followed by an eighth rest.
- Add slurs (hammer-ons and pull-offs).

Volume

- Gradually increase volume across a series of notes (crescendo).
- Gradually decrease volume across a series of notes (diminuendo).
- Play a single note/interval/chord louder than the previous note (accent).
- Play a single note/interval/chord softer than the previous note (piano subito).

Tone

- Use rest stroke (the finger touches the adjacent string) or free stroke (the finger avoids the adjacent string).
- Change the angle of the right-hand fingers as they cross over the strings, from 60 to 90 degrees.
- Move the right hand closer/further away from the bridge.




Note: In some cases, effects are combined such as tenuto and an accent or staccato and a bright tone.

Self-Recordings: An Acoustic Mirror

As you develop an interpretation for a piece, make frequent recordings of your playing. In doing so, you'll discover certain ideas that don't work as well as you thought they did. This is because your mind is absorbed with plucking and fretting notes, and doesn't fully hear the sound you are producing. The recording process also reveals bad musical habits, such as unconscious pauses between chords, uneven volume and tone, etc. In general, your musical awareness will become more detail oriented, adding a professional polish to your playing.

Learning Interpretation from the Pros

After you have done your best to create your own interpretation of a piece, listen to a professional recording of it. In the score, indicate how the artist manipulates the dimensions of musical sound discussed earlier. Use the symbols below.

vibrato	~	
portamento	---	(line connects starting and ending notes)
tenuto	—	
pause	'	
slow down	rit.	
speed up	accel.	
staccato	▪	(note is cut short by about 50 percent)
staccatissimo	▼	(note is cut short by about 75 percent)
slur		
roll chord	/	(line tilts further to the right for slower rolls)
liquid tone	○	(symbolizes right hand over the soundhole)
bridge tone	pont.	(ponticello - move the right hand near the bridge)
mellow tone	\	(symbolizes finger's angle of attack over the strings)
normal tone	\	"
bright tone		"
<i>pp</i>		<i>pianissimo</i> (very soft)
<i>p</i>		<i>piano</i> (soft)
<i>mp</i>		<i>mezzo piano</i> (moderately soft)
<i>mf</i>		<i>mezzo forte</i> (moderately loud)
<i>f</i>		<i>forte</i> (loud)
<i>ff</i>		<i>fortissimo</i> (very loud)
> / <		accent / <i>piano subito</i>
		crescendo
		diminuendo

When analyzing professional interpretations, focus on one dimension at a time, such as pitch (e.g., vibrato, portamento) or rhythm (e.g., tenuto, pauses). If interpretive analysis is performed regularly, you will develop an extensive repertoire of interpretive ideas that make your playing sound as good as that of the pros. Also, the sensitivity of your hearing will improve dramatically—a critically important factor required to achieve musical success.

Once your analysis is finished, try to duplicate the professional's interpretation. Make recordings to monitor the imitation process, which will do more to improve your musical ability than any other tip in this book.

(Editor's Note: This article is taken from Paul Markert's book *25 Guitar Tips for Instant Improvement*. He is the owner of *ClassicalGuitarsEtc.com* and the founder of *Apple Valley Guitar Academy*. For more information, visit their website at < www.AVGuitarAcademy.com >.)

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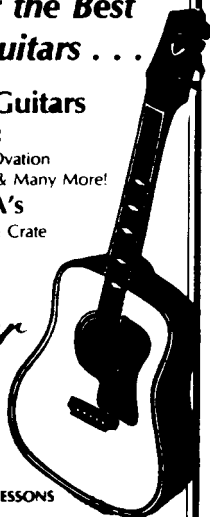
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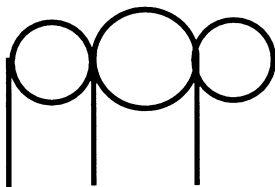
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