

Guitarist

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JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2009

VOL. 25 NO. 1

Start the New Year with Great Concerts at Sundin Hall in St. Paul!



**Friday, Feb. 20th,
GFA Winner,
Classical Guitarist
Marcin Dylla from
Poland**

see page 5 for details

Saturday, Jan. 31st Fiery Guitars Heat Up the Stage

On Saturday, January 31st, Sundin Hall will again be the setting for some of our area's finest flamenco guitarists, as this year's concert features new names and returning masters of the style. Last year's first-ever Flamenco Guitarathon was a tremendous artistic triumph and a near sell-out. Make your plans now to join us, and turn to page three for all the details about this special event. The Second Annual Flamenco Guitarathon concert will feature Ben Abrahamson, Scott Mateo Davies, Dave Elrod, Tony Hauser, Trevor May, and Michael Ziegahn. Order of appearance and musical selections have yet to be determined. Visit our website, <www.mnguitar.org>, for last-minute updates. But don't wait till the last minute to get tickets! Call 612-677-1151 right now to reserve yours!

turn to page 3 for details

Also In This Issue: Local Artists Series concerts featuring Joan Griffith and the U of MN Guitar Program; News and Notes; Special Features; and more

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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.

To reserve tickets for any Sundin Hall concert, please call our phone line at 612-677-1151 and leave a message.

For directions to Sundin Hall, see page 8 in this issue of *Guitarist*.

Join the Minnesota Guitar Society!

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.

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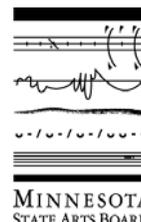
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The Minnesota Guitar Society concert season is co-sponsored by Sundin Hall. This activity is made possible in part by a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board, through an appropriation by the Minnesota State Legislature and a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. Matching funds have been provided by General Mills, AT&T, and Ameriprise Financial.



NATIONAL
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Sundin Spotlight: Flamenco-athon

Fiery Guitars Heat Up the Stage at Sundin Hall on Jan. 31st—continued from page 1

Ben Abrahamson

A recent Macalester College graduate, Ben has studied guitar since age 13. His passion for flamenco guitar took him to Barcelona, Spain, where he studied under Catalan virtuoso Juan Ramón Caro at Taller de Músics Escuela de Música. At Macalester, Ben studied with Michael Hauser and accompanied dance classes at Zorongo Flamenco. Ben has also attended workshops with Pedro Cortés Jr. He counts among his mentors jazz educator Joan Griffith and writer/guitar iconoclast Gary Lee Joyner. Ben has performed solo and with groups throughout the Twin Cities at a variety of venues, including Rossi's Blue Star, the Loring Pasta Bar, the Artists' Quarter, the Fine Line, Hotel Sofitel, Orchestra Hall, the Riverview Cafe, La Bodega Tapas Bar, and the French Press Jazz Cafe.



Scott Mateo Davies

For Scott Mateo Davies, the year 2008 was particularly memorable in that he toured China for three weeks with Ensemble Español Dance Theater (from Chicago) in September. Earlier that summer, he toured the East Coast with the Mandragora Tango Orchestra and did numerous weekend run-outs throughout the year. Mateo also played a lot of dates as a solo artist and worked extensively with flamenco singer Rachel Milloy ("Raquel la Mala"). Each Sunday he hosts a popular flamenco guitar technique class/seminar that he is very excited about—new participants are always welcome! Scott Mateo Davies is delighted if you go to his website <www.scottmateo.com>. There you will find a complete bio, lots of music, a monthly calendar, and blog. This is the second year he has curated the Flamenco Guitarathon for the MGS.



Dave Elrod

Dave Elrod studied classical guitar with Charles Pederson and Jeffrey Van. He participated in workshops with Robert Guthrie, Alice Artz, and Tony Hauser. He also studied Renaissance lute with Charles Pederson and in a class with Toyohiko Satoh. Dave was the lutenist for *Concentus Musicus* from 1977 to 1980. During most of the 1980s and 1990s Dave focused on family and work until he bought a flamenco guitar on a whim. One thing led to another and soon he was helping his buddy Mike Ziegahn accompany dance classes for the Anda Flamenco School. Dave has studied Flamenco with Ziegahn, Mike Hauser, Pedro Cortés Jr., Emilio Maya, Antonio Andrade, and Chuscales. Dave has performed with Alfredo y Sus Amigos, Rincón del Flamenco, Anda Flamenco's Fringe Festival productions, Mike Hauser, and his current group, Sendero Flamenco. Sendero Flamenco was formed several years ago. The core members are Tara Weatherly (La Tarara), Dave Elrod (El Niño David), and Mike Ziegahn (Rafael de Tresa). Sendero performs locally in such venues as La Bodega, the 331 Club, and Coffee Grounds coffee-house in Falcon Heights.



Tony Hauser

Tony Hauser defies categorization. Rooted in the classical tradition, he has explored Spanish flamenco, Latin American, ethnic, and new music in a wide array of performance settings. Tony is the son of two renowned artists, sculptor Alonzo Hauser and modern dance choreographer Nancy McKnight Hauser. His love for the guitar was born at the age of ten when he began studying with his brother, flamenco guitarist Michael Hauser, with whom he has concertized extensively. As a youth he studied classical guitar in Minnesota with Albert Bellson and Jeffrey Van and flamenco in Spain with legendary guitarists Niño Ricardo and Luis Maravilla. Under the tutelage of Andres Segovia's protegee Jesus Silva, he received his B.M. degree from the North Carolina School of the Arts. Lessons and masterclasses with Maestro Segovia, John Williams, Abel Carlevaro, and Cuban composer-guitarist Leo Brouwer followed. Tony has taught masterclasses, workshops, and private lessons since 1970. He taught at Viterbo College in La Crosse, and was director of the Guild of Performing Arts music school in Minneapolis. Currently, he serves on the faculty of the University of St. Thomas. His discography includes two CDs with recorder virtuoso Cléa Galhano, a recording of Russian Gypsy music with singer Sergei Pobedinski, and numerous titles on Blue Gentian Records, including an album of the music of Brazilian guitarist-composer Baden Powell, two solo discs, and an all-flamenco disc with guitarist Pedro Cortes and flamenco singer Jesus Montoya. His concert career spans over thirty years with hundreds of performances throughout North America. He toured with legendary jazz guitarist Charlie Byrd and leads the band "The Brasilnutz," which specializes in authentic performances of Brazilian musical styles not often heard in the U.S. His music has been broadcast on National Public Radio and *A Prairie Home Companion*. Tony was nominated by then-Senator Rod Grams to represent Minnesota with performances at the Kennedy Center and on the capitol grounds in Washington, D.C. Tony has won the Minnesota Music Award in guitar. He is the founder of the Minnesota Guitar Society.



Trevor May

With eleven years of experience playing the guitar, Trevor May started learning flamenco guitar by moving to Spain on a whim. He stayed for a year and a half. At the Fundación de Arte Flamenco Cristina Heeren, then in its third year of existence, he had the opportunity to study dance and singing accompaniment with many high-level flamenco artists including Niño de Pura, Eduardo Rebollar, Miguel Ángel Cortes, Miguel Ochondo, José Luis Postigo, Naranjito de Triana, José El de la Tomasa, Paco Taranto, and Manuel Soler (who played cajón and danced for Paco de Lucia for 20 years). Born and raised in Minnesota, Trevor has been accompanying dance and singing for classes, gigs, and productions in the Minneapolis area since moving back from Spain in 1998. One



Flamenco-athon *continued on p. 7*

Caviani-Griffith Duo Concert on January 25th

Our next Local Artist Series concert is set for Sunday, January 25th at 2 pm. It will be presented at the Woodbury Central Park indoor amphitheatre, in partnership with Woodbury's Parks and Recreation Department. Featuring multi-instrumentalist and long-time MGS member Joan Griffith in a duo with jazz pianist Laura Caviani, the concert is a celebration of their CD (released last fall) entitled *Sambanova*. The CD consists of originals and Brazilian standards. To learn more, we emailed Joan with some (im)pertinent questions.

E-Interview

Q: Your MGS Local Artist concert is in support of the CD *Sambanova*. Tell us about who and what's on the CD.

A: *Sambanova* has many original tunes by me and several from other, Brazilian composers. It features Laura Caviani on piano, Cyro Baptista on percussion, and me on guitar and mandolin.

Q: How did the project come about?

A: I have a recording of Cesar Mariano on piano and Helio Demiro on guitar that I have always loved and I wanted to do a CD with that instrumentation. I have always loved working with Laura and she plays so beautifully in the Brazilian style.

Q: You've collaborated with many of the area's best-known jazz performers. What do you like about working in partnership with someone else on a concert or recording project? Anything you don't like?

A: I love working with Laura because she is always listening and working to make the whole sound good. She is so sensitive to the voicing and range of the guitar that it is easy to play even very dense harmonic material.

Q: You're known for your versatility as a musician, style wise. Do you consider yourself to be primarily a jazz musician?

A: I guess I think of myself as a musician who loves to play jazz.

Q: You play several instruments at a very high level--mandolin, classical guitar, jazz guitar, upright bass. Did I forget any? Is one of these your primary instrument at this point?

A: I also play electric bass, which I love to play!! But if I'm just playing at home for myself I almost always play the guitar and sometimes the mandolin. When I compose, it's with a guitar in my hands.

Q: Which instrument(s) will you play at the concert on January 25th?

A: Guitar and mandolin.

Q: You've been very active as a teacher in the Twin Cities. Where do you teach these days?

A: I'm teaching at the University of St. Thomas, Macalester College, and the College of St Catherine.



Laura Caviani



Joan Griffith

Q: Teacher, performer, composer: which hat fits you the best?

A: I think they are all pretty equal. For me, it's best if there can be some balance with all of those things.

Q: What's ahead after January 25th?

A: We are playing February 21st at St. Barnabas Lutheran Church in Plymouth for their jazz series. [Ed. note: see their website <www.stbarnabaslutheran.org> for more info.]

U-MN Guitar Department Concert on February 22nd

by Jim Flegel

Every year, almost every MGS Local Artist Series classical guitarist has a connection to the University of Minnesota. The U of MN's guitar program has been at the center of a thriving classical guitar scene for decades—thanks to the work and talent of long-time faculty member Jeffrey Van. Nearly every teacher in the area has studied with Van or one of his students (or his students' students). And with the addition last year of new faculty (James Flegel), new courses in Guitar Literature and Guitar Pedagogy, and more students (over 20 majors), the program is stronger than ever, and moving forward. On February 22nd, the department will highlight its strengths, as well as its strong ties to the MGS, with the second annual University of Minnesota Guitar Department Guitarathon. The concert will feature undergraduate and graduate students from the guitar department. This year the program will emphasize ensemble performances. While details are yet to be determined, at press time plans included guitar and voice, guitar and harp, and guitar and flute. The concert is at 2 pm in Lloyd Ultan Recital Hall, in Ferguson Hall on the West Bank campus of the U of MN. Last year's U-MN Guitarathon was a great artistic success with a near-capacity attendance. Make plans now to join us, and arrive early to ensure your place at this free event!

2008–09 Local Artist Series

All concerts are at 2 pm

Sunday, January 25...Guitarist/mandolinist Joan Griffith and pianist Laura Caviani, featuring Brazilian jazz and original sambas, bossa, and more. At the Woodbury Central Park indoor amphitheater.

Sunday, February 22...The University of Minnesota Guitar Department, featuring duos with other members of the School of Music. At Lloyd Ultan Recital Hall on the University of Minnesota's West Bank campus in Minneapolis.

Sunday, April 5... [Note change of date] Robert Everest, guitar and voice, performing a variety of international musical styles, alongside original compositions drawing on Latin American, Mediterranean, and African influences. At the Woodbury Central Park indoor amphitheater.

For more information: www.mnguitar.org
www.banfill-locke.org • www.music.umn.edu
www.ci.woodbury.mn.us/parks/central.html

From Poland to Sundin Hall!

A highlight each year of our Sundin Hall concert series is the performance by the winner of the previous year's Guitar Foundation of America International Solo Competition. Many of the brightest names in classical guitar have won this award (including MGS Artistic Director Joe Hagedorn). This year's GFA-winner concert, on Friday, February 20th, at 8 pm, will be something special even by past standards. For the first time, the winner (Marcin Dylla) comes from Poland, and his GFA triumph caps an impressive list of competition successes. Dylla will be playing a program (see sidebar) filled with fiery favorites—the perfect cure for February cabin fever. Mark your calendars, and don't miss this one!

Bio

Born in 1976 in Chorzów, Poland, Marcin Dylla started to learn to play the guitar at the age of eight, in the State School of Music in Ruda Śląska. Between 1995 and 2000, he studied at the State Academy of Music in Katowice with Wanda Palacz. He then continued his musical education at the Musical Academy in Basel, Switzerland, with Oscar Ghiglia; at the Musical Academy in Freiburg, Germany, with Sonja Prunnbauer; and finally at the Musical Conservatory in Maastricht, The Netherlands, with Carlo Marchione.

By many music critics and music lovers, Marcin Dylla is considered one of the most outstanding young classical guitar

players. He owes this reputation to an unparalleled number of awards won at musical competitions. From 1996 to 2004, he won first prize 17 times at the most prestigious international guitar contests in Europe and in the U.S. Many times, he was honored by awards from the audience and from the orchestras with which he performed. In 2002, at the 7th International Guitar Convent in Alessandria, Italy, Dylla was granted a "gold guitar," the musical critics' award for the best up-and-coming young guitar player. In May 2003, he took First Prize at the XXXVIII Markneukirchen International Music Competition in Germany.

Dylla's stature in the artistic life of Europe is confirmed by his participation in many musical festivals, conducting masterclasses, working with outstanding musicians and orchestras, as well as giving many recitals in such prestigious concert halls as the Konzerthaus and Musikverein in Vienna, the Auditorio Nacional in Madrid, the Philharmonic in St. Petersburg, and the Kleinhans Music Hall in Buffalo, NY.

The 2007 winner of the Guitar Foundation of America International Solo competition, Marcin Dylla will appear in our Sundin Hall series as part of his prize-winning North American tour in support of a debut CD released last fall on the renowned Naxos label.

This concert is made possible in cooperation with the Guitar Foundation of America. This activity is also made possible, in part, by funds provided by the Metropolitan Regional Arts Council from an appropriation by the Minnesota Legislature.

Program

Sonata Romantica (Homage to F. Schubert) by M. M. Ponce (1882–1948)

Allegro non troppo, semplice
Andante
Moment musical vivo
Allegro non troppo e serio

Music of Memory by Nicholas Maw (b.1935)

Intermission

Rossiniana No. 1 by Mauro Giuliani (1781–1829)

Variations on a Theme by Scriabin by Aleksander Tansman (1897–1986)

Tres piezas españolas by Joaquin Rodrigo (1901–99)

Fandango
Passacaglia
Zapateado

by funds provided by the Metropolitan Regional Arts Council from an appropriation by the Minnesota Legislature.

An OpenStage Invitation

by Mark Bussey

A number of years ago, I showed up curious and more than a little nervous at a new Minnesota Guitar Society event called OpenStage. I didn't really know anyone there and I wasn't sure I'd be brave enough to play. Eventually, with a little gentle encouragement from the folks there, I got up to play. I chose pieces that I'd been playing in my room at home for decades. At home I could play the pieces with my eyes closed, but playing them in front of people made me so nervous that my hands shook and I couldn't keep my fingers on the strings. It was definitely not a highpoint of musical artistry, but everyone made me feel really supported and welcome.

This may not seem like a very encouraging story, but I think that choice to get up in front of people and confront my nerves is one of the best things I've ever done. I survived that first time, and came back the next month. Each time afterward, it got a little easier to play. The nerves aren't gone, but the nervousness doesn't overwhelm me the way it once did. On good days, the music I make with my hands begins to sound like the music I can hear in my head. And maybe more importantly, I've gotten to hear some really fantastic music and make some great friends along the way.

Since it's the time for New Year's resolutions, let me suggest one: come join in at OpenStage. Regardless of your skill or proficiency level, it's a great way to improve your playing. It's also a great way to hear new pieces, get exposed to new styles of music, and to connect with other folks who love the guitar. Whether you're a beginner, a long-time player, or just love listening to the guitar, we'd love your company.

OpenStage happens the first Sunday each month from September through May. All styles and skill levels are welcome. There's a sign-up sheet to set the playing order. We start at 2 pm and keep going until everyone who wants to has a chance to play. You can play just one piece or a few. We ask only that everyone keep their performance under 15 minutes so everyone has a chance to play. Once everyone has, we open the stage up for folks who want to try out additional pieces.

Upcoming Schedule

January 4th: Coffee Grounds in Falcon Heights

February 1st: Betsy's Back Porch in Richfield

March 1st: Coffee Grounds in Falcon Heights

April 5th: University of St. Thomas—

Brady Education Center in St. Paul

May 3rd: Banfill-Locke Center for the Arts in Fridley

For more information, or to get added to our email-reminder list, please email us at <editor@mnguitar.org>. See you there!

Quartet Heads to the Top

by Alan Johnston

Suzuki guitar students of mine at MacPhail Center for Music have a group class about three times a month. Once they reach ages 11 to 12 and have good reading skills, I try to put them in ensembles with only one player per part. The MacPhail Guitar Quartet is one such ensemble. The group consists of four young classical guitar students: David Tramm, Christopher Garwood, Stephen Krishnan, and Tommy Polzine. The quartet will be featured this month on the popular public radio program *From the Top*. The process was not an easy one. The group auditioned by recording first about two years ago. *From the Top* wrote back and said they liked the group but wanted to hear other repertoire. We sent a second recording, and they didn't like the Andrew York piece ("Pacific Coast Highway") the group played but still liked the group. I stayed in touch with the producer.

Finally, a *From the Top* producer came to the Twin Cities for live auditions (last September) and the quartet played Ben Verdery's "Ellis Island" for her. She liked it and put them on the show. David Tramm's account of the trip to do the recording for the program follows below. The producers told us the show will be aired from January 31st to February 2nd and will be available via streaming audio on their website from about January 28th on.

[Ed. note: To access that audio, and for more information about *From the Top*, which is a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting live musical performance among young people and producing the radio program and a related television show, visit <www.Fromthetop.org>]

Quartet on Top

by David Tramm

It's August and we hear that *From the Top* is coming to Minneapolis to audition young performers to be on their radio show. My quartet decides to try out. We have been together for about three years. Tommy Polzine (age 17), Stephen Krishnan (age 17), Christopher Garwood (age 15), and I (age 17) have all played the guitar for 10 or 11 years. The quartet got started though the MacPhail Center for Music where Alan Johnston teaches all four of us individual lessons and coaches our quartet rehearsals. We have been in many recitals, but playing for *From the Top* would be the most exciting performance. To get ready for our audition, we practice a piece called "Ellis Island" by Ben Verdery. After many strenuous hours of practicing, it is finally time for the *From the Top* audition. The audition goes quite well but because *From the Top* is such a competitive show, we can only hope and wait. A few weeks after the audition, *From the Top* calls Alan Johnston. They want us to be on their show! They also call our house, but I am not home. My mom sends me a text message informing me that we won the audition and that we will be playing in Des Moines, Iowa, on November 13th. It was awesome to read that text, but I also thought of the work that we had in

front of us. I knew there would be hours more put into "Ellis Island" and, of course, I knew the actual show would probably be a little nerve racking.

It is November 12, and we all meet at MacPhail to get ready to make the four-hour drive to Des Moines. The time goes by pretty fast since we have walkie-talkies, and we can play a game between each car. We finally see Des Moines. It's about 5 pm when we reach the hotel. We unpack our luggage and instruments, and head up to the rooms that *From the Top* has paid for. After we settle in, we get ready to go to our pizza party/meeting for *From the Top* where we will find out more of the plan for the next couple of days. After we get acquainted with the producers of the show, we go to the auditorium where the performance will take place. We learn how the radio interview will go, and we find out some of the questions that Christopher O'Riley, the host of the show, will ask us. After that is finished, we head back to the hotel.

November 13th, the day of the show, we wake up and head down to the buffet that is in the hotel. After a great breakfast, we get ready to leave for the rehearsal. We arrive at dress rehearsal and run through the whole program. It goes very well and takes away some of the nervousness. We head back to the hotel and run through the piece a few more times. Now, it is only a few hours before the show and the quartet and the families and Alan go to the restaurant for one last meal. At 6:50 pm, we head over to the Hoyt Sherman place, go into the dressing room, and wait for our turn to play. The quartet is going to be the last performance of the evening. We tune our guitars while the other performers take their turns on stage. Each performer comes back excited and maybe a little relieved that it is finally over. Now it is our turn to play. The audience claps as we make our way onto the stage and head over to the four microphones that they have set up for us.

Host Christopher O'Riley talks to us about the piece and has us all demonstrate something on the guitar that is unique about this piece. Tommy Polzine demonstrates the bow that he uses, which is supposed to mimic the sound of a fog horn. Christopher Garwood demonstrates the tuning change that he has to do very quickly in the middle of the piece. Stephen Krishnan demonstrates the exciting time signature change that happens every three measures. ("Ellis Island" has a time signature that consists of three measures of 6/8, three measures of 5/8, three of 4/8, three of 3/8, and three of 2/8. This time signature sequence repeats throughout the piece, which keeps it very exciting.) I demonstrate another unique technique in "Ellis Island," the snare drum sound. To get the drum sound, I bend the second string over the third string and then press down and strum. This makes an unusual, drum-like sound. Now it is finally time to play. We sit down and make sure we are in tune again. We can barely see the audience though the blinding spotlights. We play "Ellis Island" and it goes very well! We have successfully performed the piece, and despite being nervous that something might go wrong, I actually have fun. This is my experience with being on *From the Top*.

Assad Bros in Stillwater!

The St. Croix Concert Series announces a concert by the world-renowned duo of Sergio and Odair Assad on Friday, February 13th, at 7:30 pm, at Trinity Lutheran Church, 115 N. 4th St. in Stillwater. Complete series information is available online at <www.stcroixconcertseries.org> or email <info@stcroixconcertseries.org> or call 651-430-3528 to order tickets, which are only \$18 (\$12 for students). Anyone who remembers the Assads' incredible concert for our Sundin Hall series during the 1998-99 season will want to mark their calendars and make that phone call!

John Williams in Toronto!

Legendary classical guitar virtuoso John Williams will perform a solo concert in Toronto, Canada, on Tuesday, March 31st, 2009 at the George Weston Recital Hall. For more information, contact Randy Finney in Toronto at (416) 722-6524, <randyfinney@fingerstyleguitar.ca> or visit <www.fingerstyleguitar.ca>, or write to Fingerstyleguitar Dot CA Inc, 460 Fairlawn Ave., Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5M 1V1.

Miklós Rózsa CD by Gregg Nestor

The Miklós Rózsa Collection: Music for Guitar has been released by guitarist Gregg Nestor. The CD features music composed for motion pictures by Rózsa, arranged for guitar by Nestor and performed by Nestor, Raymond Burley, and William Kanengiser, with Francisco Castillo (oboe) and Carole Kleister-Castillo (violin). In addition to selections from Rózsa's large filmography, the CD contains two classical works, *Kaleidoscope*, Op. 19c, composed for his children in 1946, and *Sonata For Guitar*, Op. 42, composed in 1986. Visit <www.buysoundtrax.stores.yahoo.net/mirocomuforg.html> for more information. Gregg Nestor has an extensive publishing output. His press release cites over 16,000 pages of arrangements for guitar solo, duo, chamber ensemble, voice and guitar, and guitar and orchestra. For further information or to ask about score and separate parts availability for performance contact Gregg Nestor at <gmn002@aol.com> or 818-890-6106.

Upcoming 2008-09 Sundin Hall Concerts

Saturday, January 31...Our second annual Flamenco Guitarathon. Last year's was a fiery and unforgettable near sell-out. Don't miss this one!

Friday, February 20...Classical guitarist and 2007 Guitar Foundation of America International Solo Competition winner Marcin Dylla from Poland

Saturday, March 21...Turkish-born classical guitarist Cem Duruöz.

Sunday, March 22...Masterclass at MacPhail Center for Music. Masterclasses at MacPhail are at 3 pm. Also on March 22, workshop led by Cem Duruoz at Dreamland Arts in St. Paul.

Saturday, April 18...Born in India, based in Canada, sarod master Aditya Verma with tabla accompaniment. On Friday, April 17, workshop led by Aditya Verma at Dreamland Arts in St. Paul.

Saturday, May 23...Classical Guitarathon. This annual season-ending tradition is always an audience favorite. Featuring new friends and old, and always a few surprises.

Information can be found at
<www.macphail.org>.

Flamenco-athon, *continued from p. 3*

of the most rewarding experiences has been accompanying classes given by the great flamenco dancer Manolete, during his visits to Minneapolis and Chicago. Flamenco constantly challenges one; no matter what level of ability one gets to, there are always many levels to strive for. This is what keeps Trevor learning and keeps his passion alive to create more and better music.

Michael Ziegahn

Michael Ziegahn, "Rafael de Tresa," has been playing guitar since graduating from Highland Park Sr. High. His teachers include Michael and Tony Hauser, Dan Glass, Paul Berget, and Pedro Cortes Jr. in Minnesota, and Luis Maravilla, Antonio Andrade, and a group class with Manolo Sanlucar

in Spain. He is a class guitarist for Anda Flamenco dance school and appeared in their Fringe Festival production "Dona Quixote" in 2005. He has also worked with local groups Rincón del Flamenco, Anda Flamenco, and Sendero Flamenco with David Elrod and La Tarara. In 2007 he was the guitarist in the dance theatre work "Hiroshima—A Night Dreamt and a Day Flashed to Burn" by choreographer and dancer Sachiko. He is also a past president of the Minnesota Guitar Society and was a participant in both our very first Guitarathon (the MGS's first public event!), our Local Artists series in the recent past, and last year's first Flamenco Guitarathon.



Classical Guitar Strings

by Daniel Sturm

Classical guitar strings have never been so factory fresh, abundant, or as catering to the whims of the guitarist as today. There are many brands of quality classical guitar strings, each brand having at least three to as many as fifteen styles. A guitarist could not try every permutation of mixed string sets, let alone try every available string set and remember what each sounded like. But things were not always like this. What about the *olden days*?

Torres perfected the modern classical guitar circa 1860, stringing it with gut strings, as opposed to wire, which continued to be the case for many years. The modern classical guitar had been born, but gut strings of the day poorly supported the guitar's sweetness and subtleties.

The prima, or first string, could easily fray and break, either in the practice room or on the concert stage. The *segunda* and *tercera* were often mismatched. The basses—the *cuarta*, *quinta*, and *sexta*—died almost as soon as they were struck. As guitarists persevered, an additional blow was delivered to the gut string halfway through the twentieth century.

Pirastro, the main producer of high quality gut strings, was a German company. Suffice it to say that the effects of World War II practically halted all of Pirastro's gut string making. The severe economic crunch the world felt, especially in Europe, added to the problem.

As Segovia's stock of Pirastro gut strings dwindled he deplored the acute shortage of gut strings in 1946 by uttering, "If God doesn't remedy the situation I shall very soon be obliged to put my guitar away entirely." (This is a complicated story to tell in a limited space, kindly excuse my brevity.)

Talk of Segovia's complaints circulated, a friend introduced the maestro to the DuPont family, and the question was put forth whether or not DuPont's newly invented nylon would be able to replace gut guitar strings. Albert Augustine then entered the picture, with DuPont supplying him all the necessary nylon string material, and Augustine painstakingly developed the art of nylon treble string making.

Though the defects of the new nylon string and its differences from the gut string were well detectable, Segovia was overjoyed by the more-than-a-hint of a miracle in the making. When the trebles became perfected Segovia then pleaded with Augustine to create a new nylon bass string, overspun with wire.

The time came for Segovia to speak internationally. A 1950 issue of *Guitar Review*, No. 11, carried an impressively bold

advertisement for Augustine strings; it measured 3.25 by 9.25 inches. The ad copy, headed by the Augustine name and logo, began with a lengthy commendation in which Andres Segovia states every guitarist's sincere gratitude to Albert Augustine "who came to dissipate the anxiety with which we were possessed during our solitary or public work before the miracle of his strings. This unanimity of sentiment is their best praise and their most trustworthy warranty." The ad copy continued with a rich and fat paragraph each by Emilio Pujol, Regino Sainz de la Maza, Ida Presti, Karl Scheit, and Luise Walker, praising the man Augustine and his achievement.

Other nylon string brands soon after became available, such as Savarez, Concertiste, and others—when marketing entered the picture: *Guitar Review*, No. 27, October 1963 presented a stunningly new ad campaign from the two major guitar string manufacturers: Augustine purchased an *entire* two page ad: its logo on the left page, ad copy on the right page. The ad boasted there was no reason to write a "commercial" for their strings, as their attempts would be anemic compared to the glowing reports of their string users.

E. & O. Mari Inc. took a full-page ad showing "X-ray micro-photographs of a La Bella Black Nylon string" vs. the "conventional clear nylon" string. They went a step further claiming that if one desires to use the "conventional clear nylon" string, one would be best off in purchasing fishing line, because that's all one is getting with mono filament nylon guitar strings. Their black nylon had a "changed and different molecular structure, which increases and enriches its sonic overtones."

I began classical guitar study forty years ago, ignorant of the above history. At that time classical guitar string sets were good, but very often *every* bass in a set could be dead, or at least one treble would be false. It was a very special moment in those days when a guitarist happened upon a great set of strings.

The miracle of my generation came in 1975 when two new Augustine sets appeared: a Red label and a Blue label. We thought we were seeing things! "A red *and* a blue set?" we asked. Forever the Augustine label had been black, now there were two more colors. That would be one thing, but then the basses proved to be the brightest, clearest, and loudest we guitarists had ever heard, the trebles being equally superior.

Soon other manufacturers used these latest methods, and while one entire set of strings would work very well, a mixture of different bass and treble sets would often yield a more spectacular sound.

An odd side note to this story is that today gut string making is at its highest art form. Early Music instrumentalists are the main users of these strings now so splendidly crafted.

Daniel Sturm is a guitarist, composer, and Suzuki Guitar instructor. He prefers D'Addario, Hannabach, or Augustine strings. [Ed. note: Space limitations prevented us from running a longer article. For more information on this topic, contact Dan at <danielsturm.guitar@gmail.com>.]

Directions to Sundin Hall on the Hamline

U. Campus: From I-94, head north on Snelling Avenue in St. Paul, past University Avenue to Hewitt Avenue. Turn right, Sundin 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).

Third Annual Youth Guitarathon

by Chris Becknell

It was spring just a moment ago it seems and will be so again before we know it. This means one thing: Time for a Youth Guitarathon!

On Sunday, May 17th at 2 pm, the Minnesota Guitar Society will host the third annual Youth Guitarathon in the University of Minnesota's Lloyd Ultan Recital Hall. This year's Youth Guitarathon is sponsored by Gringo Star Guitar [Ed note: see display ad on page 10]. It is a chance for any student up to 21 years of age to audition and perform a polished solo or ensemble piece.

There will be four categories of solo performers—elementary, junior, high school, and senior—as well as an ensemble category. All styles are welcome. Three students will be chosen from each division (see registration form below for description of divisions). A panel of three judges will choose the finalists based on technique and musicality, accuracy, and stylistic contrast of the program.

Auditions will take place on Sunday, April 19th in St. Cloud (location TBA) and Sunday, April 26th in the Twin Cities (with the location TBA, probably at the U of MN). The audition is free to MGS members. There is a \$15 fee for non-members.

That fee includes a one-year membership in the Minnesota Guitar Society.

Last year's Youth Guitarathon, sponsored by The D'Addario Foundation, showcased a fantastic variety of styles played by Tom Polzine, Trevor Wiest, Tess Walker, Christopher Garwood, Joe Olson, Denis Terzic, Haluk Ercan-Fang, Xavier Jara, Sophia Norwood, Adithya Balaji, Michael Rosenberg, Celia Tise, Loren Pena, Benjamin Williams, Joshua Schmitter, Michael Fetterman, Julia Fabbro, Austin Wahl, Peyton Perkins, Andy Troska, and Soren, Lachlan and Kaj Anders-MacLeod. These stellar students study with James Allen, Alan Johnston, Jean Seils, Christopher Becknell, Lindsay Erickson, Tim Krueger, Jeff Lambert, Wade Oden, and Brent Weaver.

We are truly looking forward to the event drawing even more attention than ever before this year. Due to the overwhelming number of applicants last year, performers in the Third Annual Youth Guitarathon will be asked to perform only one piece with a limit of 8 minutes in length.

For more information on this year's Youth Guitarathon contact Brent Weaver at: <msgathon@yahoo.com> or call 651-643-0762.

MGS Youth Guitarathon

Attention Minnesota guitar teachers, MGS members, and friends!

Here is an excellent performance opportunity for your students.

YOUTH GUITARATHON REGISTRATION FORM

STUDENT NAME: _____

TEACHER'S NAME: _____

TEACHER'S ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

EMAIL: _____

(Students will perform one piece: total length no longer than 8 minutes.)

PIECE: _____

All applications must be in by April 4th

Students will be assigned an audition time one week before the audition date.

This application is also available on the MGS website.

Please circle your division (ages as of May 17th)

ELEMENTARY DIVISION (ages 6–8)

JUNIOR DIVISION (ages 9–13)

HIGH SCHOOL DIVISION (ages 14–18)

SENIOR DIVISION (ages 19–21)

ENSEMBLE DIVISION (ages 6–21)

Send your completed application to:
(Non-members please enclose a \$15.00 check made out to Minnesota Guitar Society.)

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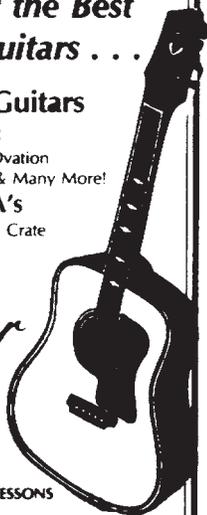
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FOR SALE: 2001 Romanillos Guitar (La Sacramento) signed by Jose and Liam Romanillos. Near mint condition. Call Alan Johnston at 651-774-6523, or email <johnston.guitar@gmail.com> for info.

FOR SALE: 1981 Alan Chapman classical guitar with hard case. Spruce top, Indian rosewood back and sides. \$2,700. Contact Xavier at 763-434-2857 or <XavierJAX@comcast.net>.

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