

Guitarist

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SEE ARTICLE ON BACK PAGE

Vol. 2 No.3

NEXT MGS. MEETINGS: MAY 18, JUNE 15, JULY 20

ALL MEETINGS AT 3:30 PM
AT 317 17TH AV. S.E. MPLS. MN
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GUITAR NEWS

NEW RELEASES:

REUBEN RISTROM has a new record out on the shelves of area record shops. It's called "I LOVE GUITAR". Veteran jazz drummer Dick Bortalussi and bassist Bob Guck add their talents to the production. "I LOVE GUITAR" is also available on POD RECORDS 6819 Noble Ave. N. Mpls. 55428

DAN ESTREM AND JOHN HOLMQUIST will be releasing PRO ARTE a record of the music of Cole Porter, arranged by Estrem, this summer. Watch for it on CD's and cassettes in area record shops.

FESTIVALS ACROSS THE NATION

THE GUITAR FOUNDATION OF AMERICA 1986 FESTIVAL is being held in Milwaukee Wis. from JUNE 16-21. Included will be concerts, seminars, workshops and a competition including many of the nations finest classical guitarists, including Minnesota's own JEFFREY VAN, JAMES MCGUIRE, RAY NEIMI AND JOHN HOLMQUIST. FOR INFO. WRITE PETER BAIME, Coordinator, GFA FESTIVAL-1986 /1100 W. River Park Lane, Milwaukee, WI. 53209

MASTER CLASSES IN GUITAR PERFORMANCE at the ASPEN MUSIC FESTIVAL will be held in three two-week sessions this summer from JUNE 30-JULY 13 --WITH OSCAR GHIGLIA; JULY 14-27--WITH SHARON ISBIN AND OSCAR GHIGLIA; JULY 28-AUG.10 WITH SHARON ISBIN. For more info. write: Music Assoc. of Aspen Inc. 250 w. 54th st 10th floor East, N.Y., N.Y. 100 After June 1 write P.O. Box AA, Aspen, CO 81612

THE FIRST AMERICAN GUITAR CONGRESS--June 10th-14. The agenda includes symposia, recitals, exhibitions and concerts by dozens of classical guitarists, composers and luthiers. For more info. write CLASSICAL GUITAR CONGRESS, SUMMER PROGRAMS, UNIV. OF MARYLAND, COLLEGE PARK CAMPUS, MARYLAND 20742.

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President's Letter

A number of thanks are due to many people this issue for their contributions of time, money and talent. TOM SWEENEY, a member and photographer at the Tribune graciously consented to dealing with nine guitarists in his studio pickin' and generally creating chaos. His picture graces our newsletter and poster for the JAZZ GUITARATHON. Thank you Tom.

MUCHAS GRACIAS to DR. MANUEL RAMIREZ-LASSEPAS for his generous contribution of \$100 to the Society. Manuel is a guitarist and aficionado who has travelled the world and recently started his own travel agency, INTERWORLD TRAVEL. You will find his ad elsewhere in this issue. If you plan a trip to Europe or South America to study with a maestro or are planning a tour of Japan, give INTERWORLD a call.

Our March and April meeting-forums were a great success and again showed the diversity and wealth of talent this area has to offer. In March we were able to schedule at the last moment the duo of ROCKY MJOS-EDWARD MARTIN to begin the meeting. They ably demonstrated on a variety of Renaissance lutes, music dating back to 1325 and through 1600. Edward Martin resides in Duluth and was on tour with Rocky so we were lucky to arrange their performance. Following the lute music, "OASIS", a trio specializing in Middle Eastern music and featuring ROB PEARSON playing the oud performed. The oud is the ancestor of the lute and its music has a respected heritage going back more than a thousand years. Accompanying Rob were JIM GREENEY on dumbek (a hand drum) and CARL POSZ on acoustic bass guitar. "Oasis" performs frequently at restaurants such as "Abdul's Afandy" and "The Jerusalem", often accompanying Middle Eastern dancers. Be sure and check them out. From the Middle East the meeting moved to the south of Spain with MICHAEL HAUSER, flamenco guitarist accompanying MANOLO SEGURA, a singer directly from Malucia. They were just about to leave town for a tour of the East Coast with ZORONGO FLAMENCO so again we were lucky in our scheduling. Members remarked at the "connectedness" of all three presentations and bombarded the groups with questions.

The April meeting focused on music of the Americas and began with NILTON MACHADO, guitarist from Recife, Brazil, demonstrating his prodigious wares. He played a combination of his own compositions and well known Brazilian tunes and also tossed in his arrangement of Scott Joplin's "Entertainer". Following Nilton were the wonderful duo-BILL HINKLEY AND JUDY LARSON. They broke everybody up with their humor and wit and presented a variety of classic jazz and country tunes on guitars, mandolin and a four-stringed bowed guitar known as the fiddle. We hope to see more of them in the future. Winding up the meeting were jazz guitarist ROSS INGRAM and vibraphonist-air guitarist-bon vivant STEVE KIMMEL. They layed down some tasty licks of the jazz variety and ably showed their improvisational talents. Ross is one tasty player and will be joining the crowd at the JAZZ GUITARATHON. To climax the meeting Ross and Steve were joined by vocalist MICHELLE MOLINE and Bill Hinkley and Nilton Machado on a couple of impromptu versions of jazz standards. Michelle's "I Got It Bad" was ironic in that we as an audience had it soooo good!

Our next meeting on May 18th will feature TIM SPARKS playing his newly arranged version of Tchaikovski's "Nutcacker Suite"!!! for solo guitar!?!, KEVIN DALEY demonstrating the guitar synthesizer and his jazz talents and the UNIV. OF MINNESOTA'S GUITAR ENSEMBLE which consists of somewhere between 2 and 20 classic guitarists. It should be a smash so don't miss it. We will try and let you know who is scheduled to play at the meetings. However arranging free- gratis performances months ahead is difficult so we won't always know. We also like to include people just passing through town like the Mjos-Martin lute duo. Even if you don't know what is going to happen you can be sure it will be special and should not be missed.

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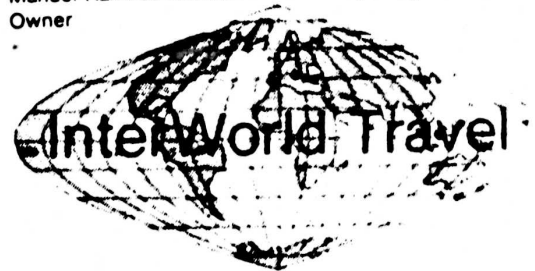
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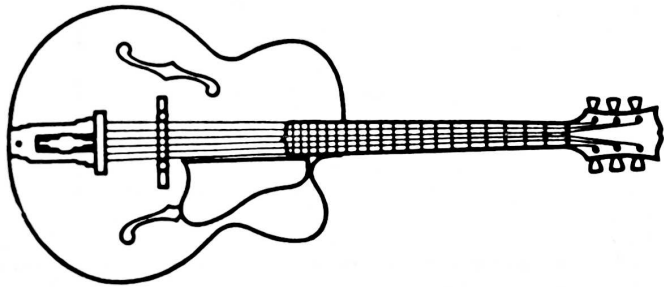
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Jazz Guitarist

BY KEVIN DALEY



JAZZ

by Kevin Daley

"I Can't Get Started" Vernon Duke, arranged by
Kevin Daley

transcribed by Jeffrey
Nelson

As a guitar teacher I occasionally run across students who specifically want to develop their ability to play melody and chords together. The arrangement of "I Can't Get Started" which accompanies this article utilizes primarily root-based chords with the melody on top. This arrangement could be played in a solo setting with the addition of a few runs and chords, but probably it would work best in a trio of drums, bass, and guitar. Then the guitarist should omit the roots and let the bass player take care of them.

The chord symbols listed above each measure are only the basic chord structures. I have in some instances added 9ths, 11ths, and/or 13ths to enhance the harmony, although sometimes the melody itself is functioning as a 9th, 11th, or 13th. I've tried to retain the 3rds and 7ths in most voicings, though usually I've left out the 5ths.

My intentions are not so much to explain each measure one by one, but rather to create an enjoyable arrangement for a variety of guitarists. Hopefully in the future specific techniques can be discussed in greater detail.

Chord symbols for the first system: Cmaj7 A7 D7 G7 E7 A-7b5 D7 G7sus4 Cmaj7 A7 D7 G7

(Dampen)

Chord symbols for the second system: Bb7 A7 D7 G7sus C6 Bb7 C6 E7 A7 Dmaj7 Gmaj7 Dmaj7

Chord symbols for the third system: D7 G7 D7 G7 E7 A7 D7 G7 Cmaj7 A7 D7 G7 Dbmaj7 Cmaj7

D.S. al Coda

(Let Ring) FINE

D.S. al Coda FINE

Classical Guitarist

BY JEFFREY VAN

MELODY AND ACCOMPANIMENT - PART I BY JEFFREY VAN
BUT ESPECIALLY ACCOMPANIMENT

Melody and Accompaniment:

Most classical guitar music has both of these obvious elements in a rather obvious texture with clear demarcations between the two. So how do we play this stuff? A pretty basic question with a pretty basic answer: play the melody loud and the accompaniment soft. This basic answer is true enough, but the complete answer eludes many guitar players who are content to only scratch the surface, so to speak.

In order to be musically convincing, one needs to answer not only the question of how much sound, but also what kind of sound. The accompaniment's function is, of course, to support the melody while staying out of its way ("keeping its place"), and so is usually thought of as subservient to the melody. Perhaps it's useful to emphasize the "serve" part of its position more than the "sub" part. If the accompaniment is to serve the melody and the music as a whole, it must take on a life of its own, assuming its full place in the musical scheme rather than becoming a non-descript subordinate.

OK, big talk, but how do we do this, not only for the brain but for the ear?

Several factors which make or break the success of an accompaniment are:

- 1) Dynamics
- 2) Color, character of the sound
- 3) Articulation
- 4) Open strings

DYNAMICS

Naturally, if the accompaniment is louder than the melody, we're in trouble. The basic truth we started with is still applicable, but even if the accompaniment is softer than the melody, it can still be out of place if the other factors go awry.

COLOR, CHARACTER OF SOUND

This is the main ingredient in the accompaniment's life of its own. Its color, timbre, or whatever you wish to call it, should be different from the melody, and enhance the character of the music by providing the most appropriate setting for the melody. Is the melody a dark, brooding one which may want to play against a more pointed, brighter quality in the accompaniment, or is the melody a clear, over-stimulation, and emphasis on quick results may have the benefits of greater productivity, but it does little for peace of mind - a prerequisite for relaxed guitar playing. Add to this the madness of an urban environment so necessary for economic survival as a performer and it's a wonder we're not all raving lunatics.

This points to one of the two chief sources of tension - that resulting from a state of mind. The other chief source - physical habits - will be dealt with later in the article.

The usual solution to the problems of mental tension lies in first identifying the source and then working to release the tension. Kato Havas in her book STAGE FRIGHT deals with this in detail, so a brief example will suffice. If you get tense when performing in a lesson situation, it is important to realize that everyone is tense in these situations, and that this is a normal reaction to attempting to perform well in front of someone more accomplished. To alleviate or lessen the tension, this nervousness should be anticipated and emphasis placed on making music rather than attempting to impress the teacher with sheer technical bravura. Chances are this strategy of placing the music first will go a long way toward impressing the listener, whereas playing "note perfect" but dully may fall far short. With a favorable impression comes a favorable reception, making the playing even easier and more musical. The tension then starts to disappear.

Similar tension-generating situations are auditions, tests, juries (for academic types) - in fact, any performance opportunity from the most casual to the most formal.

A related tension-generating situation specific to classical guitarists relates to repertoire. Since the classical guitarist is expected to be responsible for a body of music which stretches roughly from a little before 1500 to the day after tomorrow, there are many situations in which the guitarist may be on unfamiliar ground. Making sense of a piece two or three centuries distant in time generates its own tensions, and only a careful study of composers, style periods, and performance practice skillfully wedded with one's own musical spirit can make a performance comfortable and comprehensible.

The physical habits which can be symptomatic of and generate tension are as manifold as musicians. Consult the list of books below for bright singing line which needs a smooth rich sonority to give support and depth without competing with it? Most of all, it's the character of the sound which identifies an accompaniment and determines whether it will serve or usurp.

ARTICULATION

Almost as important as color in serving or usurping attention is articulation. What's called for in the music? A rather crisp, accented articulation in the accompaniment or a smoothness like a piano with the sustaining pedal? If smooth connection is called for, accenting the chords or playing them staccato will make for a very intrusive, distracting accompaniment, especially if the accompaniment is a fairly static figure while the melody is quite active.

OPEN STRINGS

These can either be an advantage or a disadvantage; you need to decide whether the open string is working for you or against you.

A constantly reiterated open string in an accompaniment figure can build up, shall we say, a "residue of resonance" which can take over and muddy the waters if struck with too much force or allowed to ring on incessantly.

The other side of the coin is that since an open string has this free resonance, it may provide the perfect quality of support as opposed to a "tighter," more intense, and less ringing sound which can be the qualities of the same note played in a higher position.

Every case has its own conditions to be met. It's worth the effort to make your accompaniments subservient but never servile.

Part II to follow: A Few Fine Tunings and Examples

ON TENSION

BY LARRY ZBIKOWSKI

The last board meeting of the MGS mentioned the scarcity of newsletter articles authored by classical guitarists. Since classical guitarists have heretofore dominated the local guitar societies, this is somewhat curious; but it's also a tribute to our thriving guitar community that consists of many fine and vital guitarists other than those concerned with issues primarily classical. This article takes as its point of departure classical guitar technique, but its application is much wider.

In talking about tension, we must first distinguish between two types: functional (good) and dysfunctional (not so good). Without some functional tension, one cannot play guitar - functional tension is necessary for depressing and actuating the strings. Since it is with dysfunctional tension that problems may lie, I'll deal primarily with this type and for the purposes of this article simply refer to it as tension.

Almost every guitarist exhibits a certain amount of tension (dysfunctional). It is rare to find one who is truly relaxed while performing. Indeed, there are so many types and degrees of tension that an article of this length can only list some of the major concerns and must leave detailed study to the individual.

Even the mildest forms of tension mar tone and cause a loss of speed, fluency, and accuracy. With these is an attendant loss of expressivity and musicality. At its worst, tension results in an inability to play at all and may lead to the debilitating disease of tendonitis.

When dealing with the sources of tension, it must first be mentioned that our basic Western cultural environment can be one of the chief sources of tension. Competition, over-stimulation, and emphasis on quick results may have the benefits of greater productivity, but it does little for peace of mind - a prerequisite for relaxed guitar playing. Add to this the madness of an urban environment so necessary for economic survival as a performer and it's a wonder we're not all raving lunatics.

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The physical habits which can be symptomatic of and generate tension are as manifold as musicians. Consult the list of books below for possible paths to pursue. An experiment should clarify the issue. Grab a guitar, and with your second left hand finger, fret the E which is at the second fret of the fourth string. While striking the string with your right hand, gradually release pressure in your left hand until the note just barely, but consistently, buzzes (lefties please make the necessary adjustments). Now, put just enough pressure on so that the buzzing stops. THAT is how much pressure you need to exert on the string. Any more is extraneous. Striking the string at different dynamic may change this, but only slightly. To those who insist that the excess pressure is part of expression and style, I will not argue. Just remember that all of that excess pressure is precious physical energy wasted, energy which must be released before the finger leaves the string. Multiplied by as many notes as we play, this inefficiency can become formidable.

Finally, one of the greatest storehouses of tension resides in posture. Since classical guitarists have only marginally improved on posture, and many are horrible knots of tension, I'll leave each guitarist to defend her or his own. At any time during practice, though, stop and release all tension. Then ask yourself, why is it there, and do I need it? Remember, how you practice is how you play or perform. My feeling is that physical blocks translate to musical blocks, and any impediment to a playing style which is as natural and stress free as breathing should be removed. At the point of ideal technique, the instrument disappears; there is only music.

I hope this article reveals some of the questions concerning tension. Read, study, practice, and above all, relax.

Kato Havas, STAGE FRIGHT, Bosworth & Co., Ltd. 1973
Abel Carlevaro, SCHOOL OF GUITAR, Boosey & Hawkes, 1984
Pepe Romero, GUITAR STYLE AND TECHNIQUE, Bradle Publications, 1982
Charles Duncan, THE ART OF CLASSICAL GUITAR PLAYING, Summy-Birchard Music, 1980
Mildred Portney Chase, JUST BEING AT THE PIANO, Peace Press Inc., 1974
GUITAR REVIEW, Summer 1984, articles by Alice Artzt and Larry Snitzler.

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Janice Bloom, Kim Bloom, Ron Brown, Dale Dahlquist, Scott Davies, Pat Donahue, Dan Estrem, John Evans, Steve Haskin, Tony Hauser, Laurie Magers, Jeffrey Nelson, Cathy Nixon, Cliff Suchy, Tim Sparks, Dan Sturm, Tony Titus, Stephen Kakos, Allen Johnston, Michael Zeigahn, Nick Rath, Bruce Williams.

PRESIDENT: Tony Hauser; VICE PRESIDENT: Steve Haskin; TREASURER: Kim Bloom; SECRETARY: Laurie Magers.

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MN. GUITAR SOCIETY JAZZ GUITARATHON

The Minnesota Guitar Society will present JAZZ GUITARATHON, our first public membership and fundraising event, at The Triangle Bar on Wednesday, May 21st, from 7:30 PM until closing. In order to make this event a success we need the help of all MGS members in getting the word out.

GUITARATHON will feature eleven of this area's top jazz guitarists, including RON BROWN, KEVIN DALEY, PAT DONOHUE, DEAN GRANROS, ROSS INGRAM, NILTON MACHADO, DEAN MAGRAW, REUBEN RISTROM, TIM SPARKS, MARK WAGONNER, and WALLY WALSTAD. All of these outstanding musicians have donated their services in support of the MGS, and each is scheduled to perform an individual set either as a soloist or backed by a rhythm section. Multi-guitar jams are also scheduled throughout the evening.

This incredible array of talent represents the entire spectrum of jazz guitar, from Pat Donohue's fierce swing licks (Pat copped the National Fingerpicking Championship a few years back) to Nilton Machado's beautiful Brazilian jazz stylings and Ron Brown's mesmerizing fusion guitar. Veteran studio guitarist Reuben Ristrom and seminal harmonic-guitar guru Dean Granros will make rare club appearances for this special benefit.

Premiere jazz drummer KENNY HORST and ace Rio Nido bassist TOM LEWIS will provide the back beat for GUITARATHON, trading off with players from the participating artists' own ensembles. In addition to turning the club over to the Minnesota Guitar Society for the evening, The Triangle Bar is underwriting advertising and publicity costs. Evans Music is providing sponsorship support in the form of musical and sound equipment and a \$100.00 gift certificate which will be raffled off during the evening. Positively 4th Street will provide door prizes and discount coupons throughout the evening.

In order for The Minnesota Guitar Society to fulfill its potential as a service organization for all Minnesota guitarists - and provide

assistance to our members in areas ranging from publicity for gigs to scholarships for advanced studies - we need money!! Benefits such as this not only help to bring in a few bucks, but they increase awareness of The Minnesota Guitar Society and help to bring in new members.

Hopefully, this will be the first in a series of MGS fundraisers scheduled for summer and fall. If this one succeeds we plan to stage similar "Guitarathons" ranging from Folk, Rock, and Blues to Classical, Flamenco, and Bluegrass. We are definitely looking for volunteers from pickers to publicists to help put these events together.

Tony Hauser, Bruce Williams, and Tim Sparks are primarily responsible for putting together JAZZ GUITARATHON, with a lot of help from their friends. We are especially indebted to Carol Brown, who handled most of the publicity chores, including sending out press releases and putting the photo session together. We could still use some help at the show, anything from taking tickets to selling memberships and raffle tickets. We would also genuinely appreciate any and all ideas and input as to how to promote this event. If you would like to volunteer your time or services, please give STEVE HASKIN a call at 333-0169 or call Tony Hauser at 331-7788.

Tickets for JAZZ GUITARATHON are only \$2.50 for MGS members, \$4.00 for Jazz Society members, and \$5.00 for non-members. Anyone who joins the Guitar Society and pays dues that evening will be admitted free. Since the Triangle only holds about 150 people, we don't expect to make a lot of money at the door, especially with the low ticket prices. We're hoping that the publicity generated by this event will increase awareness of The Guitar Society and get people to come out and become members. We also hope all of our members will come out and support these great guitarists.