

CGSUNY Newsletter

Classical Guitar Society of Upstate New York www.cgsuny.org

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Plans are already well underway for the 2012 CGSUNY Fall Classical Guitar Festival. This year's festival will be held on Saturday, October 13 and Sunday, October 14, 2010 at the Fine Arts Building on the campus of SUNY Oneonta. You can find directions and additional information about the festival at the cgsuny.org website. This edition of the newsletter will give you an overview of festival events. The time schedule will follow in September. You will also find articles about our featured performers, *David Starobin* and *Paul Quigley*.

Overview of Events for CGSUNY Fall Festival 2012

Saturday, October 13, 2012

11 a.m. – Registration

CGSUNY Members Recital - Morning Session

CGSUNY Members Recital – Afternoon Session

Masterclass with David Starobin

Informal Ensemble Playing opportunities will be available

If you would like to perform in the Members' Recital please email Sal Salvaggio as soon as possible but no later than September 1 at: vaggio@yahoo.com

Dinner Break

David Starobin Concert

As in past years, there will also be a Silent Auction held in conjunction with the Saturday evening performance. A Reception will be held after the concert.

Sunday, October 14, 2012

Members' Recital

CGSUNY Collegiate Honors Recital

Paul Quigley Concert

If you know of college students who would like to perform for the Collegiate Honors Recital, please have them email Paul Sweeny at bpsimplegifts@earthlink.net as soon as possible but no later than September 30.

David Starobin headlines 2012 CGSUNY Fall Festival



Photo by Allegra Starobin

CGSUNY is very excited to feature **David Starobin** as the headline performer for the Saturday evening program at the 2011 CGSUNY Fall Festival. David Starobin (b. 1951, New York City), was called "arguably the most influential American classical guitarist of the 20th Century" by *Soundboard* magazine. Starobin is the only guitarist to have been awarded Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Career Grant (1988); was honored by Peabody Conservatory with its "Distinguished Alumni Award" (1999); and was given ASCAP's 'Deems Taylor Award' (2007). In 2011, he was inducted into the Guitar Foundation of America's "Hall of Fame". Starobin began playing the guitar at the age of seven, studying with Manuel Gayol, Albert Valdes Blain, and Aaron Shearer. Since 1975, Starobin has toured internationally as a recitalist, chamber player and orchestral soloist. David Starobin has chaired guitar programs at Brooklyn College, Bennington College, the North Carolina School of the Arts, the State University

of New York/College at Purchase, and the Manhattan School of Music, where he held the school's "Andres Segovia Chair". In 2010, Starobin took up the "Fondation Charidu Chair in Guitar Studies" at the Curtis Institute of Music (Philadelphia). In 1981 Starobin founded Bridge Records, for whom he has recorded and produced hundreds of recordings. As performer, producer and executive producer, Starobin and Bridge have won three Grammy awards and received 25 Grammy nominations. David Starobin records for Bridge Records: www.bridgerecords.com

Paul Quigley, Sunday's Featured Performer



Guitarist Paul Quigley has performed with the Glens Falls Symphony, the College of Saint Rose Camerata, and at the Saratoga Arts Center Theatre, Troy Music Hall, The Riverside Church Christ Chapel series, Bowdoin College Summer Chamber Music Festival, Lang Concert Hall at Hunter College, The Spanish Institute, Shakespeare & Company, and the Oberwald Concert Series in Basel, Switzerland. Additionally, Paul was a featured performer on the Queen Elizabeth II World Cruise as well as the Queen Mary II and Crystal Symphony ships. A graduate of Schenectady County Community College and the Manhattan School of Music, Paul earned the A.S., BM and MM

degrees in guitar performance and recently completed coursework for the New York State Music Certification Program at the College of Saint Rose. Paul Quigley is a member of the Finger Lakes Guitar Quartet and is currently on the faculty of Schenectady County Community College, The College of Saint Rose and SUNY Adirondack where he teaches classical and electric guitar.

-Talkin' BGQ-

by Robert Burnside

The following is an excerpt from my final paper for a class I took last spring at the State University College at SUNY Oneonta. The class was called Contemporary Issues in the Music Industry. Our assignment was to pick a brand new album and answer an in depth series of questions regarding the album's release. Much of the content in the complete version is very "nuts and bolts" subject matter. It deals with everything from the legal to technological aspects as well as the creative ones an artist must consider before releasing an album. I feel that the portion included here can stand-alone. I hope you agree.

The Brazilian Guitar Quartet plays Villa-Lobos

The Brazilian Guitar Quartet (BGQ) has been receiving great praise and notoriety ever since their formation ten years ago. With their latest release *Brazilian Guitar Quartet plays Villa-Lobos* that same praise continues. It is difficult to measure their commercial success in monetary terms, rank, or products sold but they certainly are successful in terms of reviews. Since the release nearly five months ago of their latest album the BGQ has received dozens of positive reviews. The reviews cover their prior performances as well as the new album. This kind of attention would likely not be enough in the mainstream pop world to be considered a success. In the classical world and especially the classical guitar world it is huge.

The initial formation of the BGQ dates back to 1999 with the original members Tadeu do Amaral, Paul Galbraith, Edelton Gloeden, and Everton Gloeden. The current lineup includes Tadeu and Everton as well as two newer members Luiz Mantovani and Gustavo Costa. All members of the BGQ both past and present share in the passion of playing classical guitar in an ensemble/chamber group setting. A number of similar classical guitar groups exist but the extended range of notes on two of the guitars which the BGQ use help contribute to their uniqueness. Tadeu do Amaral and Gustavo Costa play traditional six-string classical guitar while Everton Gloeden and Luiz Mantovani both play eight-string classical guitar, an instrument developed and co-created by former BGQ member Paul Galbraith. The eight string guitars they use contain one added bass string and one added treble string. The two extra strings accommodate the standard tuning of a traditional guitar (E A D G B E) maintaining the ascending interval of a perfect fourth (except strings G and B) from the lowest string up to the highest (**B E A D G B E A**). These extended range guitars give the players access to about ten additional pitches (Roughly 55 total notes/pitches in comparison to the usual 43-46) that the standard classical guitar lacks. This extended note range the BGQ utilizes enables them to better realize their goal of arranging and transcribing existing chamber, orchestral, and piano works for guitar

quartet. Their most current CD release, *Brazilian Guitar Quartet plays Villa-Lobos* marks their fifth time achieving this goal.

On this newest release the BGQ transcribes some very choice pieces by the late great Brazilian composer Heitor Villa-Lobos (1887-1959). They include arrangements of two string quartets as well as a few piano piece cycles which Villa-Lobos himself also arranged for orchestra. Villa-Lobos' legacy strongly lives on throughout Brazil and many other parts of the world. Many people consider him the greatest composer to ever come out of Brazil and here the BGQ kindly pay homage.

This music draws upon ideas from both Art and Folk music. The basis for many of Villa-Lobos' works start with a traditional Brazilian melody or children's song and an African or Brazilian rhythm. He would then build on these simple subjects with European based harmony and chord progressions. To further elaborate on the work Villa-Lobos would make use of various classical music developmental procedures (as do most classical composers) such as key modulation, sonata form, theme and variation, etc.

I chose to write about the BGQ for three reasons. A) The assignment required that the album we write about be brand-new (which it was at the time). Two, The album had to fall into a genre we saw ourselves being involved with as a career. And D)... I just like them. They are the first classical guitar quartet I ever heard and therefore hold strong sentimental value for me. Here's how it happened.

While attending Broome Community College (BCC) as music student I was advised to register for a music ensemble. The only two my schedule would permit were Chorus and the Guitar Ensemble. Having little interest (and even less ability) in singing I opted for the Guitar Ensemble. I had no idea what Guitar Ensemble was all about but I did happen to own a guitar so I figured it was the wise choice.

I remember that first semester of the class being very difficult. It turned out that we had to read music, follow a conductor, be in tune with one another, and learn to play as a group (Much different than just sitting in your bedroom strumming chords to yourself). Under Prof. Paul Sweeny's instruction we all got better at doing all those things each passing day. Paul Sweeny is of course the Classical Guitar Society of Upstate NY's (CGSUNY) current Vice-President. It is a pleasure to still know him, take lessons from, and now serve with on the board of CGSUNY. Thanks Paul.

As the semester went on we were assigned more and more songs (or "pieces" as I soon learned they call them in the classical world) to learn, I started becoming fascinated and more aware of the world of classical guitar. Each week I would buy a new classical guitar CD. I bought albums by the likes of Andres Segovia, Christopher Parkening, Julian Bream, John Williams, and the very few other classical guitarists that places like Barnes and Noble keep in stock. It was on these albums that I heard other pieces by the composers whose works we were learning in Guitar Ensemble; Works by John Dowland, and Francisco Tarrega, as well as Bach, Handel, and others.

At the end of the semester we were to put on a concert, "Oh yes, we will put on a concert" (*Wayne's World 2? Anybody?*). For the concert we were told to wear black and

report to the Little Theater at BCC where we were to perform. The Little Theater has a nice stage made of a hardwood gymnasium-like floor, high ceilings with nice acoustics, and a black stage curtain draping in the background. It is a very nice step up from the dull classroom setting where we had been rehearsing all semester. Anyway, we did the concert and everything went well. It was a very thrilling experience.

After the performance I hit Barnes and Noble to lose myself in the shelves of CD's (I needed to unwind a little after the exhilarating but nerve-racking experience of performing). While rifling through the virtually endless sea of compact discs I discovered a classical guitar album that will forever be imprinted on my soul. The album had a cover that looked like the experience I just had; an experience which left such a tremendous impression on me. Four gentlemen all dressed in black, holding guitars over their left knee, music stand in front of them, foot stools on the floor, black curtain in the background, and hardwood gymnasium-like floors underneath (It could have been the BCC Guitar Ensemble *Live at the Little Theater* album for all I knew). I remember looking down at my all black attire and feeling even more proud of what I had just done. I realized that this was a real thing, not just some course that I took at college. It was a world all its own to which I then knew I wanted to in some way always belong. The album was *BACH: Four Suites for Orchestra arr. for Guitar Quartet-The Brazilian Guitar Quartet*. I had discovered the existence of something called a classical guitar quartet. The world suddenly felt more complete.



I believe the thing that made me like music so much from the very beginning (other than the sound) is the idea of a band and what it represents; camaraderie, the idea of belonging to something, and the ability to express your ideas and values within a unit. I now realized that these feelings didn't only belong to rock bands but to classical musicians as well. Most classical guitar album covers are generally bland and maybe this BGQ one is as well, but it reminds me of a place and time that will always be with me. I'm sure many of you can relate to my feelings on albums, their covers, and what they may mean to us; Albums from both the Pop and Rock genres especially. Any time I look at the cover of Frank Sinatra *Ring-a-Ding Ding!*, The Beatles *Please Please Me*, The Who *Quadrophenia*, Billy Joel *Innocent Man*, Metallica *Ride the Lightning*, Nirvana *Unplugged* and countless others, they remind me of a certain place and time during my life. All these different places and times define who we are as individuals today. This particular BGQ album for me now belongs to that special club of album covers (oh, and the music on there is really good too!).

As if solo classical guitarists weren't enough, I now had classical guitar "bands" to admire. Classical Guitar Quartet's (or any other small similar combination) are bands, garage bands in fact. They are chamber musicians and unlike symphony orchestras, they are best enjoyed in small simple settings.

Thank you so much for taking the time to read both this excerpt and memoir of mine. It is such a treat having the opportunity to share with like-minded people my love of the classical guitar and the impression on me which it continues to make. The board of CGSUNY encourages all members to share any classical guitar oriented stories you may have. Submit yours today and we'll print it in the next CGSUNY newsletter. –Bob

A Profound & Heartfelt Thank You

To Carolyn Rifenkark - Secretary, and a founder of the Classical Guitar Society of Upstate New York. Ms Rifenkark has 15 years experience playing the guitar and electric bass with 11 years experience playing the classical guitar. Ms. Rifenkark has performed with the Oneonta SUCO Guitar Ensemble and The Back Street Student Jazz Band. Ms. Rifenkark is currently a guitar instructor at Back Street Music in Cobleskill NY, plays duets with Gail Hamilton and performs as a soloist. She has served CGSUNY as a secretary, treasurer and in some years has functioned as both.

Carolyn will step down as an officer after the 2012 Fall Festival. She will remain as a valued member of our board of directors. She truly has been an integral part in the growth and development of CGSUNY.

She has been our secretary since the beginning of the society and has probably attended more board meetings than anyone on this planet. Her calm, no nonsense demeanor and competence has kept the society on an even keel for many years. Every successful venture requires a small cadre of three or four willing to do all the work. Carolyn was truly an indispensable member of that cadre. Her selfless contributions can't be measured but the society and its growth are impossible to imagine without them. – *Dennis Turechek*

She has been a very key person in starting, setting up and keeping everything together for us as an organization. Her background with non-profits, was key to us getting established, and her organizational skills with the paperwork has kept us afloat and has kept everyone on track with proper procedures so that our non profit status has never been questioned or flawed with complaints etc... - *Gail Hamilton*

I hope we have someone who is willing and able to step up into her shoes for the next season. So please consider volunteering to be CGSUNY Secretary.

We truly can't thank you enough. Best wishes in all future endeavors and many thanks.

Reminders for All CGSUNY Members

- We need you to help with publicity. This could mean simply placing some flyers in prominent places within your community. Or maybe sending an email to folks about the Fall Festival. Mentioning the Fall Festival to groups you have contact with also helps a lot. If there is a local newspaper or Public Access TV channel, send me their contact information and we'll make arrangements to get the word out. You should receive a 2012 CGSUNY Fall Festival Flyer in a separate email.

- Would you like to write a review of some of the events ? Please let me know by email at leshgeor@frontiernet.net
- A reminder to all that we will be electing Officers and Board Members at the festival. Nominations can be made by email to : carolyn@cgsuny.org
- Membership dues of \$ 25 for 2012-2013 are also due. Your financial support helps CGSUNY cultivate an appreciation for the Classical Guitar. It also helps us provide educational outreach, local concerts and events like the Fall Festival. Tax-deductible memberships and/or donations can be sent to:

*CGSUNY
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