

# The Classical Guitar Society of Upstate New York



The Newsletter

October 2021

**Sunday, October 3 2021 2P.M.**

## **The Unadilla Food Pantry Concert/Fundraiser**

CGSUNY will be hosting a benefit concert for the Unadilla First Presbyterian Church on October 3rd at 2pm. The donations from the benefit will go to the Unadilla Food Pantry.

For additional information about this concert please contact: [Matt Downey at down2425@gmail.com](mailto:down2425@gmail.com)

**Saturday and Sunday October 16 & 17**

## **The CGSUNY 21st Annual Fall Festival virtual on Zoom**

Saturday, 16 October 2021 10 A.M. - 12 P.M.

### **The Members Concert/October Soirée**

To receive an invitation to THE MEMBERS CONCERT, on Zoom, please contact: [Paul Sweeny at bpsimplegifts@earthlink.net](mailto:bpsimplegifts@earthlink.net)

Players to date:

Dave Richman  
Bill Simcoe  
Eric Roth  
Giancarlo Sidoli  
Donna Noyes-Grosser  
Paul Sweeny

Ric Chrislip  
Harry George Pellegrin  
Marc Hecker  
Matt Downey  
Paul Sweeny & Barbara Kaufman, "Simple Gifts"

Saturday, 16 October 2021 2:00-4:30P.M.

### **CGSUNY PRESENTS NICHOLAS GOLUSES IN CONCERT**

#### **Virtual Reception** following the concert

To receive an invitation to the Nicholas Goluses concert, please contact: [Paul Sweeny at bpsimplegifts@earthlink.net](mailto:bpsimplegifts@earthlink.net)

Sunday, 17 October 2021 10 A.M. - 12 P.M.

### **CGSUNY COMMUNITY DISCUSSION**

To receive an invitation to the CGSUNY COMMUNITY DISCUSSION, And to send questions, in advance, that you'd like to discuss please contact: [Matt Downey at down2425@gmail.com](mailto:down2425@gmail.com)

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## Calendar

+ live concerts in our area

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When Should it be Reverential.....Harry George Pellegrin

## Calendar

Saturday, October 2, 5 P.M. **CGSUNY Board Meeting**

Members are invited to attend all board meetings.

To receive an invitation please contact: **Paul Sweeny** at [bpsimplegifts@earthlink.net](mailto:bpsimplegifts@earthlink.net)

Sunday, October 3 at 2p.m. **CGSUNY concert/fundraiser for the Unadilla Food Pantry**

Saturday, October 16, 10a.m.-12P.M. **CGSUNY FF Members Concert/October**

Soirée, Saturday, October 16 2:00- **CGSUNY Presents NICHOLAS GOLUSES,**

Saturday, October 16 concert finale - 4:30 CGSUNY reception with Nicholas Goluses

To receive an invitation please contact: **Paul Sweeny** at [bpsimplegifts@earthlink.net](mailto:bpsimplegifts@earthlink.net)

Sunday, October 17, 10 A.M.-12P.M. **FF Community Discussion**

Wednesday, October 20, 7:30 P.M. [Mid Hudson Classical Guitar Society Virtual Café](#)

To receive an invitation to the MHC GS Virtual Café,

please request an invitation from: **David Temple** at [david.albert.temple@gmail.com](mailto:david.albert.temple@gmail.com)

October 30, 2021 2P.M. **CGSUNY ANNUAL MEETING** virtual on Zoom

To receive an invitation to the CGSUNY Annual Meeting

please contact: **Paul Sweeny** at [bpsimplegifts@earthlink.net](mailto:bpsimplegifts@earthlink.net)

Announce the results of the board elections

Presentation of the CGSUNY survey results

And more.

## Eric J Roth - Performer, Composer and Arranger

Saturday, September 25, Time approximately 1:30pm (All Day Event from 11-6)  
Hasbrouck Park, New Paltz, NY (outdoors)

This all-day festival of ambient music will feature multiple performers on various instruments. Eric will perform some of his original compositions as well as music by 20th century works such as Francis Poulenc, Alan Hovhaness, and Lou Harrison.

Sunday, October 3, 7pm

Green Kill (performing arts space), Kingston, NY, live in-person and livestream options. Details can be found at

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/eric-j-roth-october-3-8-pm-livestream-on-youtube-tickets-170205658707>

### **CONCERT: "SOUNDS OF AUTUMN" IN RHINEBECK**

### **Guitarist David Temple Performs at Center for Performing Arts**

The Center of Performing Arts at Rhinebeck presents classical guitarist David Temple on Sunday, September 26, at 6:00 p.m. This unique program entitled "Sounds of Autumn" will be presented as part of the special September lineup at the Center. It will feature music to excite the spirit and the imagination — a musical journey through many places and times. Works from Spain, Brazil, Argentina, and more. Compositions by Tarrega, Barrios, Villa-Lobos and others. Tickets are \$20, and are available through the Center's Box Office by calling (845) 876-3080, or online at [www.centerforperformingarts.org](http://www.centerforperformingarts.org).

David Temple is a graduate of the Music School at Eastern Michigan University and is Vice President and a founding member of the Mid-Hudson Classical Guitar Society. He has presented concerts for the Festival of the Arts at Mohonk, the Philadelphia Classical Guitar Society, the Ulster Chamber Music Series, and many others. He was soloist with the Northern Dutchess Symphony Orchestra for their June 2019 performance of Rodrigo's monumental "Aranjuez" concerto.

His mission is to create concerts full of color and variety, appealing to the newcomer as well as the aficionado. He has recorded four albums, highlighting four centuries of music, including his original compositions and arrangements. David teaches guitar, theory, and composition at his home studio in Clermont, NY. David's original music has been used internationally in films, television, and musical theater. Noah Fleisher of the Taconic Weekend reviewed the CD "Night Dances: Music of Spain and Latin America" and stated, "David is one of those rare musicians of any genre that is able to play directly what is coming from his head, without barrier between mind, finger and fretboard."

The Center for Performing Arts in Rhinebeck is located at 661 Route 308 in Rhinebeck, approximately three (3) miles east of the Village center. The Center is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to providing performing arts experiences for people of all ages, with a strong emphasis on arts education for children.

## President's Message

Autumn, as always, brings change. Sadly the change we probably most want- the possibility of live concerts, of teaching/shopping, etc, without having to wear a mask, of going out in public without fear, still remains in the future. Once again our Fall Festival will be a virtual one. The advantage of this is that we can finally get to hear Nicholas Goluses play the concert he was scheduled to perform for us last Fall and that members and guests from all over can take part. On the other hand we don't get the live experience and we don't get to spend time truly together. Just as the Passover seder includes the phrase "next year in Jerusalem" I firmly hope "next year in Oneonta!" (and elsewhere as well- we have great plans).

I want to end this message with thanks and a tribute to Sal Salvaggio. He was with the Society at its founding and has been deeply involved in its activities, both on the Board of Directors and as a non-Board member, through all of those years. He is ending, I hope temporarily, his service on our Board after the upcoming election and he will be greatly missed. If you see him (or you can send him an email) thank him for his prodigious service to CGSUNY. Thanks Sal, happy trails, and we hope to work with you in the future.

## CGSUNY Soirée - Sept. 19, 2021

CGSUNY has been holding Soirées on Zoom on Sunday afternoons since January of this year. We've found a workable and successful format to keep in touch and support our musical growth during these months when we could not meet in person. Over the months, we have significantly improved our sound quality by having pre-soiree 'sound checks' starting 20 minutes prior to the beginning of the Soiree. We are grateful to the players who participate in the sound checks. Most of the 'bugs' are rooted out, and we can get right to the performances without a lot of fiddling and false starts.

We will not have our official Soirée in October. Instead, we will be holding our Fall Festival on Saturday, October 16th on Zoom. The Morning Segment of the Festival will consist of Members' Performances, 'live' on Zoom. Members will have up to 15 minutes to showcase their playing and add relevant comments. The Members Concert will also be the CGSUNY soiree for October. The review will appear in the November Bulletin.

**Bill Simcoe** started our Soiree program. He played **Tango** by Roberto Di Marino (b.1956, Trento, Italy). The piece started out with an introduction that set the Tango rhythm, then proceeded to an exciting middle section with varied interesting rhythms, before it returned to the classic tango beat. It was well played and a very nice introduction to a contemporary Italian composer who is still composing and arranging music.

**Giancarlo Sidoli** played a Johann Kaspar Mertz (1806-1856, Austria-Hungary) piece called **Unruhe**. He played with great tone and expression, especially in the parts that showcased the 'unrest' that is portrayed in the piece. Merz is particularly well known for his beautiful (but challenging) guitar arrangements of Schubert songs

**Ric Chrislip** gave us a Francisco Guerrero (1528-1599, Spain) song called **Pastor, Quien Madre Virgen**. It was a song about a shepherd's visit to the Virgin Mother in Bethlehem and the awe he experienced. Ric had transcribed the polyphonic choral piece into an arrangement for lute and voice. It was quite beautiful.

**Eric Roth** played a minimalist piece by Lou Harrison (1917-2003, Oregon) called **Avalokitesvara** (a Buddhist chant) that was originally written for harp. It's worthwhile to listen to the original piece on Youtube; it features magical angelic percussive 'aura'. Eric's was a soothing piece with repeats that varied little by little. Eric said that it was difficult to learn due to the similarities of the repeats.

**Jerrod Provost** played Fred Hand's (b.1947, Brooklyn, NY) **Study #1** which featured a beautiful melody in the bass with treble arpeggios. It was very 'open' sounding with cross-string campanella effects. Next, he played Luiz Bonfá's (b.1957, Brazil) **Sambalamento**. This piece, by the composer of music for the film **Black Orpheus**, is quintessential "Brazilian" and seems to fit on to the guitar like it was made for it.

**Paul Sweeny** played the **Gavotta-Choro** by Villa Lobos' (1887-1959- Brazil) from his **Suite Populaire Bresilienne**. It's wonderful to revisit this piece. The Gavotta has a driving rhythm with tender moments. The structure always reminds me of Pictures At an Exhibition in that it returns to a 'promenade' section between 'adventures'. The piece includes a few 'Villa Lobos effects'; those fun passages in which he moves fixed chord shapes up and down the neck to form the 'melody'.

**Marc Hecker** brought us a **Cariulli Waltz** and a piece by **Aguado**. We appreciate his willingness to play, but his pieces suffered from technical difficulties on Zoom and were hard to make out. Hopefully, Marc will attend the 'sound check' before his next performance so we can better hear the result of his musical offerings.

In Round Two: **Giancarlo** 'noodled' on his arrangement of the pop song, **Autumn Leaves**. The first part was a moody version, then he sped up to a swinging, faster version. His balance in the melody and accompaniment was good. **Eric** played Augustin Barrios' **Danza Guarani** which is a lively folk dance with some interesting 'polyrhythms'. **Bill Simcoe** played **Verggio** which was a minimalistic, meditative piece.

The soirée concluded with the President reminding everyone to renew their membership. He urged us to encourage others to join the Society as well.

Participants ended the Soirée with a duet which was an arrangement of Schubert's **Ave Maria**. Giancarlo led the group, giving instruction and playing the arpeggiated accompaniment. The other participants played the beautiful melody that goes with the arpeggios. Since the participants needed to be muted on Zoom, they could hear themselves play, but the 'audience' could only hear Giancarlo.

The Soirees continue to offer good listening and playing opportunities for us. We often hear music that is new to us, or composers we haven't heard of before. We get reminders of pieces we used to know. We inspire each other with our continued practice and dedication. And, we enjoy spending time together and making good connections. Thank you to everyone who participated. We look forward to seeing you soon.

Deena Freed

JULY REVIEW <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1oNB5AnZwAnavTIH3fhTL2pkSp6Uyu8QR/view?usp=sharing>

August Review <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1DjYnjwA-MWW13H5PlsjbPJJJaJxnF81Kd/view?usp=sharing>

*By Giancarlo Sídolica*

Performing solo on stage is truly a thrilling experience for anyone to have in their lives. However, prior to going on stage, we need to establish a program or set of pieces which to perform. This raises a few questions:

What order are my prepared pieces going to be played in?

How can I show contrast between pieces?

Is there a theme or common trend to all the pieces that I want to perform?

What about smaller performance sets as opposed to full concerts? Do I follow these same strategies? The answer is YES!! These small performance sets are a crucial middle ground between performing one piece and a full recital. As such, they need to be approached with the same rigor and attention to design as a full recital. Whether it is a community music event or something more casual like an open-mic, these are great venues to begin your study of programming concerts.

Consider the following four tenets:

**1. Play pieces you feel comfortable playing.**

This might be a piece that you have been studying and preparing for performance for a few weeks and are well prepared to play. It also might be a piece that is a bit newer to you but is simpler to play. Regardless of what you pick, keep in mind that you may be the only solo guitarist at the event and this contrast that you provide with the other performers will be appreciated by the audience. Short pieces and studies by Sor, Mertz, Lauro, Brouwer, Carcassi, and Carulli often can be seen as examples of highly idiomatic guitar works that are great building blocks for your performance set. Renaissance repertoire by Milan, Narvaez, Mudarra and the Chilesoti selections are also fine examples of this.

Let's consider the following performance set:

Pavan (a minor)-Luys Milan

Study op. 60 nos. 1,3, and 7-Matteo Carcassi

Vals Venezolano no. 2 Andreina-Antonio Lauro

Note that these pieces are modest in tempo, short, and all are pieces commonly studied in the first year-second year of classical guitar study.

**2. Provide contrast.**



As part of any program, it is necessary for audience engagement to provide contrast when transitioning from piece to piece. The contrast might be tempo, country of origin, tonality or time signature. You may even choose your first two pieces from the same suite or sonata. In doing this, the composer often will do the work for you by expressing this contrast. Of course, going this route one must use caution. For example, baroque preludes as well as first movements of sonatas are often lengthy compositions. Selecting shorter movements can provide a greater sense of balance to your performance set. Contrast also should be expressed by the performer within the pieces themselves. Renaissance, Baroque, and Classical period repertoire while not notated with timbre, articulation, and dynamic contrasts consistently, often have this implied through repeated sections and motives. For similar reasons you may want to select repertoire that has a great textural range. If your first piece has a monodic texture (clear melody with accompaniment), perhaps select a piece that contains a more contrapuntal texture, or even one that has a large section of just a single melodic line or a series of arpeggios.

Let's consider the contrasts of tempo, meter, country of origin, and texture present in our hypothetical set:

The piece by Milan is in cut-time in A minor and is played at a moderate tempo. Carcassi's first etude is in C major in 4/4 time at Allegro, his third is in A major, in common time and is generally played around Andante. The last Carcassi etude is in A minor in 4/4 time and is once again at Allegro. The Lauro vals is generally played Moderato-Allegro but is highly effective at Presto as well. It also contains the mixed meters of 6/8 and 3/4 which is quite characteristic of Venezuelan music. Further contrasts are afforded by having three different countries and style periods represented (Spain, Italy, and Venezuela).

Additionally, a wide range of textures are presented. In the Milan, block chords are the dominant texture with a few melodic flourishes in the second half of the piece. In the first Carcassi, a scalar texture is the dominant feature, whereas the succeeding studies are largely arpeggio based. The Lauro provides a great number of polyrhythms which affords the performer a further contrast in texture.

### **3. Present something personal or original**

Including a more personal or even an original selection is another approach to consider when programming for an open mic. In doing so you may find that it allows for a sense of continuity between yourself and other performers who often perform original material themselves. This may simply start as a chord-melody arrangement of a song that you enjoy. Creating a new arrangement, even a simple chord-melody is still a personal statement that will impact the audience similarly to a completely original work.

While the set I have provided doesn't reflect anything too personal to me, it may to the hypothetical performer. For example, they may have recently gone to Venezuela or they may

have recently gotten to attend a historic plucked instrument concert where they saw a vihuela player performing some Milan or a 19<sup>th</sup> century guitar specialist playing the Carcassi on a Panormo, Lacote or perhaps a Stauffer or a Mirencourt guitar. Sharing this story and presenting the repertoire makes it a bit more personal which the audience will enjoy and appreciate.

#### 4. Play something snappy, sonny!

In saying this I am by no means advocating a barrage of Bartok pizzicato! This is simply a paraphrase of something that was said to me by an elderly woman at one of my first solo concerts which consisted of a half-hour of Sor, Carcassi, Milan, and Bach played at a retirement community in Delhi, NY . Most of my selections were slow-moderate in tempo. Being only 18 and having only played guitar for about two years, I found myself having a nice set of repertoire, just not much virtuosic repertoire.

Since then, I have tried to provide offerings of virtuosity dotted throughout my short performance sets. As I allude to in no. 1, prepare yourself thoroughly to play the virtuosic piece to the point where you can play it well from memory so that your attention can be purely on your hands and not on the page. I would highly recommend Villa Lobos etudes 1-4, Legnani caprices 2 or 15, the Capriccio, Unruhe, or Tarantella from the Bardenklänge by Mertz, as well as a wide range of character pieces by Brouwer, Torroba, Turina, Tarrega, or Barrios.

Using our sample set, the Lauro can provide a fine finale to the set as it comes off quite well at an Allegro-Presto tempo marking. The B section of that vals is particularly rousing and has a definite groove that will leave the audience bouncing in their seats!

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Many of these strategies carry over when selecting music for community events. Our fall festival is a prime example of this. Other examples where short sets are utilized are the wide range of virtual guitar performances put on by various guitar societies such as CGSUNY and MHCGRS.

The biggest difference between these events and open mics is that there usually is a bit of a higher standard of performance as well as a more attentive audience. For this reason, programming should reflect your very best prepared repertoire and when you include original pieces, be sure that these are prepared to the same standard as your other repertoire selections.

In closing, your short program should be music you love to play. The audience will see your connection to the music and in turn, will respond positively.

## When Should it have Panache and When Should it be Reverential?

I was recently revisiting an article penned in nineteen ninety five by Bernard Holland, a fabled music critic at the New York Times. Entitled *When The Musician Presumes to Upstage the Music*, it is easy to believe one can guess his feelings on the subject matter—from the title alone—before one has even begun to read. Mr. Holland begins his article describing the letters he had often received after publishing a review of a concert, one about which he had obviously made somewhat less than complimentary comments, written by audience members who had asked the question “Did we attend the *same* concert...?” He then describes two performances he attended where the recitalist or the soloist had, in his opinion, used too much range of dynamics or too much rubato, too many grand gestures and basically been too emotional with their programs.

Mr. Holland’s final assertion is that due to the lamentable fact that the standard repertoire has been so overplayed and that many if not most new compositions are not composed to be listener-friendly (his opinion, I merely reiterate), the musician is forced to do *something* to heighten the sense of drama, more deeply plunge into any intrinsic pathos, to just simply play these pieces *bigger* than their composers intended to please a jaded audience. So, in the author’s opinion, the messenger becomes bigger than the message. His rationale is presented very eloquently and I certainly respect his opinions and certainly do not wish the reader here to assume I am ridiculing Mr. Holland.

We as guitarists face this issue as a more intensified crisis (if you will) as our repertoire is (a) quite a bit smaller than that of other recital instruments and therefore rather overplayed and (b) contains pieces culled from the repertoire of other instruments, a fact which can pit some audience members and reviewers against the guitarist simply because we have worn our shoes as we have trod, so to speak, on their favored instrument’s hallowed ground even before we have played a single note. But there is more.

I come from the old school. Trained during the late mid-seventies, my teachers included two well-known students of Andrés Segovia. Segovia’s detractors, even in those days prior to his demise, considered him overly romantic when he played, for instance, any composition by Johann Sebastian Bach. As a student of his students I have been endowed with built in schmaltz. So did many—if not most—of my compatriots.

Classical guitarists did not use amplification in those days. One teacher told me that music was, in many ways, the same as acting. I am sure everyone remembers the difference between screen and stage acting. In stage acting, the actor must physically push all emotions and lines out as far as possible—indeed as far as the back row of seats. Large motions and full-voiced/distinctly clear diction are of primary importance. If the actor is so blessed to have a screen career as well, he or she knows that this larger-than-life approach does not work before the camera. Huge hand gestures, booming lines—these look ridiculous on screen. Similarly, delicate facial expression, hushed lines, and small moves would leave the theatre audience

beyond the front row wondering if the play had even commenced! I was taught that when on the recital stage, *mezzo forte* was the bottom of the dynamic range and that emotional input had to be larger than life. In other words, play to the cheap seats! Of course, when one goes into the recording studio, this could and should be toned down (no pun intended.) One could be sensitive and even introspective when recording. To this day, I still play very loudly in any other venue than the studio. [I also don't relish amplification, but at any cocktail party where the loudest inebriates always gather vociferously within six inches of the performer it is a necessary evil.]

I've strayed a bit from Mr. Holland and our interpretation of music and will return presently. In the nineteen sixties and seventies, maybe earlier, period-correct performance practice entered the consciousness of most classical musicians. This eventually filtered down to the guitar world. Many of us bought lutes. We became painfully aware that certain sub-genres of, say, Baroque music, were divided and decided by a decade in time, a country and even a municipality that required trills and ornaments to be performed to specific formulae and the modern performer starting an ornament a half step in the wrong direction would utterly destroy, in some minds, an otherwise lovely performance! In the nineteen eighties and nineties, if one did not perform a piece of music exactly as written and within certain interpretive parameters, there was a problem. Soon our audiences lost interest. The majority of attendees had not paid to hear a perfectly metronomic museum exhibit, as I began calling such reproductions, but had come to be *entertained*. More cerebral audiences appreciated the pristine readings, and they were dutifully performed for classical guitar societies, in recitals at centers of musical higher education or when participating in master classes, but God help the performer who played thusly to a less illuminated crowd.

I am certain you have seen Agustin Barrios' various manuscripts of the same piece. They are almost always different, one from another. I believe this is because his works were intended for performance and as he did just that, he would make changes to the score for one of two reasons. First, I assume he would change his music as he *worked* the piece—improve and polish. Maybe a great idea would pop into his brain and he just had to incorporate it. The other reason? Maybe the first version received a rather lackluster response from the audience and he decided to jazz it up, so to speak and as it were. Who can say whether Bach or Dowland or any other long-gone composer did or did not do likewise as they worked with one of their own compositions? Who knows? Bach himself might be thrilled to hear his music performed after these many hundred years and might not be all that distressed that a bit of romantic interpretation (and even harmonization in Segovia's case) lent his music relevance to a large twentieth and twenty-first century audience! [Let me stress here that this is just my opinion, and that my opinion isn't right just because I thought of it! Too many folks feel that their opinion is right and everyone else is wrong for just that reason! End of preach.]

So what do we do as guitarists? When do we get *excited* and when do we pay homage? Let me prioritize. What is our first goal? This should be to express our souls through music—to display our emotional responses to the world around us. If a composer's piece allows us to channel our joy, pain, frustrations, anger, etc. AND we do not totally demolish the emotions the composer intended, that is a good thing! If we can't find a composer's work that allows us to do so, maybe we ourselves should begin to compose—our repertoire is perilously small; we need some new music! Our second goal is to take this music and entertain an audience. If we can convey our emotions in a meaningful way to a number of people, we have done a noble thing. One caveat: this does not include pandering to the lowest common denominator. When playing for a musical savvy crowd, the homage will be their best entertainment. Still, if an educated critic such as the gentleman who inspired this article implies we are somewhat less than correct by accomplishing the first two goals while performing for the somewhat less-than-sophisticated group, then this, to me, is truly of little import. As an aside, Mr. Holland did indeed acknowledge the fact that the performer was caught between the rock and a hard place trying to juggle relevancy with an audience with the perceived need to please a solitary critic. I think Mr. Holland understood that, without totally destroying the composer's work, the audience comes first.

Musical taste is, by its very nature, a matter of personal taste! Sounds silly, but taste is solely based in opinion. No matter how educated that opinion may be, it can and will be challenged by anyone possessing a contrasting viewpoint. As a final note, this is not intended to be anything more than an expression of an opinion and I do indeed have a great respect for Bernard Holland. Similarly, I have great respect for those—both performer and audience member—for whom perfectly rendered period-correct performances are the ideal. I sincerely hope no one has gathered anything from this article that would indicate otherwise. My opinion is not sacrosanct; the intent is to present food for thought.





