

Fret Wire

Fall 2025

Our 25th Anniversary!

***The CGSUNY
Newsletter***

**Regional
Artist
Shane Bucci**



Articles!

Info!

Guitar Stuff!

Fret Wire

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Our membership is encouraged to submit articles and compositions for possible inclusion to the *Fret Wire* editorial staff for consideration. Please contact Harry at recitalguitarist@verizon.net

On our cover:

Our Regional Artist, Shane Bucci

Our Mission

Our purpose is to promote the education, appreciation and cultural awareness of the classical guitar and other associated instruments as a non-profit presenting arts organization.

FALL 2025

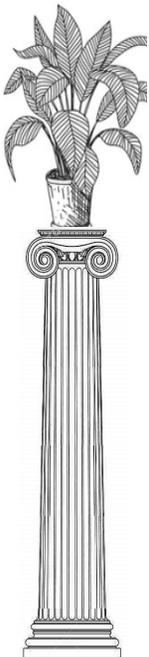
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A Note from the CGSUNY President

Two score and five years ago Dennis Turechek, Gail Hamilton and others brought forth in this region a new organization conceived in love of the classical guitar and dedicated to the proposition that many shared their love. Now twenty-five years later we are going strong and ready to celebrate both our past and the future. We are thrilled to have William Kanengiser as our featured soloist at this year's

Fall Festival, and we have plans to offer more public performances in more different locales.

As always, we want to serve and cultivate our membership; we always welcome your thoughts and suggestions—who are some fine local performers we could present, who are like-minded souls who would want to join us, where are

some good venues for a guitar performance...? In troubled times, music is even more necessary; please join us and let us serve you.



—Paul Sweeny

Fret Buzz

The Next Twenty-five Years!

In the last issue, I sort of got just a bit blue thinking about where we are going as an organization.

I believe that the older I get, the more I see things as being more in my past than as anything that could possibly belong to my future. But that does not apply to our Society!

We are fortunate to have active and dedicated younger members like Matt and Giancarlo. They will be our standard bearers into the future. I'd like to see more high school and college students becoming involved with the CGSUNY.

I recently saw an article that lamented the fact that one doesn't see young people starting bands the way we used to back forty or fifty years ago. When I was a teenager, there was at least one band per city block in The Bronx. It was from these bands that many of the classical guitarists my age were spawned.

When I drive through my town now on a Saturday morning, the streets are silent. Where one used to hear the roar of countless garage bands, now there is peace. But is it a good thing? I work a few days a week teaching at a local music store. Most of my students are either re-entry players—retired folks who

used to play and are now getting back 'into it'—or some kids whose parents are requiring (read: forcing) the child to learn an instrument. *Where is the love in that?*

Our mission as adult players is to motivate youth to *want* to play! But how??? I believe motivation to play comes from exposure to the instrument and the music—**AND the performer!** I truly believe that a personable artist who reacts one-on-one with the concert-goer is the best ambassador for our instrument. When Fred Hellwitz and I met Dale Kavanagh at the 2012 GFA convention in Charleston, her playing thrilled us—that's why we invited her to play at our Fall Festival a few years later. But it was our sitting down and speaking to her after her 2012 recital that really made us

—Harry G. Pellegrin



respect and admire her. She doesn't talk down to lesser mortals; she treats people as peers. It is this congenial human interaction—as well as the talent and the music—that makes others wish to join our ranks as guitarists. **Remember to be a positive influence!**

And, Of Course, Our Headliner! *(In case you missed last issue!)*



William Kanengiser

has forged a career that expands the possibilities of the classical guitar. A prize-winner in major competitions (1987 Concert Artists Guild International Competition, Toronto Guitar '81) he has toured throughout North America, Asia, and Europe with his innovative programs and expressive musicianship. He recorded four CD's for the GSP label, playing music as diverse as Caribbean, Eastern European, and jazz. A member of the guitar faculty at the USC Thornton School of Music since 1983, he has given master classes around the world and produced two instructional videos. Most recently, he performed the U.S. premiere of "Folk Concerto" by Clarice Assad, with fellow LAGQ member Scott Tennant, and the Albany Symphony conducted by David Allan Miller.

An active proponent of new music, he recently received a grant from the Augustine Foundation for his "Diaspora Project," commissioning seven new works focusing on issues of migration and assimilation. It includes new pieces by Sergio Assad, Dusan Bogdanovic, Golfam Khayam, and others. An advocate for musicians, wellness, he serves as Chair of the Thornton Musician's Wellness Committee, curating their Wellness Initiative with health screenings and a lecture series, as well as creating a Musician's Wellness course.

A prolific arranger, he has created dozens of transcriptions for solo guitar and guitar quartet, and com-

posed a number of works for four guitars. In 2009 he created the stage production "The Illustrious Gentleman Don Quixote" for narrator and guitar quartet, writing the stage script and adapting music from the Spanish Renaissance. It was premiered with Monty Python member John Cleese, and extensively toured with Firesign Theater founder Phil Proctor.

As a founding member of the **Los Angeles Guitar Quartet**, William Kanengiser has given hundreds of recitals and concerto appearances around the world, and has recorded over a dozen releases. Their Telarc release "LAGQ Latin" was nominated for a GRAMMY®, and it was their Telarc title "LAGQ'S Guitar Heroes" which won a GRAMMY® in 2005 as the best classical crossover recording. Most recently, their recording of the title work on Pat Metheny's "Road to the Sun" hit #1 on the Apple Music Classical chart.

<https://www.kanengiser.com>

A New String Formulation from D'Addario!



I teach at Music & Arts in Latham. It is my way of keeping myself busy in semi-retirement and earning money for my rather expensive addiction to guitars and support supplies. So, due to this, I hear about new products just a bit earlier than the general public at large and I also enjoy a very nice discount on strings and accessories through D'Addario directly.

So I was pretty quick out of the gate when I saw that D'Addario had released an XT variant of nylon string that stands (price-wise) head and shoulders above the much-loved ProArte line of strings. I will here admit to my shame—I also play electric and have used their NYXL strings on my electrics. They sound great and last a long time. So I was excited to try the 'X' classical strings to see what they offer.!

This past Sunday, June 29th, some of us played the Unadilla Food Pantry Benefit Concert. I needed a restring on my old Hill Munich, so five days before the concert, I cut off my old strings and installed the XT's. On my 640mm guitars I use the hard tension sets, on my 650's, I use the normal tension. I find that, for me, the tension remains constant from instrument to instrument and avoids any adjustments I have to make.

The XT strings appear no different from ProArte's upon visual inspection, I learned that the XT Classical is a premium coated version of ProArte, which features Composite PEEK cores in the basses for better tuning stability and bolder projection. (Basically hydrophobic coating on Composite ProArte basses.) Nylon trebles are the same as EJ45/EJ45C. XT Classical Carbon or Titanium sets, these actually have coated Dynacore Basses, which is the composite peek multifilament twisted for even better and clearer tonal projection

along with better tuning stability as well.

With all that technical information said, the XT's stretched in at what I would consider to be the normal amount of time—in other words, I noticed no difference in stretch-in between the XT's and the ProArte's. They do sound just a smidgeon brighter than the ProArte's, so if you have a slightly dark sounding instrument and are looking for just a bit more 'bite', these may be just the string you need!

So for the next five days, I practiced and played on my Hill exclusively so that I would have the maximum comfort level at the Unadilla benefit. [I've been playing for audiences for fifty five years and don't get nervous, but playing with four high-end performers sitting in the audience, as well as playing before and after me, I like to be well prepared and comfortable.] After many hours of play—and after the concert, the strings showed no discernible signs of wear. ProArte's, while still thoroughly playable, enjoyable, and with no signs of impending doom, will show a bit of

tarnish (or loss of silver) and are just beginning to show very minor fret divots after that much of a workout. With that said, all you who know me know that I often play very forcibly, hopefully not over-playing the instrument, but I like to push volume when I need it—call me *Mr. Apoyando*. So I cast no aspersions on the Pro Arte's, merely on me!

After over a week of constant use, they sound great, feel great and seem like they are not even hitting their stride yet. I will report back as they age. Are they worth the price tag? If they last twice as long, yes. If they last three times as long, they will be more economical than the ProArte's.

I'll keep you posted...

—Harry G. Pellegrin

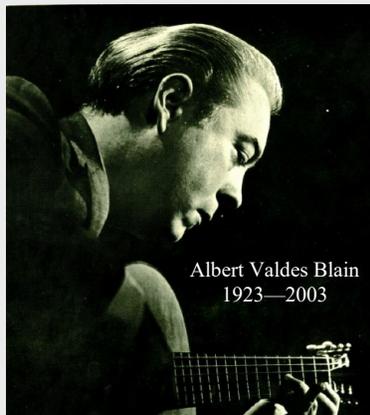
At four weeks later—at least two hours a day of practice and play, four hours of lessons and stints of composition sessions—these strings sound just as fresh as day one and show NO signs of wear! At five weeks, still no loss of tone quality—just a slight sign of wear! I played at the historic Bethesda Church in Saratoga Springs yesterday on my Marczak guitar *Dark Horse* and am totally in love with these strings!

A FEW THINGS I LEARNED FROM ALBERT BLAIN

One day when I was playing for Albert during a lesson, he said, "I see you have tension in your right hand." I asked how he knew that. He said your pinky is sticking out. I asked what I should do about it. He said to put a rubber band around the third and pinky fingers or tape them together so your mind will become accustomed to thinking of them both as one finger. It works! [*He used the same corrective measure on me!* —Harry]

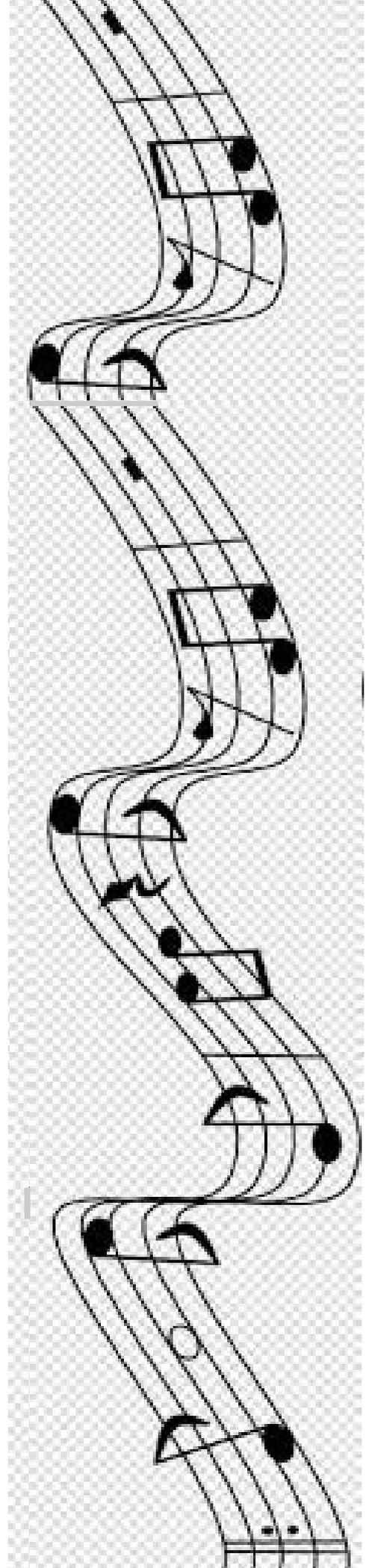
Some of my students have noticed for years that I have a block of wood with an old piece of leather to buff my nails. Albert told me when I first began studying with him that an old piece of leather mounted on a block of wood was as good a buffer as any thing. I found an old piece of leather in the Port Authority Building on a bench and took it home and mounted it on a block of wood. I am still using that same piece of leather on that same block of wood to this day some 60 years later!

This last item may be controversial to some. I was reminded of this after hearing Ken Meyer play Prelude #3 by Villa Lobos at the fundraiser in the Bainbridge Theatre fundraiser. I had not heard this piece in some time and it brought me back to what Albert had said about it.



Albert knew Villa Lobos well enough to have conversed with him about the B section of this prelude. This prelude was dedicated to J.S. Bach and the B section consists of a descending harmonic scale pitched against a repeated note on top and Albert asked Villa Lobos about how to interpret this section. Villa Lobos told him that the pedal on top should be metronomic but the descending line should be played freely! I told Freddie Hand about this years ago at some master class at Mannes, I believe, and he dismissed this immediately as balderdash. I don't know whether he was dismissing Villa Lobos or Albert Blain. Maybe just me! In any case, I mentioned this to Ken who had just rendered a masterful version of this prelude and he said nobody ever plays it that way. But Ken has an open mind and thought about what might be the result of putting a metronome on the top note and playing against it. I have experimented for years with this approach and it can in fact be done. I guess my question would be, is it wise to reject testimony from the composer himself about the interpretation of his own work?

— *Dennis Turechek*
7/25/25



Enquiring Minds Want to Know...

Ongoing Questions as Posed by Deena Freed

Many pieces have noticeable trouble spots in them. What are some helpful ways to conquer the challenges and tame those beasts?

I am a non-player, but I have lived with a guitar player for the past 34 years. I have watched my player tackle passages that seemed apparently insurmountable when the music first made it onto the music stand. Realize that I am incredibly attached to my player—he's my husband, so if I sound overly enthusiastic, you'll have to forgive me. I watched him overcome not one, but two physical injuries that were predicted to end his playing career. Each time he fought back. He'll be the first to admit that, through all this abuse, he is not the technician he once was, but I think the emotional pain of those diagnoses gave him something more. Getting back to the question, I have listened to the same slowly practiced passage repeated until he asked if I was getting tired of it. I said 'no' so he kept going. I believe mastery comes from the simple act (and I say *simple* although it seems so difficult!) of practicing the trouble spot until it is understood and mastered through both intellectual as well as kinesthetic memory—the brain and the fingers learning what to do. In short, my observation is related to a comment one of the jazz greats said about excellence in performance—one must invest fifty thousand of hours of practice to master an instrument. There are no shortcuts. I have witnessed first-hand the dedication it takes to master a piece of music! I admire all of you who do this!

—*Elaine D. Pellegrin*

FOCUSED Practice! What do I mean? It has been recommended that the trouble spot be isolated and mastered, be it a phrase or a single measure—even a few beats! If the rhythmic content is ambiguous, it is recommended to sketch out the beat pattern—you know the old '*I e and a*' concept. Make sure the pulse and subdivisions are correct. Now if the fingering seems ludicrous, pull it apart and see if it can be done. Most often, it is doable, but possibly difficult. Sometimes there can be a typo! Don't believe me? Check out the old Ricordi edition of Carcassi's Opus 60! Often a complete dissection of the fingering will shed the necessary light! At this point, repetition, repetition, repetition is the key to success, But don't forget to reincorporate the trouble spot(s) back in to the piece in its entirety!

—*Harry G. Pellegrin*



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Keeping Records Not Vain!

What are the benefits of having a recordkeeping system for your practice time?

The main benefit of a practice record is analysis (but only after a significant amount of recordkeeping). The “data” you collect allows you to chart progress on pieces, check notes from when it was last on your stand, and critically determine whether your current routine is producing results. It’s also fun to see how many hours you practiced in a year(!)

Do you keep a journal, or set goals?

Yes, I do keep a journal and I do set goals. In fact, the journal is primarily a practice record informed by a series of multi-range goals. As a record of practice, each dated entry contains the length and a summary of each session; spots worked, practice techniques employed, and if applicable, tempos reached. The journal is also a place to articulate thoughts and ideas related to guitar pedagogy and perhaps most importantly, it can be a place to set and record goals for your development, performance, and career.

At any given time, practice routines should be informed by multiple long-term, mid-term, and short-term goals. Setting and working towards multiple goals encourages a diversity of focus and development. Whether learning new rep, polishing old rep, developing new techniques, or perfecting others, setting, and addressing a variety of goals guarantees diverse practice sessions. This helps to keep sessions fresh, inspired, and free from burn-out.

Some thoughts on goals:

Long-term goals generally address larger projects and repertoire preparations. They are usually set a year or more in advance and declare a path for any project newly begun. These can include learning pieces, preparing for recordings, creating new programs, and long-range career projects. I generally categorize them as “have to” (I’ve been hired to do it), “want to” (bucket list), and “need to” (good for my development). These categories can also inform daily/weekly practice to keep the material of each session fresh, inspired, and free from burn-out.

Mid-term goals are geared towards polishing newer rep, cultivating older rep, and keeping all your rep “in your fingers”. This is also the second stage of development for long-term goals and can be divided into various multi-month units. I think of them quarterly with length roughly related to the work cycles of the academic year (fall semester, winter break, spring semester, summer break). Mid-term goals, depending on time and difficulty, are best set to individual lifestyle/employment cycles.

Short-term goals inform performances or events that are a few days, weeks, or months away. Just like mid-term goals, they function as the third stage of development for your long-term goals. These will vary depending on preparation needs, daily and weekly schedules, and sometimes, the significance of the event. Large scale visualization, hands-alone practice, and careful consideration of notes and fingerings through slow practice are all valuable “finishing” techniques.

If you teach, do you ask your students to keep records?

Yes. I encourage each student to summarize their practice sessions. I also require (and sometimes help with) a precise schedule for daily/weekly sessions. We start with hours in the day and subtract time for sleep, meals, class, work, social, exercise, homework, ...and practice. Practice sessions will be of various lengths and depend on changes in daily and weekly schedules. Each day should have different sessions devoted to different goals. An example might be working on new rep for a long-term goal, perfecting old rep for a mid-term goal, and a short-term goal of visualizing a new piece in preparation for an upcoming performance. I encourage starting with a big goal. This can be learning a piece, multiple pieces on a performance, recording preparation, organizing a series of concerts for yourself, or even designing a website. Long-term goals generally start a process. Whether a piece, concert, recording, tour scheduling, or website design, if it starts at the beginning, it will likely be a long-term goal of sorts.

Once you have the long-term goal, reverse engineer the learning process and craft two or three mid-term goals that lead to achieving the one long term goal. Specific short-term goals likewise help achieve the larger mid-term goals.

Is record keeping just for kids?

No. Record keeping is a great way to maximize practice time and monitor results. Over time, a practice journal allows you to reflect on the time spent in achievement of a goal. It also provides blank sheets of paper for ideas, thoughts, philosophies, technical etudes...even shopping lists, whether grocery in origin or those related to the guitar.

Happy practicing!

—Ken Meyer



Shane Bucci is a classical and electric guitarist who enjoys exploring repertoire from a wide array of genres and musical eras. Shane's programming bucks trends and defies expectations, and he often provides audiences with a mix of hidden gems, forgotten favorites, and well-known standards. Coming from the small town of Otego, NY, Shane was one of the only people to pursue music academically or professionally in his area. Currently, Shane lives in Bloomington, Indiana, where he attends the Jacobs School of Music for a Doctor of Music degree in guitar performance, history, and literature. During his Masters degree in Clarksville,

Tennessee studying with Dr. Stanley Yates, Shane won first prize in both the APSU Concerto Competition as well as the Beethoven Club guitar competition. More recently, Shane has been a finalist or semifinalist in several competitions including the Southern Guitar Festival and Appalachian State Guitar Festival. Shane recently made his concert debut near his hometown in Oneonta, NY, playing for friends, family, and community members at SUNY Oneonta, as well as Rochester Classical Guitar's concert series at the Little Theater Cafe in Rochester, NY. Shane also recently gave his second doctoral degree recital on April 4th in Bloomington, IN. and performed at Christ Church Cathedral in Indianapolis on May 5th, and for the Skaneateles Library concert series in New York on June 15. Looking ahead, Shane is preparing for his last two degree recitals, working on composing his first piece for classical guitar, and planning to make more recordings featuring his electric guitar playing. Recordings will be posted to YouTube and this website, so stay tuned!

When Shane is not practicing, performing, or competing, he enjoys spending time training and exploring with his 4 year old Australian Shepherd named Thor. Shane is now living in Buffalo NY and maintains a private studio there.

CGSUNY Members' Soiree

Sunday, 7/20/25, 5PM

The customary pre-soiree sound-check began at 4:30. We sailed through a few sound fixes under Paul Sweeny's fine guidance. The attendance this month was outstanding for a summer soiree. I had to miss the June Soiree, and heard that it was small and, unfortunately, there will be no review of it. Thanks to all who showed up for the June Soiree.

To begin the Soiree, **Marc Hecker** played a *Sonatina* by Ferdinando Carulli (1770-1841, Italy). Carulli wrote a volume called *Method Complete Pour Guitar* (1810) that is still used today. He was part of the group of guitarists that established modern guitar technique in the 19th century.

Next, **Jarrold Prevost** played *Guardame Las Vacas* (Watch Over My Cows), a Renaissance piece by Luis de Narvaez (1526-1549, Spain). This is a piece very familiar to those of us who studied Fred Noad's Renaissance Guitar book. It is a "theme and variations" composition that was originally written for vihuela, a 15th century 4 double course guitar with a rounded back. In 6/8 time, it has great movement to it, and the variations are wonderful. Great to listen to, and fun to play.

P.J. Mintz played *Julia Florida* by Agustín Barrios (1885-1944, Paraguay). This is a lyrical barcarole that is one of Barrios' most well known pieces. It has a singable melody that visits your brain as an echo long after you hear it. There is a recent episode of *Now Hear This* (Great Performances, NPR) called Barrios 'Chopin of the Guitar'. Please watch it! It takes you to Barrios' home town, to THE Cathedral, and delves into his many eccentricities. It contains lots of beautiful playing throughout. It is especially well done.

Dave Richman played the *Prelude* Lute Suite #4 (BWV 1006) of J.S. Bach (1685-1750, Germany). This complex work features drone-like repetitions of high notes (and low notes, sometimes) against a fast moving melody line. The effect is magnetic. It moves, it runs in imitation, it rests, it excites. No matter how many times I hear this, it absolutely captures my attention. It's a great example of Bach's contrapuntal gifts and the beauty of his compositions.

Bill Simcoe played *Summer* from *the Four Seasons* of Buenos Aires by Astor Piazzolla (1921-1992, Argentina). This well known piece has a catchy rhythm and melody. It has a middle section that uses strumming techniques to good effect then returns to the dance-like first part.

Donna Noyes Grosser played Sergio Assad's (b.1952, Brazil) *Valseana* - a piece with a "theme and variations" structure. She played a shortened version with just the theme and one of the variations. It was a slow, beautiful piece. Paul commented that it was 'really lovely'.

Paul Sweeny played the *Milonga* from the *Suite del Plata* (Silver Suite) by Maximo Diego Pujol (1886- 1980, Spain). A milonga is a precursor to the tango that originated in the Rio de la Plata in Argentina. The slow dance rhythm is maintained in the bass while the treble plays a sweet, gentle melody. It's an appealing and outstanding piece.

Round 2:

Bill Simcoe played the *Joropa* from Luis Merlin's (b 1952) *Suite del Requerdo*. This suite continues to be a great favorite of mine (and others agree!). It was first made popular by Jason Vieaux on the Laureate recording he made when he won the GFA competition. The Joropa is a fast and exciting dance piece.

Paul Sweeny played part of Luigi Legnani's (1790-1877, Italy) *Grand Studio*. This is a long piece with many interesting and varied sections. I call them 'sections' rather than variations because each one that Paul played stood out as quite different from the previous ones. All the parts he played sounded worthwhile and engaging.

Marc Hecker played *Canario* by Carlo Calvi (1610-11670, Italy). It was a charming, short piece that echoed the beginning part of the more famous piece called *Canarios*.

We had a great turn out for this Soiree, especially for a summer day. I guess people are finally sick and tired of all those lakes, trips to the Adirondacks, and family visits. My vacation this year included close proximity to ongoing toilet training of a 2 year old in the lovely Saranac Lake area of the Adirondacks. I am going to Tanglewood, Glimmerglass, and Marlboro soon. Marlboro is one of my 'bliss spots' though it's hard to imagine anything more rewarding than the toilet training thing!

Thanks for coming, playing, and listening. See you next month.

— *Deena Freed*

Unadilla Food Pantry Benefit Concert



Sunday, June 29th 2025, members of the CGSUNY performed a benefit concert for the Unadilla Food Pantry. Close to \$400 was raised. We had a lovely audience who appreciated our efforts and made us feel very welcome. They always do!

Matt Downey opened the concert with two pieces from the ‘My Neighbor Totoro’ cartoon. He has arranged the *Rain Theme* and the *Main Theme*. He interspersed these with two pieces by the late guitarist and composer Roland Dyens, two of his letters — *Lettre Sydney* and *Lettre Seine*. Matt always brings sensitivity, passion and virtuosity to his performances.

Dennis Turechek played in second position, delighting us with four selections from ‘The American Songbook’, melodies that not only are wonderful contributions to the guitar repertoire, but are also our contribution as Americans to the world’s culture. Dennis brought these pieces to life with heartfelt interpretations. I personally love listening to Dennis play!

Paul Sweeny, our CGSUNY president, contributed two pieces by John Dowland; the always evocative and moving *Lachrimae* and *Sir John Smith, His Almain*. Two pieces that are always a joy to hear him play.

I played next. I had picked four of my *Vals Brevis* compositions. I particularly enjoy playing these pieces as they were either written for a particular person or inspired by an event in my life that moved me deeply. I find it most easy to channel my emotions into their performance. I finished my set with the dark and moody *An Idea, a Passacaglia* composed by Leo Brouwer and dedicated to guitarist Eli Kassner, founder of the Toronto Guitar Society, on his 75th birthday. I particularly love the often rich, often sparse texture of this piece.



Matt Downey

some lovely recorder and guitar duets by Claudio Camissasa. These pieces were *Chôrinho Para Tiago*, *Un Dia de Sol*, and *Tempestango*. These lovely pieces gave our concert a very nice break from the solo guitar milieu, bringing the sweet voice of the recorder into the mix. As always, their pieces were very well received by the audience!

For me it is always such a pleasure and privilege to perform

in these benefit recitals. I get to rub elbows with some wonderful players and do something positive for a very much-needed organization. We learned that our efforts last Fall resulted in 30 families being able to have a Thanksgiving dinner. How fulfilling is that? To me, that is what this is all about!

—Harry G. Pellegrin



Dennis Turechek Harry Pellegrin

One of my all-time favorite musicians, Ken Meyer, played after me. This was a relief—I usually have to play after him—and he is one tough act to follow! Ken went ‘off program’ and played Heitor Villa-Lobos’ Preludes No. 3 and No. 4. These he played with all the rich darkness and passion one hopes the guitarist can imbue into this music. He never disappoints!



Ken Meyer

Paul and Barbara Kaufman rounded out and completed our program with



Barbara Kaufman Paul Sweeny

Thoughts on perfecting the mechanism:

Many years ago, I worked with a guitarist named Tim. Tim was a delightful, middle-aged, executive-ish guy who wanted to play guitar well enough to gig in his retirement. We worked on all the standards and many with just “three chords and the truth” were easily attained. Others like Hotel California, Stairway to Heaven, and Sultan’s of Swing, required closer scrutiny. Tom had a phrase for this type of practice called, “perfecting the mechanism.” It referred to breaking a purely technical element of a larger musical process down to its smallest parts; perfecting each element and putting the mechanism to the service of the music.

Perfecting (or developing) the mechanism refers to a purely didactic or technical approach to the guitar. Its purpose is to enable dialogue and synchronization between the hands and mind. It is a pursuit-worthy goal requiring just a small percentage of your daily practice time (5-10%).

I find it best to do this type of practice as a warm-up, early in the morning. The exercises are simple so that they may be executed with perfection. We so seldom play perfectly on the guitar. Take this first opportunity with your instrument a few days a week and listen to your hands.

At its core, we might call the process a meditation-with-guitar. The overall goal is to move your fingers slower than your mind as we focus on three parts: Thought/Desire, Motion/Action, and Examination/Assessment. Expensive words and philosophy for a basic process method: Think about doing it/tell the body to do it, do it, and ask how it went. That’s about it. Time is not important to the development of this part of your technique. Time (and the use of a metronome) begin after developing the mechanism. The deeper your focus and thought during this process, the greater and quicker your successes. Though the motions are repetitive, your awareness must be alive and vibrant.

So, let’s make the most of our relatively short time.

Right hand

Begin by playing open strings in the right hand. One at a time and then all pairs, together and separate; all fingers planted except the pinky (p-4th string, i-3rd, m-2nd, a-1st). The goal is to wake the hand and mind up to a conversation with each other. Examine tone, contact point, follow-through. (90 seconds)

Move to a series of right-hand arpeggio patterns – using the right hand alone. Without the metronome, proceed at a speed that allows for the process and examination of tone, contact point and follow-through. I like the Tárrega – *Arpeggios from The Complete Technical Studies*, sourced from Scott Tennant’s, *Pumping Nylon*; particularly for their use of irregular right-hand string-crossing combinations. They provide ample opportunities for thoughtful examination of the process. Don’t try to play all of them. Pick a few each day. (2 minutes)

You might also consider the right-hand-alone portions of:

Giuliani – *120 Right Hand Studies*

Papararo – *La Technica Degli Arpeggi*

Carlavaro – *Cuaderno n.2*

Left Hand

Begin with repetitive left-hand touches on the fretboard, one at a time and then all pairs. Examine contact point, tension, and release for each finger. Repeat the process for each finger at various points of the fretboard. I like to place my left hand on the third string at the seventh fret and tap each finger and pair a few times. I’ll repeat that process for each fret down to the first position. (90 seconds)

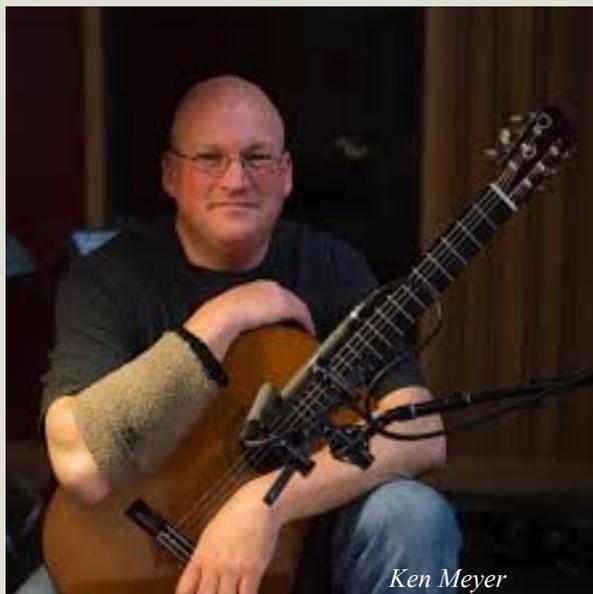
Move to a series of scalar passages and multi-finger shapes – using the left-hand alone. Focus on Thought/Desire, Motion/Action, and Examination/Assessment as you consider tension, contact points, relaxing away from the note and release. Any one octave/three string scale shape will work (this can be an opportunity to work on other scales/modes). Multi-finger shapes require more than one finger. Once you have the shape, release the tension so you are only touching the strings with

the left hand – not pushing them down. Now, press one, two, or three fingers of the shape at a time focusing on our three-step process. This concept is one of the pillars of, The Guitarist's Hands (ISBN-13: 978-0900938511), a fantastic book by John Duarte and Luis Zea.

Synchronization

With our hands ready and by playing with intention, we may begin to perfect the mechanism by discussing and developing the concept of synchronization. Synchronization (of the fingers, hands; even heart, and mind) is one of the most important and yet often overlooked elements of guitar technique. Every note you play, other than an open string, is the culmination of a process requiring at least two different synchronized actions; one from each hand (and that's just for one note)! Forget about chords, scales, slurs, arpeggios, artificial

harmonics... Next time you play a note think about all the motion that must be synchronized for it to sound. Both hands must find the note, touch the note, play the note, release the note, and prepare for the next. Again, just one note. Now consider the amount of synchronization in just one measure of baroque fugue or modern concert etude, while you factor in that classical/fingerstyle guitar technique is the only instrumental music technique that requires at least a 2:1 ratio (between the hands:to make one sound). Don't sleep on synchronization!



Touch and Play

Tim liked the mechanical nature of guitar technique; the idea that thoughtful repetition with a reward for accuracy can program the hands to perform a series of physical tasks. In fact, much of our daily practice is devoted to very specific versions of this, or what Segovia used to call, “training the donkeys.” Now, when training these donkeys, deep in the weeds of a measure or phrase, we are generally trying to coordinate many different tasks and motions; essentially synchronizing them to occur at a specific time.

Thinking about technique as a mechanism allows us to treat it in the abstract, away from the music. Something that can be thought of at a macro level (overall technique) and then applied to our donkeys on the micro level (measure 34 of such and such, by so and so). Pepe Romero introduces the macro-concept of touch and play in his guitar method, La Guitarra (ISBN-13: 9780985945107). This simple concept is a great way to begin work on hand synchronization.

Pepe suggests the following three steps* and emphasizes that they are all part of one movement.

1. The string is touched at once and without pressure by both fingers. Left hand at the note and right hand at the string.
2. Pressure is applied by both fingers at the same time. Pressure/motion sounds the note.
3. The left hand/finger holds on while the right hand/finger releases through the string. The next note starts the process again.

The genius here is that although two hands must synchronize motions, they are essentially doing the same thing: the middle finger of the left hand moves to a fretted note just like the “m” finger of the right hand moves through the string. Both fingers move to the palm. *For this exercise, the movement from note to note is slow but the velocity of “playing” the note or moving the fingers towards the palm is quick and deliberate.

I hope this helps and Happy Practicing!

—Ken Meyer

Fall Festival Schedule!

Saturday

9 AM Registration begins, coffee!

10:00 AM – 11:00 AM – President’s Welcome, followed by Warm-up and Ensemble Playing (All are welcome to participate.)

11-12:30 Members Recital First Session

12:30-2:00 Lunch

2-3:00 Members Recital Second Session

3:00 CGSUNY Annual Meeting

4-5:00 Rifembark Concert featuring Shane Bucci

5-7:30 Dinner

**7:30 William Kanengiser headliner recital at First United Methodist Church
Reception to follow.**

Sunday

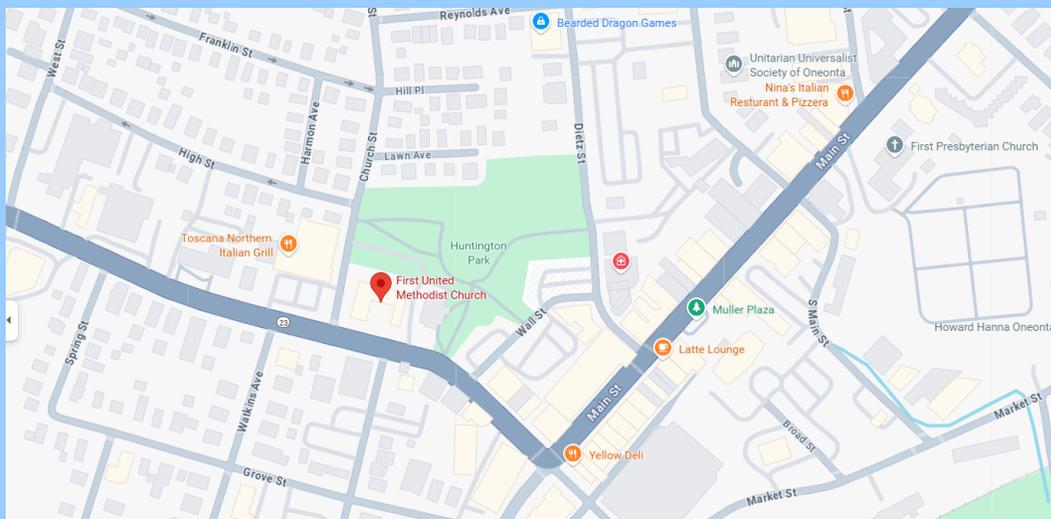
9:30—10:00 Member’s ‘Hands On’ Warm-up Session with Bill Kanengiser

10:00-12:00 Master Class with William Kanengiser

Like us on Facebook!

Important Information for 2025 Fall Festival!

Some important aspects have changed! Please read this information.



The most important change is that our headliner recital will be held at The First United Methodist Church, 66 Chestnut Street—Phone 607-432-4102. Traditionally, the recital has been held at Hartwick College or SUNY Oneonta, but not this year!

Having the recital at the United Methodist Church will make the event more easily accessible for the community-at-large. Exposing the classical guitar to the world is our mission statement!

Hampton Inn

CGSUNY has an arrangement with the Hampton Inn in Oneonta for a block of rooms for Friday and Saturday:

Rate \$179

Code CGS

Mention CGSUNY

Address is 225 River Street, Oneonta 13820

607-433-9000

Sales person was Alexandra Sales

Lodging is also available at a discounted rate for CGSUNY members! It's the same hotel as last year. Please take advantage of this as soon as possible as there is a cut-off date (September 18, 2025) for the discounted rate.

UPCOMING EVENTS

October 18th & 19th 2025!!! *Fall Fest* **'25**

SUNY Oneonta Fine Arts Center.

1. Take I-88 to Exit 15. Make a right at the end of ramp onto Foster/Lettis Highway.
 2. As the Foster/Lettis Highway crosses Main Street at its first major intersection, it becomes Maple Street in residential Oneonta.
 3. At the first light on Maple Street, make a left onto Center Street.
 4. At the end of Center Street, make a right onto West Street.
- Turn right at the SUNY Oneonta sign onto Ravine Parkway and into the campus.

Monthly Virtual Zoom Soirées

CGSUNY is now offering Monthly Virtual Soirees open to our membership. We will host a Zoom meeting on the Third Sunday of Every Month at 5pm and send information out to our membership. Members may come to perform or watch the Virtual Soiree.

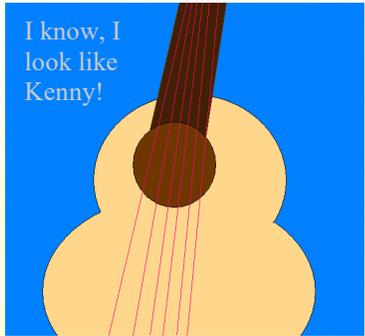
Any questions can be directed to current Secretary, William Simcoe, via email:

wsimcoe@cgsuny.org

The Question for next quarter's issue:

All members feel free to respond!

Is there a piece of music that changed your life?



Campus Directory

Links to Google Maps:

1. [Alumni Field House](#)
2. [Alumni Hall](#)
3. [Bacon Hall](#)
4. [Baseball Field](#)
5. [Blodgett Hall](#)
6. [Bugbee Hall](#)
7. [Chase Physical Education](#)
8. [Counseling, Health and Wellness Center](#)
9. [Curtis Hall](#)
10. [Denison Hall](#)
11. [Emergency Services/Police](#)
12. [Facilities and Safety](#)
13. [Fine Arts Center](#)
14. [Fitzelle Hall](#)
15. [Ford Hall](#)
16. [Golding Hall](#)
17. [Grant Hall](#)

Map Key

- V Visitor Parking
- A Admissions, Visitor Parking
- ♿ Accessible Parking



See you next quarter in
the Winter Issue of

Fret Wire

Have some news?

Have an idea for an article?

*Have you written a piece that
you wish to present to the
membership?*

**Consider submitting it for
possible inclusion in**

Fret Wire

**your Society's
quarterly newsletter!**