

The Mandolin Journal

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2016 Convention News

by Mark Linkins

The CMSA leadership team and the Valley Forge host committee have been busy working to lay the groundwork for the 30th Annual CMSA Convention. We are extremely happy to announce that the Modern Mandolin Quartet (MMQ) will be the headlining guest artists for the 2016 convention! The MMQ, founded by Mike Marshall and Dana Rath in 1985, returns to a CMSA convention after a 15-year hiatus. MMQ last appeared at a CMSA convention in 2000, in Atlanta. At the time, the quartet's line-up included a very young Chris Thile.

Given the theme of the 2016 Conference – “The Art of Ensemble Performance” – we are particularly pleased to welcome the MMQ, which has played such an integral role in helping to expand and redefine conceptions about mandolin-based chamber music. Over the course of three decades, the MMQ has released seven full-length recordings and appeared on numerous Windham Hill samplers. MMQ's most recent recording – “Americana” (2011) – garnered three Grammy nominations. David Balakrishnan, of the Turtle Island Quartet, described “Americana” as “America's premiere mandolin quartet playing at the top of its game.”

The MMQ personnel have evolved across the decades. The current roster includes founding member Dana Rath (mandolin), Matt Flinner (mandolin), Adam Roszkiewicz (mandocello and guitar), and the quartet's newest member Radim Zenkl (mandola). Zenkl joined the group in 2015, following the untimely passing of Paul Binkley. Each performer brings a unique musical history and skill

set to the ensemble. In the next edition of the *Mandolin Journal*, we will highlight the individual profiles of each member of the quartet.

During the convention, the members of the MMQ will present concerts, facilitate workshops, and serve as section leaders of all of the “mando” sections of the En Masse Orchestra. We are very pleased to announce that Mark Davis will serve as leader of the guitar section. The founder of NAME (New American Mandolin Ensemble), director of the Providence Mandolin orchestra, and one-half of a duo with Beverly Davis, Mark Davis is well known to regular conference attendees.

In addition to the MMQ, the conference concert line-up will feature Philadelphia's mandolin and guitar ensembles – the Munier Mandolin Orchestra (MMO) and the Philadelphia Mandolin Ensemble (PME) – performing separately and together. Their repertoire will include an eclectic

mix of compositions and arrangements for mandolin orchestra. The program will include a first-time event at a CMSA conference: the performance of a major choral work with mandolin orchestra accompaniment. The combined mandolin ensembles will be joined by the 50 members of the Media Chamber Chorale (MCC) for a performance of Vivaldi's “Gloria,” under the baton of MCC musical director John Stroud.

During the course of the past five years, the Philadelphia Mandolin Ensemble has performed the “Gloria” with four choral groups from Pennsylvania and New Jersey.



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Back Issues of the CMSA Newsletter of last year are available for \$3.00 each. As long as copies last, our introductory issue of 1986 is \$1.00 each. We invite suggestions and written contributions to the Newsletter please email them to CMSAJournal@gmail.com.

All material (items, notes, editorials and advertising) must be submitted by the deadline stated within the Newsletter. Items not received by the deadline will appear in subsequent issues.

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Editor's Note

Greetings,

Thanks to everyone who contributed to this issue of the *Mandolin Journal*, This is the largest issue to date, at 40 pages!



Be sure to check out the new CMSA website at <https://classicalmandolinsociety.org/> The site is well organized and the content alone warrants a visit. Back issues of the *Mandolin Journal* are available as is an extensive library of sheet music. You can also find videos and photo galleries from past conventions. Please see Joane Rylander's article on page 6 for more information.

Mark and Beverly Davis' article "The Care and Feeding of a Mandolin Orchestra", (a re-cap of their 2015 CMSA convention workshop) pointed out a desire amongst the membership for a dedicated section within the *Mandolin Journal* for orchestra news. I'm certainly willing to give it a try. So if you have any orchestra news that you would like to share with the membership please email it to me. Keep in mind that the *Mandolin Journal* is published quarterly - so news /events that are time sensitive may not be published before they actually happen.

The deadline for submissions for the August issue of the *Mandolin Journal* is July 1st. Please email submissions to me at CMSAJournal@gmail.com.

Sincerely,
Jackie Zito

CONTENTS

Convention News.....	1,4-5	Basics Under the Microscope.....	20-23
Presidents' Message.....	3	Keith Harris in Korea.....	23
Treasurer Needed.....	3	Bluegrass Vitamins for Classical Cats.....	24-25
Modern Mandolin Quartet.....	5	The Man and His Mandolin.....	26
New CMSA Website.....	6-7	Music Review: "Wishes".....	28
Evan Snoey: Thank You CMSA.....	8-9	Review: Carlo Aonzo Concert & Recording.....	29
Compser's Corner.....	10-13	NAME Goes International.....	29
Care & Feeding of the Mandolin Orchestra.....	14-16	Short Reviews.....	30-31
White Rock Mandolin Ensemble.....	17	Tutti in Philadelphia.....	32
Call for Scores.....	18	Sheet Music: Reverie.....	33
		Which Finger.....	34-37

Presidents' Message

There is a lot going on behind the scenes right now. There are volunteers working on replacing and updating our website, paying bills, planning the convention for this year and next, examining and revising outdated by-laws, working on building our music library, editing our Journal, and working with contracts, composing music for the en masse orchestra, transposing music, working to teach children how to play classical mandolin and also doing their daily jobs, parenting, helping elderly family members and practicing their parts for orchestras, trios, duets and solos.

Our members are all volunteers who have a passion for the mandolin and want to play and work with other like-minded people of all ages.

This month's message is dedicated to all the people who work to make our organization vital and relevant and to keep you informed about news from around the world as it relates to mandolin groups and players. Thank you for making our organization strong!

As CMSA expands and undertakes new activities, we would like to see even more of that wonderful volunteer spirit! When our new website is launched, you will find a place there to offer your talents to the great group of people who are Classical Mandolin Society Members. Some of the volunteer roles are very visible: you can help out at the convention, participate on a committee or run for a position on the Board. We're also looking for more people to join the team that will jointly manage our

new website. But many other activities are less visible: researching & gathering information for a new initiative, drafting a brochure, document translation, or designing a poster, to name just a few of the tasks that need to be done.

Don't hesitate to drop us a line and let us know that you're interested, whether on a small or large scale. Getting involved as a volunteer will have a huge impact on CMSA.

Sue and Susan



Sue Lesser



Susan Mc Laughlin

New Treasurer Needed

by Lou Chouinard

CMSA is looking for our next Treasurer. Will it be you?

I love volunteering for CMSA. However, I have come to the point in my life where I find time sensitive responsibilities difficult to accomplish. There are some time sensitive responsibilities in the Treasurer's position (convention registration, Board meetings, etc.) If I am travelling or otherwise scheduled, meeting those responsibilities has been a challenge. The last thing I want is to be a bottleneck for CMSA or to let the organization down.

I plan to complete the current term that expires 12/31/2017. I would like to use the time between now and then to mentor the next Treasurer. (If the new Treasurer feels confident in stepping up sooner, I am happy to step aside.)

There are some non-time-critical aspects of the Treasurer's responsibilities (financial statements, tax returns, etc.) As these take some Excel skills and I enjoy doing them, I am willing to act as Treasurer Assistant on an ongoing basis if so desired by the new Treasurer. (This joint effort worked very well when Antonina Nigrelli was Treasurer.)

Please give careful consideration to becoming the next CMSA Treasurer.

For more information or to put your name "into the hat", please contact our Co-Presidents at CMSAPresident@ClassicalMandolinSociety.org or me at CMSATreasurer@ClassicalMandolinSociety.org.

2016 Convention News

(continued from page 1)

The initial performance resulted from a collaboration with the Concord Singers, an all-women's chorus based in Summit, New Jersey. (Interestingly, Vivaldi initially wrote the Gloria to be performed by an all-female group – the girls at Ospedale della Pietà, a convent/orphanage/music school in Venice.)

PME member Mark Linkins and Concord Singers musical director Michael Sanflippo had been exploring the possibility of a joint performance of a major choral work with orchestral accompaniment. The key was to find a work that would “translate well” when performed on mandolin and guitar. For a variety of reasons – both aesthetic and practical – Vivaldi's “Gloria” seemed like a logical choice. Mark Linkins adapted the original score – written for string orchestra, continuo, oboe, and trumpet – for mandolin and guitar orchestra.

The performances were well-received. The interest generated from the initial collaboration led to future collaborations with other choral groups. With each performance, the arrangement has evolved. The most recent performance – in December 2015, with the Media Chamber Chorale – included the addition of organ continuo (with realization by the chorale's accompanist Bill Gatens). This is the version which will be performed at the conference.

The use of organ continuo with plectrum ensemble presents an interesting reversal of roles. As one would expect, the prominent instrumental lines in Vivaldi's score are performed by instruments that generate sustained tones: bowed strings, winds, or brass. The continuo accompaniment, in contrast, is most typically performed by plucked stringed instruments with minimal sustain: harpsichord, lute, theorbo, etc. These usual roles are reversed, however, when mandolin family instruments and guitar play the orchestral parts and the organ provides sustained continuo parts. When we initially explored the concept of using organ continuo, we feared that the organ might overwhelm the plucked string instruments. It turned out that these fears were unfounded. Bill Gatens's sparse and delicately rendered organ accompaniment provided the perfect foil to the sparkling sound of the mandolins.

In the next issue of the *Mandolin Journal*, we will include more details and highlights about the convention program, including featured workshops, concerts, vendors, special conference events, etc.

Introduction to Host Committee Members:

The 2016 host committee is pleased to include at least one member representing every section within a typical mandolin orchestra: mandolin – Jan McIntosh, Lyndon

Laminack, and Mark Linkins; mandola – Joe Kasinskas; mandocello – Dave Betts and Dave Thorne; guitar – Jim Lemisch; double bass – Steve Clark. Each committee member also performs with one or more of the ensembles that comprise the Mandolin Society of Philadelphia.

The Philadelphia classical mandolin community is happy to claim one of the CMSA board members – Dave Betts – as their own. Dave Betts currently serves as the secretary of CMSA, and for many years he also served as CMSA's webmaster and recording archivist for CMSA conventions. Dave co-chaired the host committee of the 2004 CMSA Convention in Philadelphia. Dave plays mandocello and cello. A member of both MMO and PME, Dave has been actively involved in Philadelphia's classical mandolin community for nearly two decades. Dave will be handling AV/technology and transportation needs at the Valley Forge conference.

Jan McIntosh is familiar to many regular conference attendees. A longtime CMSA member, she co-chaired the 2004 Philadelphia Host Committee (along with Dave Betts). Jan currently studies mandolin with Barry Mitterhoff, and she frequently participates in Carlo Aonza's workshops. Jan will be responsible for the design and production of the conference programs, and she will also plan and coordinate the raffle.

Dave Thorne, a longtime member of the MMO and CMSA, is a veteran of many conventions. Dave plays mandocello with the MMO and bass balalaika with various balalaika ensembles in the Mid-Atlantic region. Dave will be serving as the host committee liaison with Valley Forge Radisson.

Joe Kasinskas currently plays mandola with both the MMO and PME, but he is equally at home on mandolin and guitar. Joe also serves as the assistant conductor of the MMO. He studied music theory and composition at the University of Colorado, and he was a founding member – as performer and composer – of the ground-breaking Philadelphia-based new music ensemble Relache. Joe has written and arranged numerous pieces for the MMO and PME. Joe is serving as the vendor coordinator for the 2016 convention.

Lyndon Laminack plays mandolin in the MMO. A guitarist for most of his adult life, Lyndon began playing the mandolin five years ago. He currently studies mandolin with Philadelphia-based mandolin and domra instructor Tamara Asta. Lyndon is serving as the convention's volunteer coordinator and publicity/advertising coordinator.

Guitarist Jim Lemisch joined PME eight years ago. Prior to that, his study of classical guitar was primarily a solitary pursuit. Jim thoroughly enjoys the musical and

2016 Convention News

(continued from page 4)

social connection that comes with ensemble performance. Jim will handle the design and production of concert programs and conference paraphernalia (t-shirts, tote bags, etc.).

Steve Clark plays double bass with the MMO. He is equally at home playing jazz, bluegrass, folk, or classical music. Steve will support the other members of the host committee as needed.

Mark Linkins plays mandolin with the PME, and he serves as the musical director of the MMO. Mark studied double bass performance at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia. He did wedding and freelance work for many years. In recent years, Mark has turned his attention to mandolin and guitar. Mark has written

and arranged pieces for both the MMO and PME. Mark is the host committee chair. He will also coordinate the convention's welcome party.

Hotel Reservations:

We are pleased to report that a significant number of hotel rooms have already been reserved. If you are planning to attend the convention and wish to stay on-site, we encourage you to reserve a room as soon as possible. To make reservations, call 610-354-8118. Be sure to identify yourself as a Classical Mandolin Society of America Convention attendee to ensure that you receive the reduced rate. When making your reservation, please specify that you wish to stay in the "Radisson tower," (otherwise you may wind up in the "Casino tower").

Featured Performers: the Modern Mandolin Quartet

by Dotty Coffey



The Modern Mandolin Quartet

The Classical Mandolin Society of America is thrilled to announce our featured performers for the 2016 convention – the Modern Mandolin Quartet. We are also delighted to

announce that members of the ensemble will conduct the optional pre-convention teaching and technique class.

The Modern Mandolin Quartet was founded in the 1980s by Dana Rath and continues to delight mandolin fans. As with any such long lived ensemble, its roster has changed over the years and continues to feature amazing talent. Alumni of the quartet include Mike Marshall, John Imholtz, Chris Thile, and David Peters. The quartet went into temporary hiatus during Paul Binkley's terminal illness, and, subsequent to his passing, has returned anew. Today, the Modern Mandolin Quartet consists of Dana Rath, Matt Flinner, Radim Zenkel and Adam Roskiewicz.

The MMQ's dedication to use "the instruments of the mandolin family to perform classical and contemporary compositions from around the world" is evident in the group's long discography. Its 2012 release – *Americana* – features work of Antonin Dvorak, George Gershwin, Leonard Bernstein, Philip Glass, Keith Jarrett, Aaron Copland and Bill Monroe. Furthermore, *Americana* was

nominated for Grammys in the categories of Best Chamber Music/Small Ensemble Performance, Best Engineered Classical Album and Classical Producer of the Year.

The group brings deep knowledge of the plucked string world, particularly mandolin and guitar having degrees in composition (Matt Flinner, University of Utah); music performance (Adam Roskiewicz, San Francisco Conservatory of Music); in depth study with a number of well known classical mandolinists (Dana Rath, with Keith David, Harris, Gertrud Tröster, Emmanuel Sheynkmann and Andy Statman); and classical guitar, mandolin and composition studies (Radim Zenkel).

CMSA convention attendees have an unsurpassed opportunity in 2016 to revel in the many genres and styles mastered by the MMQ. Each member of the quartet performs in a variety of idioms including classical, bluegrass, flamenco, Irish, jazz, klezmer among others.

Because of the unique opportunity presented by the stellar lineup of Matt Flinner, Dana Rath, Radim Zenkel and Adam Rozkiewicz, we expect spots in the pre-convention technique workshop will go quickly as this group is skilled in ALL the mandolin family instruments and guitar. And hotel rooms will go quickly. Reserve your hotel room now and register for the convention quickly when the website is open.

The CMSA's 2016 convention is a not-to-be-missed event that will be talked about in years to come!

To learn more about the Modern Mandolin Quartet, visit their webpage at www.modernmandolinquartet.com.

CMSA Announces a New Website!

by Joane Rylander

A small team has been working with the CMSA Board to revitalize the CMSA website. The website will include the features of the current website and a few more!

The first priority of the website project team has been to transfer the content of our current site and to ensure that the membership features and member-only areas work effectively and securely. In the coming months, we will be adding content and features that our members value.

Team members include Sue Lesser, Susan McLaughlin, Fred Pike, Dotty Coffey, and Joane Rylander, with assistance from Lou Chouinard and Dave Betts.

Dave Betts has single-handedly managed all of CMSA's webmaster duties for many years, working behind the scenes to keep the website running and update the database with changes. Going forward, a team of interested individuals will work behind the scenes to keep the website up-to-date.

Thanks from all of us, Dave, for all of your hard work over the years!

FAQs

Q: What are some of the features of the new website?

A: Members will be able to maintain their own member profile, including photos, interests, and website links. Household memberships include a place for separate contact information for each household member, who can maintain their own information.

Like everything in the CMSA, the website is staffed by volunteers. The new website will be supported by a team rather than just one person (aka Dave). Membership and event coordinators will be able to access membership and event information and reports themselves. Remember that our volunteers work hard to answer your questions as quickly as possible—we appreciate your patience.

Q: When will the new website be available?

A: The website conversion is planned for Friday, April 15th. You may notice that the site is unavailable for a short time during the conversion. Please be patient with us while we switch over and work through any issues. The new website will have the same web address as the current site.

Q: In the Member Directory, other people have nice pictures and descriptions. How do I update mine?

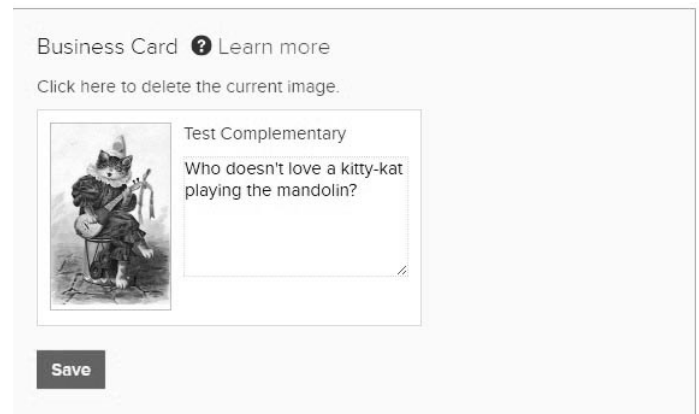
A: If your membership was active as of March 2016, we are bringing your basic member information to the new membership database. However, the business card shown

in the Member and other Directories is a new feature.

From the *Membership* menu, select *Manage Your Account*. On the *Profile* tab, update your business card and additional information that you'd like to share with other members. Note that you can choose not to list your information in the directory and to not show your street address in your directory profile.

The directory is accessible only to current CMSA members. The CMSA does not release this information to third parties without your express consent.

You can always click [? Learn more](#) to see some text or a short video on how to use this (or any other) feature.



Q: I don't have a reliable connection to the Internet. How can I maintain my membership?

A: Paper membership and convention registration forms will be available as well. You can download and print the forms from the website, complete them, and mail them to the CMSA Treasurer, currently Lou Chouinard. The membership form is also published in each issue of the Mandolin Journal.

If you do not have an email account or Internet access, please contact the CMSA Treasurer by phone or snail mail.

Q: I know I'm a member of CMSA, but I can't login.

A: If your membership was active as of March 2016, we are bringing your email and password to the new website. If your membership was not active, you will need to register as a new member.

All members must have a valid email address to join online or login to the member area of the CMSA website. If you have an old email address on file, login with that email address and change it to the new one yourself. Your email address is used to track your membership, login to the website member areas, and for any CMSA

CMSA Announces a New Website!

(continued from page 6)

communication. Make sure that your email address is up-to-date. If you are still having problems logging in, email webmaster@classicalmandolinsociety.org, including the problem and your full name.

Q: I forgot my password.

A: Click the button to receive a new password to the email address on file. This will reset your password. The next time you login, you can change this password or leave it as is.

Q: I have or want to sign up for a Household membership. How does this work?

A: At the time of joining or renewal, the primary household member updates their profile information.

Each primary household member can add one or more additional Contacts to their membership record. The additional Contact will have their own membership profile that they can manage themselves. The additional Contact will receive separate communication on their listed email address. Additional contact records already on file will be created for current household memberships. This person will need to update their contact information through the primary member to create their own login and profile. The additional Contact will not be listed separately in the directory, but can be located using the search feature.

Note that only one paper copy of The Mandolin Journal will be mailed per household.

Q: I want to become a Lifetime Member of CMSA. How do I do this?

Lifetime membership is one of the payment options for Individual or Household memberships. You will be charged a one-time fee, and your membership to the CMSA will never expire. And, we would love for you to become a lifetime member if you are not already!

Q: Whom do I contact if I have problems with my membership.

A: Use the Contact Us form on the website or email CMSAtreasurer@classicalmandolinsociety.org if you have any problems with your membership. Like everything in the CMSA, the website is staffed by volunteers. We work hard to answer your question as quickly as possible (within a day or two), and we appreciate your patience.

Q: What payment methods can I use to join, renew my membership, or register for events?

A: You can safely and securely use your credit card on the

CMSA website (using Stripe technology). For you techies, our website also uses SSL (<https://>), a protocol for secure communication over the Internet.

If you prefer, you may pay by check. Be sure to send your check promptly to the CMSA Treasurer as shown at the time you sign up.

Q: I'm noticing that my membership is set to expire on December 31, 2016. Why is this?

A: For the new system, we are changing the membership year to January 1 – December 31. Current members will have their membership extended for two months. Membership renewal will be separate from the annual convention registration, though you must be a CMSA member to register for the convention.

Q: How will I receive my Mandolin Journal?

Every member with a valid email address will receive a notice and a link to the most recent issue of The Mandolin Journal. If you have indicated on your member profile that you would also like a paper copy, one will be mailed to you. If you don't need or want a paper copy, update your member profile to receive only the electronic version.

The website has links to the archive of Mandolin Journals, including the current issue. Access to The Mandolin Journal is a benefit to CMSA members only.

Q: I want to donate to the CMSA. How do I do this?

A: Use the convenient Donate link in the header or footer to donate to the CMSA or to one of our specific grant or scholarship options. Contributions help support a variety of CMSA programs.

Q: Okay, I'm a techie. What technologies are you using? In an alternate universe... Okay, I'm not a techie, what does all of this mean?

A: The website is built with WordPress and uses the Divi theme by Elegant Themes. The website is fully responsive for use on any device type. Membership and events are managed by MemberFindMe software. The site uses secure payment processing, and SSL protocol for secure communication over the Internet. Backend virus protection and security plugins are installed.

Translation: The website is built using current technologies and aesthetics. The website can be accessed on your smart phone, tablet, laptop, or desktop and looks good on any of these. Your online payments and personal information are as secure as possible.

CMSA 2015

Austin TX | October 2015 | Austin Holiday Inn Midtown

CMSA Open Mic: Giving the gift of choro

Evan wanted to participate in the open mic concert and chose to play a choro that he learned from his mandolin teacher, Tim Connell. Austin Mando Orch director Joel Hobbs hosts Choro Das Tres when they come to Austin so he was happy and quite able to back Evan up with some driving Brazilian rhythm on his mandocello.



Participating in 130 person mandolin orchestra - a first!

A relative asked: "Why do you play in the orchestra with all those adults, Evan?" Evan replied, "I enjoy playing my mandolin with other people."

While the workshops were icing on the cake, The En Masse Orchestra was the cake for Evan and it met every day for a 3 - hour rehearsal. Conductor Jim Bates kept the sessions fun and upbeat. There was plenty of laughter and plenty of woodshedding.

Evan's stand buddy was Laura Norris of Mando For Kids-Baltimore. It was a great match and Laura's kindness and coaching was well received and appreciated!



We will try to share a link with Evan's open mic performance as soon as it is available.



Fringe benefits

In addition to the amazing planned musical offerings there were impromptu late night jams.....



delicious Texas cuisine



time for a dip in the pool



And even some homework done in the hotel room!

Participating (cont.)

We look forward to seeing her again in Baltimore next year!

Evan was not able to make it to the mandolin intensive with Carlo Aonzo but we were able to get in an hour lesson, and Evan went to several of Carlo's workshop sessions. We hope to stay in touch!



Musical highlights for Evan included late night jamming, including Sue and Paul's sight reading jams, and playing Joel Hobbs "Memories from the Future." And of course the performances by Carlo and Rene made deep impressions on both of us and we look forward to listening to some of their CDs that we brought home. Their artistry will not be soon forgotten.

In summary, THANK YOU! Without your donation to the Seattle Mandolin Orchestra Scholarship Fund, Evan would not have been able to travel to Austin this year. To Sue and the CMSA organizers, we are so grateful we had the experience to be a part of the community you have all created, touched by the warm welcome extended to all and were inspired by the hard work and creativity that this little instrument inspires in so many. We may not have won any raffle prizes, but we won big in the musical life experience department! Many thanks to you all!

Kelly and Evan

Composer's Corner

by Evelyn Tiffany-Castiglioni

I know the hour of my birth as a composer. It was on July 12, 2011, at about 4:20 PM, Eastern Daylight Time. My story as an emerging composer may be of interest to others who have a melody in their hearts and are thinking about how to put it on paper. Most of my experience in the last 5 years has been writing short folk-like dance tunes with melody, harmony and counterpoint. I consider it Phase I, which in time will be followed by more complex endeavors.

My disclaimer is that I am a neuroscientist working in the area of toxicology. For me, composing is an activity not regulated by cautious hypothesis or calculation; it is a space where evidence and data are unimportant. While there is an art to neurotoxicology, the emphasis is on critical thinking and objectively verifiable evidence. In contrast, while there is a science to composing music, the emphasis is on the expression of emotion. I invariably start with a melody and let it grow to good size (such as a 32 bar jig or waltz), and then add the chordal progressions, harmonies, and counter melodies. I love building big jigsaw puzzles, and composing seems like puzzle building to me, except that the pieces do not come out of a box. I get to make them.

An advantage of my practicing music composition as an avocation is that there is no external pressure on me to compose anything good or indeed anything at all. Perhaps that will change one day when I have more time to devote to music, but I hope not. I hope I will feel golden-aged and crusty enough to care not whether my pieces are good, so long as they satisfy me and my friends find them worth playing.

My favorite hours are spent playing my compositions or arrangements with my friends, among them my mandolin practice group called "Plucked Pairs." Any instruments are welcome in this group, though most of us play mandolin or guitar. We play my miniature pieces, which are set for three interchangeable C instruments. These kind friends do not hesitate to indulge me by playing piece after piece and trying out all the parts. The camaraderie and sharing let us create our own little magical place, where wordless speech shimmers in the air and beguiles us.

A disadvantage of my involvement with music as a hobbyist is my lack of formal training in composition. I learned music theory from my accordionist father, Robert S. Tiffany, Jr., and imbibed the sounds of Western European, American, and Latin musical styles as a child in El Paso, TX, from playing accordion and singing in choirs. (By the way the bass keyboard of the stradella accordion is an ideal tool for remembering a lot of music theory instantly; it is arranged very systematically.) In addition, I have been privileged to have had wonderful teachers on a variety of instruments: among them Jennifer Novak (piano), Gayel Panke Gibson and Laurie

Buchanan (solo and orchestral pedal harp.), Lori Joachim Fredrics (voice), Marilynn Mair (mandolin one week per year for eight years), and Prudence McDaniel (cello). I have also been a contra dance accordionist for more than a decade and have been deeply immersed in Scottish and Irish traditional harping, having arranged and performed hundreds of tunes in these traditions. This background, plus the fearlessness of advancing years, have emboldened me to venture forth as a composer.

Coming back to that turning point on July 12, 2011, I was in a one-hour class on composing taught by the wonderful guitarist and composer Robert "Bob" Martel. This class took place during Marilynn Mair's SummerKeys Mandolin and Guitar Ensemble week in Lubec, ME. Bob gave us brief instruction about two principles of composing: repetition and variation. Then he gave us 5 notes and empowered us to compose. They were A, e, c, d, and e (written here in abc notation for simplicity) in that order but otherwise unconstrained rhythmically. These notes were like the starter dough for sourdough bread that would rise and expand when a few ingredients were added. I choose the word "empowered" deliberately, because that was the effect of this class, empowerment. All 6 or 8 of us wrote a tune and played it for everyone else. As Bob promised us, once the musical idea was started, we would be able to take it from there. I wrote a waltz and a jig that are now part of my contra dance band's repertory.

After that class, it was as if a door had opened in my brain and tunes kept stepping out and presenting themselves to be put on paper. In the next couple of weeks I wrote them down, about a dozen waltzes, jigs, and reels, which seemingly had been waiting for me to notice them. Some melodies occurred in dreams and some in waking hours. The melodies always came first. Sometimes they started with a short musical idea that grew, and occasionally they sprang full-grown, as Athena sprang from the head of Zeus. Once I had a melody, the rest of the composition would materialize, such as interdependent counterpoint lines and harmony lines. My foremost goal was and is to write each part so that it is musically rewarding and fun to play and enhances the melody. I still write tunes in the same way, though less prolifically. I have since advanced to several longer pieces which have been performed by mandolin ensembles or by other instruments. In that regard, I am very grateful to Marilynn Mair and Joel Hobbs for encouraging me to write scores for their ensembles and advising me on technical points.

Music is a form of human expression deeper than words. In an article about Mozart that appeared in *The New Yorker* in 2006, Alex Ross wrote a profound statement that resonates with me: "Often, an artist sets forth in his work what he cannot achieve in life..." Ross was referring

Composer's Corner

(continued from page 10)

to the balance between conflicting emotions that Mozart could achieve in a short piece or even a single phrase. Though I am taking it out of context, the same thought applies to my composing efforts. Through music I can communicate the pleasures, yearnings, sorrows, and joys that I know more completely and compactly than I ever could in words. I can reach across cultures and nations. I can even tell jokes that actually make people laugh.

Paradoxically, music is also a way to express oneself obscurely, which is valuable for a private person like me. It is encrypted, relying as it does on wordless metaphors and imagery. Even the most educated decoder may not understand the composer's exact meanings. This ambiguity is partly because music is subject to interpretation. In that sense, I enjoy the subtlety that is possible for a composer. On the other hand, having heard several of my pieces performed by professional or amateur groups, I am also cognizant of the translation that may occur between what I think my piece should sound like and how it is actually played. That, of course, is a risk, whether the composer finds the performance to be unsettling or gratifying. (It's actually a hazard for scientists, too, where "performance" takes the form of other scientists interpreting one's work.)

This thought brings me to my main intention as a composer: I primarily write for the performer (often me). I hope to give the performer something he or she will want to play again and again because it is satisfying. At a maximum, music requires three participants: composer, performer, and listener. This partnership is a dynamic three-way balance between the intentions of the composer, the performer's intuition and emotion, and the listeners' engagement. At a minimum, however, music requires a performer and no one else. The performer imbues the composition not only with life, but with his or her personal perspective.

Though I use my music as a vehicle for my own personal feelings, often I am trying also to express common feelings of humanity and our world. What is the sound of the parched land during the devastating Texas drought in 2011? It is in my waltz "Waiting for Rain." The sound of a child in the enchanted otherworld of the carousel is in my piece for mandolin orchestra, "Carousel." Or not. The performer or listener may hear something entirely different in these pieces than I heard when I wrote them. This is part of the unpredictable, dynamic balance between composer, performer, and listener.

I have many projects on my music stand. One goal is to score "Waiting for Rain" for band in the style of Shostakovich's Waltz No. 2 from Jazz Suite No. 2. Is emulation a good idea for me? I think so, and fun, too. The simplicity of that score suits my waltz. I will learn

the range and total colors of the brass and woodwinds as I score it (Rimsky-Korsakov's *Principles of Orchestration* at hand), and seek reality checks from brass and woodwind players. It will be part of my next steps as a composer, a sort of autodidactic training.

I offer the reader a miniature piece to explore: "La Vie," which is presented on the accompanying pages as a clarinet/cello duet and as a trio for mandolins. Is this piece wistful and languid or melancholy and even tragic? Or all of these? Does it say something meaningful to us? The clarinet and cello duet was debuted on September 27, 2014 (Eric Hansen, clarinet and Michael Dewhirst, cello) in a concert by "a very small consortium," which consists of faculty and their friends at the University of Wisconsin Green Bay Music school. In time I will incorporate it into a larger work, as I find my way as a composer.

[Evelyn Tiffany-Castiglioni is a professor of neuroscience at Texas A&M University. She received a B.S. in Biology from the University of Texas-El Paso, at the same time studying classical harp with Eastman graduate Gayel Panke Gibson. She received a Ph.D. in Human Genetics and Cell Biology from the University of Texas Medical Branch-Galveston. She was named Harper of the Day at the Texas Scottish Festival and Highland Games and the Ohio Scottish Games in 2004 and the Stone Mountain Highland Games in Georgia in 2005. Her "Jamie Suite" for mandolin ensemble was recorded on *Enigmatica 3* by Marilyn Mair's ensemble Enigmatica (Uncommon Strings). Her sheet music for harp is available from Afghan Press Music (Cypress, Texas) and for accordion from www.musicforaccordion.com. Her new book of 150 short mandolin trios, *Evelyn's Big Book for Mandolins*, is available from Amazon.]



Evelyn (far left) with her mandolin practice group

(cont. on page 12)

Waltz in E Minor
Clarinet and Cello

La Vie

Evelyn Tiffany-Castiglioni

Moderato (♩ = c. 100)

B♭ Clarinet

Cello

Measures 1-5 of the score. The B♭ Clarinet part (treble clef) begins with a melodic line marked *mp* and *languid, pensive*. The Cello part (bass clef) provides a harmonic accompaniment marked *p* and *restive, uneasy*. Both parts are connected by a long slur.

Measures 6-12. The B♭ Clarinet part continues with a melodic line, marked *mf* and *mp*. The Cello part continues with a rhythmic accompaniment, marked *mp*. Slurs and accents are present in both parts.

Measures 13-19. The B♭ Clarinet part features a melodic line with dynamics *p* and *mf*. The Cello part continues with a rhythmic accompaniment marked *mf*. Slurs and accents are present in both parts.

Measures 20-25. The B♭ Clarinet part continues with a melodic line. The Cello part continues with a rhythmic accompaniment. Slurs and accents are present in both parts.

Measures 26-32. The B♭ Clarinet part continues with a melodic line. The Cello part continues with a rhythmic accompaniment. Slurs and accents are present in both parts.

Waltz in E Minor

La Vie

Evelyn's Waltz Book

Evelyn Tiffany-Castiglioni (April 7, 2012)

Melody

Descant

Harmony

Mel.

Desc.

Har.

Mel.

Desc.

Har.

Mel.

Desc.

Har.

CMSA Workshop 2015: The Care and Feeding of the Modern Mandolin Orchestra

by Mark & Beverly Davis

Mark Davis, Music Director, Providence Mandolin Orchestra (PMO), 1989-present
Beverly Davis, PMO President, 2000-2014; PMO Treasurer (2014-present)

At the recent CMSA Annual Convention in Austin, we drew upon our experiences directing and managing the Providence Mandolin Orchestra, (and, more recently, the New American Mandolin Ensemble), to present a well-attended workshop on the many issues surrounding the running of a successful modern mandolin orchestra. Subjects covered included repertoire and program planning, rehearsal tactics, membership issues, finances, touring, exchange concerts, retreats and master classes. There was much good discussion as attendees included both seasoned veterans of the MO scene, and some just starting their first group.

1. REPERTOIRE/PROGRAMMING

The issue of repertoire and programming is central to running a successful MO. The challenge is in creating an exciting program that will excite both your orchestra members and your audiences. It's a good idea to find a unique repertoire for your orchestra, which reflects the group's strengths and interests. If you share your excitement, passion, and involvement with the music with your audience, then you can be assured of a successful concert.

In our experience, music which reflects the music that we grew up listening to – rock, jazz, folk as well as classical – stands the best chance of 'grabbing' our groups and audiences. Luckily there is a vast amount of great new music being written now for plucked strings reflecting this eclectic set of influences. The availability of new music has never been greater than now in our digital age. The topic has been covered in recent articles here (reference), and a large listing of proven and easily available pieces may be found on the website of the PMO:

<http://www.providencemandolin.org/about/repertoire-of-the-pmo/>

One possibility of creating exciting programs is to come up with a theme. Thematic programs can be very effective and can actually work to tie in various disparate pieces of music. For example, the PMO has a program called "A Day in the Life of a City" which combines the Beatles "A Day in the Life" (arrangement by R. Margo) with Emiel Stopler's "The City Awakens" (written for the PMO), Betty Beath's "Lament for Kosovo" and John Petersen's "Illawarra Dances". The different moods of the day from sunrise through morning rush hour all the way to dusk and night life provides a surprisingly effective framework

to this eclectic program.

Other suggestions for thematic programming were to choose a holiday music theme (often done) or a particular music genre (all-Italian program...Americana...German Zupfmusik of the pre-war era).

2. REHEARSALS

On the issue of rehearsals, we find that consistency of time and place is of paramount importance. Many orchestras including the PMO rehearse on a weeknight (Tuesday for us) as that is usually an off-night which people can reserve on a weekly basis. There is also the question of seasonal rehearsals. Does your group consider their 'season' from September to through May, and take the summer months off, or do you work throughout the year? We find the summer break is important as it gives us time to re-group and do some ad hoc explorations of new pieces for the following season.

Finding a good place to rehearse is often a challenge. Smaller groups can meet in someone's home but most orchestras will need to find a relatively large public space. You might consider bartering space from a church or school, in return for an annual benefit concert, and the chance for their people to listen to rehearsals. (We do this, and also give our church an annual contribution towards their utility costs).

It is worthwhile looking into forming an alliance with a local cultural institution. The PMO for several years was "Ensemble-in-Residence" at Johnson & Wales Culinary Institute in Providence, for which we were given the use of a lovely performance space and a small office. Students were provided to help us produce the concerts (and also to provide top-quality hors d'oeuvres for the concerts!).

We discussed options for rehearsal modes: the regular full rehearsal, the 'dress rehearsal,' the use of occasional sectional rehearsals, and technique building workshops.

We spoke a bit about the importance of an Assistant Conductor. This person can take rehearsals if Music Director is ill or out of town. It is often helpful for orchestra members to hear a different approach to the music.

3. MEMBERSHIP

There can be a big challenge in attracting new members. Finding players who read music (or who wish to learn) and can commit to regular rehearsals and concerts can seem daunting. Although the tried-and-true 'word of mouth' technique is the most common form of recruiting,

CMSA Workshop 2015: The Care and Feeding of the Modern Mandolin Orchestra

(continued from page 14)

we have had some luck with posting advertisements in on-line sites such as Craig's List and in local music schools. The concept of holding 'Open Auditions' is valuable; such auditions place membership as a goal to be attained.

Keep your present members involved. Make sure rehearsals are fun and well organized. Orchestra members will feel valued through their participation in regular public concerts and fun events such as post-concert parties and holiday events.

Maintain and raise performance levels by challenging your orchestra. Every year we pick at least one piece that is just above our technical abilities. We have found our members will rise to the challenge and have a great feeling of accomplishment once the piece is worked up to performance level.

There may be an issue of players wanting to join the orchestra who do not have sufficiently developed musical skills. In this case, we recommend signing them up for the 'farm team'; a membership that allows rehearsal attendance only. After a certain amount of time they can audition to become part of the performing group.

The youth orchestra, as an adjunct of the main orchestra, is a popular concept in Germany and Australia, and should be considered more widely here. Robert Schulz of the Western Australian Mandolin Orchestra runs a youth orchestra, and will write or arrange special pieces for the combined groups to perform in concerts together. WAMO also asks each member of the orchestra recruit and teach someone new.

4. ECONOMICS

We know of two distinctly different models. One is the teacher-led orchestra. The teacher is the director, the members are by and large the students. The ensemble is a way for the teacher to give his or her students performing experience. The teacher does all the work, and all benefits accrue to the teacher.

Another is the amateur community orchestra with a paid director. Typically players pay yearly dues, which pays for the directors' fee as well as expenses such as music purchases, soloists fees, rehearsal space and hall rental.

A third model is the small professional ensemble in which all members share equally in the decision-making process. Concert proceeds are divided among the members.

Groups may wish to look into additional sources of revenue. Local or regional arts councils should be tapped, as well

as mandolin-related string and instrument companies.

5. THE CONCERTS

Before you go looking for concerts you must decide what is your goal. Is it to be recital/concert appearances or background music? For our groups and the style of music we perform, it is "sit down and listen" concerts.

For years we sponsored our own concerts. We have found that the work and expense of these, coupled with the insecurity of never knowing whether you will get an audience, makes this a difficult proposition. We much prefer finding locally established music venues. We have good luck with New England music series such as 'Arts in the Village' in Rehoboth MA; and Music at Lily Pads, and Sandywoods Center for the Arts, both in RI.

Another good option is to offer your services to a Benefit concert or a series like The Bread Box Theater (Willimantic CT) which raises money for the local soup kitchen.

Other potential performance options are Farmers Markets, arts events, and First Night celebrations. The Providence Mandolin Orchestra has even been asked to perform at a wedding.

The PMO has a long history of arranging exchange concerts with visiting artists and ensembles from abroad. We find that having an international group performing with you is a great way to gain attention in the community. When Carlo Aonzo's Mandolin Academy Orchestra was touring here, we arranged home stays for the entire group coupled with school visits, and several concerts. Other groups we have had exchanges with include the Ensemble a Plectre de Toulouse, Het Consort, and the Saarland ZupfOrchester.

6. SPECIAL EVENTS

Retreats/Master-classes - we had Tamara Volskaya visit the PMO for a weekend of workshops, rehearsals, and informal music-making at the Alton Jones Retreat Center.

Retreat/concert - we bartered a concert at a church in return for use of their rural retreat center for a weekend.

Invite a non-mandolinist musician for an orchestra Master Class - we invited the RI Philharmonic's Assistant Conductor who, coming from a non-plucked string background, gave us a whole new level of understanding of our music.

(continued on page 16)

CMSA Workshop 2015: The Care and Feeding of the Modern Mandolin Orchestra

(continued from page 15)

Host US or international guests – the PMO has hosted an eclectic variety of artists playing a variety of styles including Chris Acquavella, Simon Mayor, Tamara Volskaya, Carlo Aonzo, Duke Robillard, Rose Weaver, Alexey Shabalin, Scott Hamilton, and others.

Invite other mandolin orchestra conductors to guest conduct – a great way to expose the group to new ideas and new repertoire. When we have visiting orchestras we typically perform a few pieces together and in this way get to work with each other's directors.

7. Public Relations

We discussed the art of writing an effective, concert-specific press release, and the importance of maintaining an up-to-date list of media outlets. But these days it is of equal importance to maintain a high digital profile. We talked about group websites, and the use of social media for publicity, including FaceBook, ReverbNation, and regional Arts Council websites.

We discussed developing relationships with local radio music shows and talk show hosts, with the goal of going on their shows to talk up upcoming events.

Finally we touched on your group's mailing list. One of the best ways to build and communicate with your list is through an internet mail program like MailChimp (which is free and easy to use).

8. COMMUNICATION

By now we were running out of time but still had a few minutes to talk about the subject of communications and keeping in touch with developments on other groups at home and abroad.

International newsletters can be a good source. We recommend both the FAME orchestra quarterly newsletter (out of Australia) and the German ZupfMusik magazine (In German, but full of international information).

Internet sites such as www.mandolicafe.com and The Mandolin Tuner, as well as various mandolin-oriented FaceBook pages can be useful.

And finally we all agreed on the need for better rapport between US ensembles. We hoped that some day we might have a dedicated section for orchestra news in our CMSA Newsletter, and who knows, maybe even a dedicated page for orchestra news on the new CMSA website!

9. THE TAKE AWAY

There was so much good discussion engendered by this workshop that everyone wished to continue the conversation. As this workshop seems to have filled an on-going need, we hope to reprise the workshop in some form at a future convention. Stay tuned...

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The White Rock Mandolin Ensemble: It Sure Ain't Easy Getting Started by Ernie Nicholls



White Rock Mandolin Ensemble

Three years ago we made a life-changing experience. After more than 50 years of life in Regina, Saskatchewan we moved to White Rock, British Columbia – a mere stone's throw from Blaine, WA and a spit away from the ocean. White Rock is a little “retirement community” of some 20,000 folks. In week number 2 here, and knowing no one, I dropped into the local Community Recreation Centre asking where I could find the members of the mandolin community. They looked askance at me, informed me that “. . . no one out here plays mandolin, but there is great interest in the Ukulele, in fact a large high school down the road a piece has a Ukulele Orchestra of more than 150 young people.” I said, “Thanks, but no thanks.”

Cathy Sands and Barbara Conrad were friends I had met at various CMSA Conventions. They both reside in the Burnaby area some distance north of us. I was invited to play in their small orchestra (the Melodious Mandolins) and it was great fun. But the long, dark, and wet evening drives in sometimes heavy traffic over bridges I had never heard of caused me after three or four weeks to leave them. But I didn't give up on starting some lessons program in White Rock.

Within 4 weeks I received a phone call from an individual asking if I could teach them mandolin lessons. After teaching adults in the Regina Mandolin Orchestra's (RMO) Lessons Program for over 20 years, I was delighted to say, “YES”! So, on a weekly basis Liz Smith came all the way from Tsawwassen to become student #1 with lessons in our wee kitchen. Mary Lynn Ribeiro, also from WR, had also tried the Burnaby gang, but opted to stay closer to home and join Liz and me in the kitchen and helped to start the White Rock mandolin Ensemble.

After a short while I returned to the Community Recreation Centre folks and asked if I could start teaching Mandolin lessons in their Centre. I told them that I was not a professional teacher of music, I was not interested to be paid any salary, I merely wanted to have others learn to play and enjoy the mandolin. They said they would give it a go.

Our single, local music store had very few mandolins for sale and had even fewer mandolin teaching resources. Fortunately for me I had the permission of the Regina Mandolin Orchestra to use their 4-Book Mandolin Lesson Program in White Rock. The Recreation Centre had agreed to provide me a room for

lessons each Saturday morning with chairs, music stands, and even did some of the photocopying for us.

New beginners came to register at the end of each semester. Meanwhile Liz and Mary Lynn quickly breezed through the Beginner series and became the intermediate class. We had a separate hour, playing in book 2 (plus hand-outs I gathered from everywhere possible). In the spring and summer, we even went down to our beach area, (on the lawn beside the paths where folks stroll) set up our stands, and practiced outdoors!

We are not allowed to ‘busk’, or accept money, but we can chat with prospective players. We enjoy it and so do the folks who stop and listen, applaud, ask questions, etc. Some people would walk by and ask how things were going with the “banjos” we had. . . but they also would stop and enjoy our playing.

Our Lessons Program has now been going on for two and one-half years. The lessons are for any and all ages but most students are mid-range adults (I'm guessing from ages mid-30s to way up there if they want to join in the fun. The oldest student I had was 91). The lessons program was then and still is advertised primarily in the White Rock Community Centre Recreation Guide - published 4 times per year and I would guess goes out to a very high percentage of families here. We are a “city” of 20,000 . . . surrounded by municipalities: South Surrey, and sort of “next door” to Delta (incl. Ladner and Tsawwassen), Richmond, and Langley. And I know they hear about us and many are interested. I do believe that word-of-mouth is happening all the time and would guess that it is responsible for probably 50% of students who show up. My telephone is fairly busy with inquiries.

A while back, we even got invited to play as a trio in a local chamber music concert series – our very first gig! We were pretty nervous and made mistakes but it was a great experience for us. Now we've started to take on gigs with the “Intermediates”. We have done some at local seniors' homes nearby - and we are slated to play at the Chamber Music Concert Series in mid-February 2016. This Quintet has two accomplished M1s and two M2s and I will play my mandola.

Right now I have 4 (sometimes 6) beginners and about 8 intermediates taking lessons. I seem to “do” everything in this lessons effort. My biggest roles include, set-up each Saturday morning, digging out music and exercises, scales and as vast an array of music as, teaching as best I can, trying to continue to have FUN and ENJOY the sounds we make, find gigs wherever they can be found, etcetera, etcetera.

The biggest problem in teaching mandolin lessons are the vast discrepancies between those who can read music, who rather quickly pick up basic fingering, who are adept in the use of the plectrum, and those who are unable to grasp the concepts of notes, notation, interaction between notes and fingers on frets, etcetera. Some students pick it up quickly, others struggle but most have kept at it. They are the ones who really help to make this instructor happy!

The Kalamazoo Mandolin and Guitar Orchestra is issuing a Call for Scores in hopes of expanding the current repertoire for mandolin orchestra. Composers of all ages and experience levels are encouraged to apply. The winning composition will be awarded a cash prize of \$250 in addition to a premier performance by the KMGO during the 2016-2017 season. Deadline for submission is September 1, 2016. Please visit our website at www.kalmando.com for full details.



Call for SCORES

APPLICATION FOR ENTRY

(This application must accompany your score and parts to be considered for the prize)

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: ____ ZIP: _____ COUNTRY: _____
Phone: _____
E-mail: _____

Title of work:	
Length:	
Year of Composition:	

I affirm that the work of music that I am submitting here is my wholly original work. I also affirm that I have read the rules of submission and that I understand them and agree to abide by them.

Signature: _____

Mail application, score, parts and any recordings to:
Philip Rugel, KMGO, 320 E. Glenguile Street, Kalamazoo, MI 49004

San Diego CLASSICAL MANDOLIN CAMP

Chris Acquavella, Director
JULY 25 - 31 2016



Come join us for a unique in-depth experience of the classical mandolin's technique and repertoire in beautiful San Diego. The *San Diego Classical Mandolin Camp* will be held July 25th to July 31st, 2016 at the lovely Crowne Plaza San Diego, led by classical mandolinist and educator *Chris Acquavella* along with this year's guest instructor from Europe the very talented Julien Martineau. We will also be joined this year by the lovely and talented Dr. Stefanie Acquavella-Rauch. The SDCMC will explore the depth and breadth of the classical mandolin, from baroque to modern times, through 5 full days of classes, rehearsals, and concerts.



when: July 25 - 31, 2016
where: Crowne Plaza San Diego
what: 5 full days of classical mandolin classes, rehearsals, and concerts
who: All levels and all mando-family instruments are welcome

Chris Acquavella, Julien Martineau
& Dr. Stefanie Acquavella Rauch

Camp Fee: \$425.00
(includes classes, rehearsals, and concerts)

Food, lodging, and transportation are separate. The event hotel, Crowne Plaza, will be offering a special \$142/night rate for a single or a double (that can be shared). Go to our website for more details, and to register!

www.sdclassicalmandolincamp.com

Chris Acquavella: cracquavella@gmail.com



The Basics Under the Microscope: Revisiting Keith Harris, *The Mandolin Game*, Part One

by Robert A. Margo

This is Part One of a multi-part article on Keith David Harris, *The Mandolin Game: Practical Reflexions on Some Basic Technical Matters*, published by Joachim Trekel-Musikverlag in Hamburg, Germany.¹ Part One is an introduction to the book, and also discusses the first two chapters or “games” as Harris calls them, in a nod to Eric Berne.² Subsequent parts of the article discuss the remaining 24 games (labelled C-Z). In this and subsequent parts, I refer to the book by the acronym “TMG”.

Why am I writing this article? Simply put, I am convinced that TMG is one of the most important books ever written about the mandolin and, therefore, deserves to be read and studied by every mandolinist.³ The importance derives from TMG’s specific solutions to fundamental problems that we all confront in playing the mandolin; the persuasive manner by which these solutions are supported by logical argument and empirical evidence; and by the effectiveness of the author’s teaching method, which invites readers to try things out and guiding them to inevitable conclusions. In the process TMG dispels many time-honored but unsubstantiated or ill-thought out traditions, thereby setting out a productive path for the future development of mandolin technique. By delving into TMG in detail I hope to aid in the diffusion of the book’s ideas and to stimulate discussion. Harris’ other writings on the mandolin, such as his many articles for the *CMSA Journal*, employ a similar approach. To fully appreciate and benefit from these articles, TMG is a pre-requisite.

Background: Keith Harris

Born in Sydney, Australia, in 1949, Harris studied music and languages at the University of Sydney, after which he moved to Germany, where he obtained highest performance diplomas from the Hochschule für Musik Köln.⁴ Immediately upon arriving in Europe, Harris embarked on a substantial and prominent international performance career in the 1980s that was cut short by a diagnosis of multiple sclerosis in 1990. Despite his illness Harris has continued as a music professional. For four decades he has been leading and recording with many different ensembles, including for example the European Mandolin and Guitar Youth Orchestra and on four occasions the CMSA En Masse Orchestra. His many compositions and arrangements for mandolin orchestra are published by Trekel and Vogt & Fritz.

Harris has taught mandolin and other plucked instruments (banjo, guitar) from a very young age and continues to do so at present in workshops and masterclasses and *via* Skype on the internet. He was a lecturer at the Music University in Heidelberg for most of the 1990s, and

music director for the Hessian state branch of the Bund Deutscher Zupfmusiker (BDZ) for over a decade. Harris was recently awarded the silver medal of the BDZ for services to plucked string music. His website is <http://www.mandolin-lessons.com/>.

TMG: Some General Observations

For those who are unfamiliar with TMG, some general observations about the book and Harris’ approach to the mandolin may be helpful. First, in no sense is TMG a “method” or even a “how-to” book about making music on the mandolin. Rather, it is a book tackling certain basic technical problems (for example, how to hold the instrument, see Game A, below) that are present no matter which specific notes are played.⁵ Because there are only a few topics covered, the book goes into great detail on each topic, and almost entirely in writing; while there are some drawings to illustrate physical actions, these are kept to a minimum. TMG is not meant for casual page-turning at bed-time; I find it necessary to read the various Games quite closely (i.e. line by line), in correct order, and repeatedly. Specifically, after reading and contemplating a Game, I go to my instrument and try out Harris’ ideas, and then repeat the process, usually several times until I am convinced (hopefully, with justification) that I have the hang of it. There are 26 Games in the book, well into a year’s worth of material, perhaps longer (by quite a bit) if the mandolinist is seeking either to establish *good* habits for a lifetime, or probably more often to undo a lifetime of *bad* habits. To derive the most benefit from TMG, the mandolinist needs be systematic and diligent in trying out and ultimately implementing the book’s solutions.

Second, the core idea of TMG is efficiency in musical performance, where “efficiency” means using the least cost technique in terms of physical (and associated mental) exertion to achieve a given musical end. The economist in me notes that efficiency is both short and long run. In the short run, there is a specific task at hand – a C major scale in eighth notes, perhaps. In the long run, there is the player’s physical well-being – an inefficient technique left unattended over many years can lead to serious physical problems later in life, of which there are many unfortunate examples in the plucked string world.⁶ Efficient technique on the mandolin (really, on any instrument) is hierarchical – if one is inefficient in basic matters, it can only get worse as the music gets more complex, never better, so getting the basics right at the start is crucial.

Third, Harris believes that all plucked stringed instruments share common features that should be kept in mind in searching for solutions to basic technical

(continued on page 21)

The Basics Under the Microscope: Revisiting Keith Harris, *The Mandolin Game*, Part One

(continued from page 20)

problems. As such Harris believes that many of the solutions arrived at in TMG parallel those faced by players of related plucked string instruments such as “domra, balalaika, bandurria, tamburitsa, or ukulele, among many others” (TMG, p. 1). Similarly, the literature on, say, classical guitar technique is fair game for any useful insights it may have for the mandolinist.⁷

Fourth, while Harris acknowledges there may be multiple efficient means to a given end on the mandolin, there are likely fewer of these than one might think, and often different from means blessed by well-trodden traditional methods (for example, Bickford, Calace) or what famous players do (or don’t). Indeed, for the vast majority of classical mandolinists, it is quite likely that some or even all of TMG will be at variance with what they learned previously was (allegedly) best practice technique.⁸ To be sure, Harris is deeply knowledgeable about the history of mandolin technique; the leading players; and, of course, the music. But the solutions in TMG do not stem from citing this or that method or role model; rather, they are achieved through painstaking trial and error over many years of performing and teaching, always in light of physical and physiognomic principles and with well-defined musical goals in mind.⁹ Harris knows exactly what he wants to hear on the classical mandolin, and his “ear” is extraordinarily refined; when he doesn’t hear what he wants (quite often, even from well-known professionals) he knows how to diagnose the problem.

Game A

TMG begins at the very beginning: how to hold the instrument. In fairness to other opinions, Harris outlines two methods, always, as elsewhere in the book, emphasizing the individuality within the generality. His preferred method has the mandolin on the right leg, with the right leg elevated by a footstool. The performer sits on the edge of the chair, posture (i.e. shoulders) erect, with the face of the mandolin tilted slightly upwards and to the right (from the player’s perspective). The head of the neck is approximately level with the player’s shoulders. The right arm exerts gentle pressure on the body of the instrument, which helps hold it in place. The purpose of the footstool is to raise the instrument to a sufficient height so that the player’s shoulders are level and relaxed, rather than hunched over, a common fault.¹⁰

The second position has the footstool under the left foot. The knees are held close together and the mandolin sits in the space between them. A variation on the second position has the player place both feet on the footstool, left in front of right. The main difference between the two methods (aside from the orientation of the mandolin

from the player’s front perspective) is that the right arm plays more of an active role in holding the mandolin in the first method than in the second.

Whichever position is adopted the player uses a non-slip cloth under the instrument. This Harris considers to be non-negotiable, analogous to a violinist’s chin rest. The key idea is that the left hand does not support the neck of the mandolin whatsoever. That is, if the player were to allow the left arm to fall to the side of the body, the instrument would remain in place, not moving a whit. If the instrument moves – specifically, the neck slips toward the floor – the left hand is being used to support the neck in some manner. In conjunction with the placement of the right arm as just described, the non-slip cloth keeps the neck from slipping, and the left hand is free to move up and down as needed.¹¹ Harris rightly emphasizes that playing an instrument always involves an ebb and flow of forces. Rigidity of any sort is like a car without shock absorbers.

Coming to the mandolin as I did from classical guitar and lute, I have always considered it absolutely fundamental that the left hand should not support the neck of the mandolin. No properly-trained classical guitarist would ever do this on the guitar; indeed, not only must the left hand be free to move up and down the neck on the guitar, strictly speaking, the player should be able to fret notes without the left hand thumb on the back of the neck. This is because the fretting force comes primarily from gravity, exploited by a correct application of static forces, not from the opposing pressure of the thumb. Harris is making the same argument for the mandolin.

From my personal observation, however, a substantial proportion of classical mandolinists do not follow this advice.¹² Why does it matter? Using the left hand to support the neck is highly inefficient; energy is continually wasted on a completely unnecessary activity – holding the neck up – when it should be directed towards the music one is playing; worse, it typically straight-jackets the hand, rendering some desirable movements difficult and others impossible. If the music is very simple, it may not matter much, but as the music becomes more complex, it is likely to matter a great deal. Inevitably, passages will not be legato; worse, (and very commonly) some notes will be flubbed or the player will botch the passage entirely. Needless to say, this is not useful if the goal is to play at a high level.¹³

Game B

Game B focuses on holding the plectrum. Harris outlines a methodical approach to mastering his preferred plectrum

The Basics Under the Microscope: Revisiting Keith Harris, *The Mandolin Game*, Part One

grip. The player sits comfortably, with the right hand in a relaxed state.¹⁴ The right arm is raised at the elbow; the index finger moves under the thumb, such that the tip of the finger and that of the thumb essentially meet, and the left hand inserts the pick between the index finger and thumb. I refer to this as the “index finger” grip; as Harris puts it, “[t]he plectrum protrudes just a little from underneath the thumb – like an extension of the index finger” (TMG, p. 12).

This is not how many American players hold the plectrum. Instead, it is common for American players to form a light fist with the right hand. The plectrum does sit on the index finger, but it meets the thumb close to its first joint (from the end of the thumb) rather than the tip. The thinking is that said grip offers more “power” which, at the very least, is debatable (and not my personal experience). Less debatable, however, is that those who hold the plectrum this way acknowledge that compared with the index finger grip, it can be more difficult to produce a good tremolo (along with, I would argue, eighteenth century right hand arpeggio patterns and much else).¹⁵ When I first played mandolin I held the plectrum like other American players but, after studying TMG I discovered the benefits of the index finger grip for me – greater precision, control, and reliability in performance – were substantial. I haven’t looked back since.

In the next Part to this article, I discuss Games C-F, which focus on the right hand down-stroke.

(Endnotes)

1 I thank Keith Harris for helpful comments. The book can be ordered from Trekel’s website; the direct link is <http://trekel.de/de/22880-themandolingame.html>.

2 Author of *Games People Play: The Basic Handbook of Transactional Analysis*. Harris prefers “games” to chapters because the former suggests a playful attitude towards learning, which he finds useful in teaching.

3 Shortly after publication TMG was reviewed by Norman Levine in the *CMSA Journal*; while highly favorable, the Levine review did not delve into much detail on the book’s contents or philosophy.

4 For further biographical information, see Dix Bruce, “Keith Harris Interview,” *Mandolin World News* 8 (Spring 1982):5-13 and Harris’ website, mentioned in the text.

5 When notes are required in one of the Games, Harris uses the same four – F through A flat, on the D string. The sparseness is intended to underscore the universality of the principles, at least up to the 12th fret or so.

6 Harris has read widely in methods of teaching sports, for which efficiency considerations are paramount, and for which he sees many parallels with music.

7 As an example Harris cites a book on guitar technique (in German) by Manfred Bartusch in Game G (TMG, p.39).

8 Mandolinists who are *a priori* reluctant to disavow their favorite method, teacher, or professional role model might ponder the following two points. First, the classical mandolin has always been a niche instrument with highly cyclical popularity and, at best, limited contact with the rest of the classical music world. Consequently, any notion that the best mandolin technique has already been revealed is debatable on its face because there never has been a sufficiently critical population to weed out inefficient, vague, or plainly bad methods (and their teachers) unlike for orchestral instruments or, more recently, the classical guitar. Mimicking one’s favorite player has its perils because professionals generally learn very early to concentrate on music they can play well, not what they play indifferently or poorly. Eventually, however, an inferior technique will out itself if the professional is confronted with a passage that cannot be played unless undue time/effort is applied, which the player does not have to spare (as we all know, time is money).

9 As Harris described three decades ago in his interview with Dix Bruce (p. 9), “clarity of the notes, the beauty of the sound and the quality of the note, whether one note is connected well to another and [with] the right emphasis, the right phrasing, the right articulation”. One critical feature of note “quality” is intonation. In the later Games in TMG and especially in his *CMSA Journal* articles, Harris demonstrates that traditional left hand fingering on the mandolin often produces notes that are out of tune – sometimes slightly, sometimes glaringly so. Apropos, I emailed Harris a link to a YouTube performance by a well-known professional mandolinist which adhered quite closely to traditional left-hand fingering, asking for his opinion. Harris pointed out a badly out of tune passage at the very beginning of the piece that clearly could have been avoided by not using standard fingering. The player in the video seemed oblivious.

10 Harris is a stickler for proper posture; a “hunched-over” posture can lead to spinal and circulatory problems later in life. Tilting the soundboard slightly upward is also standard on classical guitar and lute; in doing so, the sound is projected upwards from the instrument, and the audience’s collective ears.

11 I routinely use position #1, which I find works particularly well if the mandolin is a bowl back. If it is a flat-back or American carved back mandolin, or one of the larger mandolin family instruments (e.g. a liuto cantabile, which I also play) I generally supplement the non-slip cloth with a strap. The addition of a strap gives me an added measure of stability – the instrument is kept rock-solid in place. Use of a strap plus a non-slip cloth is

(continued on page 23)

The Basics Under the Microscope: Revisiting Keith Harris, *The Mandolin Game*, Part One

(continued from page 22)

commonplace in the lute world. Harris suggests that non-slip cloth from the local supermarket is fine, but one must be careful because the supermarket variety can mar delicate finishes. This is not the case with the authentic German product, which can be purchased from www.trekel.de.

12 Based on my personal experience and observation I would say that more than half of mandolinists in the typical CMSA En Masse orchestra support the neck with the left hand to one degree or another.

13 Not long ago I heard a very well-known classical mandolinist attempt to play a specific (and notorious) passage from a very well-known piece (for obvious reasons, I am not going to identify the mandolinist or the piece). Said performer

was unable, in performance, to play the passage properly because the left hand supported the neck and it is extremely difficult (without inordinate practice) to play the passage this way. By contrast, I heard the same passage played a few years earlier by a highly proficient amateur German mandolinist who did not support the neck with the left hand. The passage in question was played perfectly, without any apparent effort, and very musically.

14 Harris assumes a right-handed player but suggests that left-handed players make the required adjustments when working through the text (TMG, p. 3).

15 See August Watters, *Exploring Classical Mandolin: Technique and Repertoire* (Berklee Press, Boston MA), pp. 9-10.

Keith Harris in Korea

On the way back to Europe after Christmas in his home country, Australia, Keith Harris had a magical evening in Korea with some new friends.

The wonderful Korean hospitality began at the Incheon (Seoul) Airport, where Harris was met by mandolinists Hyekyung Kim and Kiwook Lee. Only hour later, they were enjoying a superb Korean banquet, where they were joined by Minsoon Park.



From left to right, Kiwook Lee, Hyekyung Kim, Harris, & Minsoon Park

Hyekyung Kim is a student of the internationally acclaimed Japanese composer, conductor and teacher Takashi Kubota, who had introduced his colleague and friend Harris to the Korean musicians. Hyekyung Kim's fine playing does her teacher honour. She teaches not

only in Korea but also in China.

Kiwook Lee directs the mandolin shop in Seoul, and also plays in the mandolin ensemble Animato.

Minsoon Park is certainly one of the best-known mandolinists in Korea, particularly through his active use of the social media. He is vice-president of the Korea Mandolin Union and leads the ensemble Animato.

The lively conversation over dinner of course also included the mandolin, and continued into the night back in Harris' hotel.



Harris pointing out a few details to Kiwook Lee in between exotic Korean dishes.

CMSA Workshop 2015: Bluegrass Vitamins for Classical Cats

by Alan Epstein

alanepsteinmusic.com

To set the record straight, I am one of those mandolin players who came to the CMSA world through years of playing bluegrass music. I recall the first CMSA convention that I attended in 1997 at the Galt House in Louisville, Ky. After already playing the mandolin 25 years, what an eye opener that was, attending workshops and listening to concerts from the likes of Sam Bush, Butch Baldassari, Tamara Volskaya and Ugo Orlandi. Although they were playing different styles, it was beautiful mandolin music and it all fit together. I was hooked. Since that time, I have always tried to explore both sides of the music; from founding the Pittsburgh Mandolin Orchestra in 2002 to becoming a Wernick Method Bluegrass Instructor in 2012 I have maintained my balance by keeping both traditions alive.

When I volunteered to present a Bluegrass workshop at the Austin Convention last year I had a good idea of what I wanted to cover, but I needed a good title. Lately, I have been using the term Vitamins for my mandolin workshops as I think there are always good nuggets of information that can be gleaned from all workshops. At the suggestion of CMSA Workshop Coordinator Robert Margo we came up with “Bluegrass Vitamins for Classical Cats”, a fine title indeed. The attendees assembled into the room to the background music of Bill Monroe and we were off and running, covering a wide range of agenda items. The 30 or so attendees were ready to get to work.

Bluegrass Chords and Rhythm Exercises

If I can draw a comparison between classical players and bluegrass players, I think one of the aspects that classical folks are often times less familiar with is playing chords and rhythm backing up soloists in an ensemble. The vitamins for today started with your basic 2 finger chords, then on to the standard chop and bar chords and then moved to some new voicings that I learned along the way. (See Chord Example below) The attendees got familiar with these chords while playing rhythm concepts using the snare drum affect of the “bluegrass chop” as well as shuffle rhythm. I saw some light bulbs go one from some of the attendees so I think the vitamins were working.

Bluegrass Vitamins for Classical Cats

Basic	Standard	“New”
G 0 0 1 2 	G 4 3 1 2 	G 1 2 x x
C 0 1 2 x 	C 3 1 2 x 	C6 1 3 2 x
D 1 0 0 2 	D 3 1 2 x 	D 1 0 0 x <small>12th Fret</small>
A 2 1 0 0 	A 1 1 3 4 	A 3 4 0 0

CMSA Workshop 2015: Bluegrass Vitamins for Classical Cats

(continued from page 24)

Left Hand Pinky Finger Buster

Next up was a pinky exercise that I learned a while back, maybe from the original Mandolin World News, not sure. It's pretty self explanatory and is shown below. Do slowly please!

Kickoff in the key of A in the style of Bill Monroe

Now on to the best vitamin of the day, (I had this tune playing on my I Phone through the Bose L1 compact (thanks AMO folks) when folks were filing in. The gospel music of Bill Monroe is, to my ear, the foundation of bluegrass mandolin playing and the song Shine Hallelujah Shine is one of my favorite examples. Sometimes classically trained musicians are tied to the page so, to break that habit, we listened to it a bunch of times first, sang the solo and then took it phrase by phrase till everyone had it under their fingers. I am happy to say that they all got it. (Notation shown below, but its best to listen to Monroe play it first)

Bluegrass Vitamins for Classical Cats

CMSA Convention Austin Texas

Alan Epstein

Left Hand Pinky Finger Buster

Mandolin

Musical notation for 'Left Hand Pinky Finger Buster' in 4/4 time. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a common time signature. The melody is written on a single staff. Below the staff, the fretboard positions are indicated by numbers: 7 6 7 5 7 4 7 3 | 7 2 7 1 7 2 7 3 | 7 4 7 5 7 6 7 7.

Kickoff in the key of A in the style of Bill Monroe " Shine Hallelujah Shine"

Mand.

Musical notation for 'Kickoff in the key of A in the style of Bill Monroe' in 4/4 time. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a common time signature. The melody is written on a single staff. Below the staff, the fretboard positions are indicated by numbers: 2 4 0 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 | 0 2 0 2 0 2 0 0 | 2 6 2 0.

Let's Jam on a Fiddle Tune

With the time we had left we did a little jamming on the classic fiddle tune Old Joe Clark, and I am happy to say I had some takers when we were passing around solos. It was a real treat for me to present this workshop and I feel confident that the classical cats left with some good vitamins to help them along their musical journey.



Alan Epstein teaching
"Bluegrass Vitamins"
at the 2015 CMSA
Convention

The Man and His Mandolin

by Randy and Keith Karasik

The Man - Ely Karasik was the first recipient of CMSA's Lifetime Achievement Award, given in November, 2005. Ely was born in Bronx, NYC, April 28, 1924 and began his mandolin playing career as a teenager. Sensing his early talent at age 14 his father, Ben, purchased a Gibson F5 for him for a few hundred dollars, a huge sum at that time. He treasured this precious instrument until his death in September of 2015. In between, Ely played in various mandolin orchestras being the concert master of the American Mandolin Orchestra in 1950 in Brooklyn, NY. Being of the Greatest Generation he fought in WW2, raised a family in Colorado, taught science in public schools, and composed a litany of original music. Some of his original compositions are performed to this day by the Denver Mandolin Orchestra, of which Ely was a key member, helping to revive it 30 years ago. This coming April 24th, the Denver Mandolin Orchestra will have a tribute concert in honor of Ely, and will feature some of his original compositions.

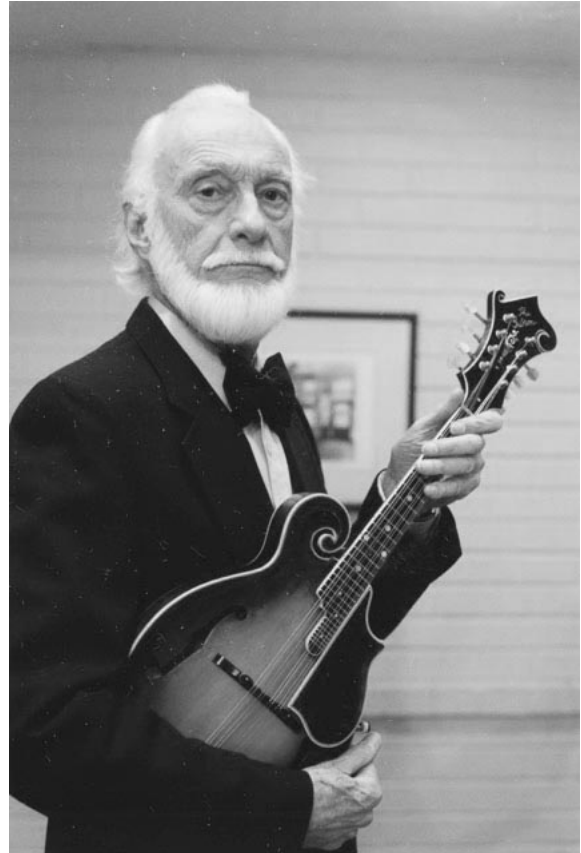
A song was written in honor of Ely. Scott Johnson is the author and vocalist of "Bronx Mandolin", currently on YouTube. Ely is the mandolinist in the video. A better quality sound file is available upon request.

Ely was a prolific music composer and his "Tango Passions" is currently published and available from Mel Bay. He also has 3 volumes of compositions recorded as his "Mandolin Originals". A few of his rare CDs are still in existence today. Another very ambitious project, Tones and Poems, was an operatic score written for the poems of Edgar Allen Poe.

The Mandolin - Ely's Gibson F5 Master Model is a Lloyd Loar original, serial #71839, built in 1923 and is a treasured and highly desirable instrument. Past appraisals have placed its value as high as \$210,000. Similar instruments have sold for \$185,000. This is the instrument that sings above all the rest in the orchestra,

the one mandolin that the listener can pick out of the entire ensemble. Its tone is strong and clean, crystal clear and crisp, resonating over and above the sounds of all other mandolins.

Ely's family would like to pass this fine instrument on to its next devoted owner. Please forward any serious inquiries to Randy Karasik, randy@karasikpiano.com, or 303-650-6429. Thank you very much.



Ely Karasik with his Gibson F5 Lloyd Loar Mandolin

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Feature Music Review: “Wishes” for mandolin duet by Christopher Acquavella

by Robert A. Margo

Feature Music Review: “Wishes” for mandolin duet by Christopher Acquavella, Astute Music Ltd, www.astute-music.com

In the February 2016 issue of the CMSA *Mandolin Journal* I reviewed Chris Acquavella’s “2014”, an excellent and important new work for solo mandolin. “2014” was inspired by Acquavella’s marriage to Stefanie Rauch, and his move to Germany where Rauch is a professor of music. “Wishes” was also inspired by, and dedicated to Rauch – Acquavella describes it as a “love letter ... filled with all the excitement, passion, romance, and anticipation” of two people courting.

Approximately 6 minutes in length, “Wishes” is in three contrasting parts. The first and third parts are inspired by minimalism, while the middle part is freer and more improvisatory. The piece opens in 4/4 with M1 playing an arpeggio for four bars solo, and then M2 enters, doubling a portion of the M1 arpeggio for four bars followed by a contrasting pattern. The dialog continues for quite a while, with occasional melodic fragments emerging, until section two arrives at m. 99, much slower, and in 3/4. Here, M1 is given a set of chords from which to improvise an accompaniment to the written out melody in M2. Section 2 ends at m. 128, followed by 8 bars in 4/4 that signal the start of the third section at m. 137. The third section recapitulates some of the material from section one, but also adds significantly to it, especially from m. 177 to the end where the right hand patterns are reminiscent of (if not identical with) modern cross-picking in the McReynolds sense.

“Wishes” is a beautiful piece, an outstanding contribution to the contemporary literature for mandolin duet. Emotionally, the music wears its heart on its sleeve and players need to bear this in mind for an effective performance. Overall, the difficulty level (technically and musically) is moderate/advanced – Trekel rates it between a 3 and 4 on its 1-5 scale, which seems about right – and the parts are evenly matched. The main technical difficulties are four. First and foremost, both players will need to be proficient and secure in right hand picking across any combination of strings. Second, a strong sense of rhythm and the ability to navigate syncopation are pluses, as is the ability to readily play chords that

mix stopped and open strings up (and down) the neck. Third, there are a few spots that will likely need careful, slow practice – for example, mm. 72 in the M2 part is a fairly quick passage in 16th notes, while m. 96 in M1 starts well up the neck. Lastly, there are occasional uses of special effects, such as thumb tremolo in m. 109 in the M1 part, and artificial harmonics in mm. 129-130 (both parts). For study purposes, Duo Acquavella has posted an excellent video from a live performance that can serve as an authoritative reference (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ngNTolj8BUM>).

The appearance of “Wishes” marks the welcome return to active mandolin publishing by the British publishing company Astute Music Ltd. The company began its mandolin program in 2006 under the direction of Alison Stephens, who led it very productively for several years before her untimely death in 2010. Barbara Pommerenke-Steel has now stepped into the role formerly held by Stephens; in addition to “Wishes”, Astute has recently published two other new works for mandolin. All of the previous publications in the mandolin series are still in print. Print quality of “Wishes”, like all Astute products, is exceptional; helpfully, the publisher includes a score along with separate parts. Orders can be placed for hard copy, or in pdf form for email delivery from Astute’s website; Trekel also carries the hard copies.



Rauch & Acquavella

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Review: A Concert and a Recording

by Nick Royal

In early April I went up to Walnut Creek, (near Berkeley, CA) to hear a concert by the duo, Carlo Aonzo, mandolin, and Lorenzo Piccone, guitar. Carlo Aonzo is well known by many members of the CMSA.

The concert was part of a long event with a workshop in the afternoon for the “serious” mandolin players, hosted by Dr. Mark Rubenstein, a member of CMSA. I met Mark in 2001 at AMGuSS, Marilynn Mair’s mandolin camp, and saw him a number of times at the Santa Cruz Mandolin Symposium. It was at the Symposium that I first met and heard Carlo.

The concert was really well done: moving music and beautiful playing by the two musicians. And Lorenzo Piccone backed up Carlo’s mandolin playing extremely well. I love to go to a concert not knowing quite what to expect, and being really moved by it. This concert was one of those events!

As usually happens at a house concert, there were cds for sale and many of us went over afterwards to see if there was a cd of Carlo and Lorenzo playing what we had just heard. There was a new cd called “A Mandolin Journey,” by the Aonzo Trio, which also included Luciano Puppò on bass.

In the booklet with the cd Carlo starts his essay:

“Often the mandolin has traveled in 3rd class, accompanying immigrants through seas and continents, inside cardboard suitcases to unknown lands. But wherever it landed it made its new dwelling by cleverly integrating with the local culture.”

The concert Saturday night was really a live performance of the new cd, starting with an Italian polka then moving to the lovely “O Mio Babbino Caro” by Puccini. Early music from the U.S. was played; and of course some choro pieces from Brazil. A David Grisman tune was played along with a lovely piece made famous by jazz guitarist, Wes Montgomery. Near the end was one of the highlights for me: what Vivaldi’s “Four Seasons” (a part of that piece) which Carlo told us: this is what it could sound like today. The melody was there, along with the blues and some jazz! They ended the concert with “Jethro’s Suite,” 3 tunes made famous by Jethro Burns.

Carlo and Lorenzo followed fairly closely the order of the music on the new cd, but what we had, as listeners, was the energy of live music. But, I love having the cd of the concert with all or much of what we heard that Saturday night.

Carlo tells me he will be back in the U.S. in October with his trio. If he is playing near you, I urge you to go and hear him.

NAME Goes International: Spain, August 2016

by Mark M. Davis

The New American Mandolin Ensemble has been invited to perform at the *45th Festival International de Plectro de la Rioja 2016* in Spain this summer. The festival runs from the 22nd to the 27th of August. Participants are housed in the north-central city of Logroño but concerts will be held in many of the out-lying towns in the mountains and vineyards of La Rioja.

The New American Mandolin Ensemble will be presenting their signature programs of original contemporary repertoire for mandolin/guitar ensemble, with many international pieces (Charlton, Mandonico, Stopler, Kruisbrink, Kaufman) as well as pieces from US composers (Acquavella, Hartford, Assad, Macadam-Somer, Nix).

Besides NAME, other performers at this year’s festival include the Spanish *Dúo Pedro Chamorro y Ricardo Gallén* (bandurria and guitar); the Swiss-Italian *Orchestra dell’Accademia Internazionale di Mandolino*, directed by Carlo Aonzo; the French *Dúo Chitarrone* of Vincent Beer-

Demander and Grégory Morello (mandolin and guitar); the Russian *Dúo Resonance* of Natalia Kravets and Yana Povolskikh (mandolin/domra and guitar); the Colombian *Trio Nuestra Herencia* (bandola, tiple, requinto and guitar); and the Spanish *Dúo Rosana Ascacíbar* of Alfaro and María Abril (bandurria/mandolin and guitar).

The Festival is organized and held every other year by the Association ConTrastes-Rioja, a group which also directs the annual *International Composition Competition for Plucked String Music ‘José Fernandez Rojas.’* The Association’s mission is to encourage the composition and performance of music for the plucked string instruments, including mandolins, bandurrias, guitars, domras, laudes, etc.

More information about the festival can be found at their website: <http://www.plectrorioja.com/wordpress/>
Or on their FaceBook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/45Festival2016>

Short Reviews, Volume 6:

Recordings of Interest

by Robert A. Margo

It used to be possible to review more or less every classical mandolin CD of significance for the *CMSA Mandolin Journal* at leisure and length. No longer – there are just too many worthy artists and too many worthy CDs, and extended reviews sit in the queue too long due to journal space constraints. This is volume 6 of an occasional column of “short reviews” – the tradeoff is less detail in return for timely information/opinion for CMSA members.

Vincent Beer-Demander, “Mandolinomania,” www.trekel.de



Vincent Beer-Demander

Born in France in 1982, Beer-Demander studied mandolin with Florentine Calvo and Ugo Orlandi, composition with Regis Campo, and chamber music with Alberto Ponce. He has performed widely on various plucked strings with artists such as Mike

Marshall, Roland Dyens, Ricardo Sandoval, the Kerman Mandolin Quartet, and various French symphonic and operatic orchestras. Based in Marseille, Beer-Demander teaches at the city’s National Conservatory as well as the Academy of Mandolin where he is the artistic director. Beer-Demander is also an extremely prolific composer with his own series at the Canadian publishing firm Les Productions D’Oz (close to 20-odd works under his own name and a similar number by other composers which he has edited) and other works published by Trekel. As a composer Beer-Demander is highly eclectic with influences ranging from rock to film music to Brazilian to avante-garde classical and everything in-between. The music on his solo CD “Mandolinmania” reflects these influences very well; the works on display are originals composed by Beer-Demander or friends (e.g. Mike Marshall, Hamilton de Holanda, Ricardo Sandoval), or elaborate arrangements-cum-theme-and-variations (e.g. Enrico Morricone, “Once Upon a Time in America”) – nothing at all from the traditional repertoire of classical mandolin and none the worse for it. As a performer Beer-Demander is world-class, with a passionate, go-for-broke approach to music-making, and a very wide-ranging palette of special

effects. The energetic quality of the performances aside, what distinguishes “Mandolinmania” from the typical solo classical mandolin CD is that eight of the twelve tracks are performed either on mandola (the European variety) or mandocello, making it just about the only such CD in the universe. I especially enjoyed the Beer-Demander originals “Tombeau à Raffaele Calace” (mandolin) and “Alba” (mandola); “Queen’s Rhapsody,” (mandocello) a wild-and-crazy medley of the rock’s group’s greatest hits; and Beer-Demander’s take on Marshall’s iconic “Gator Strut,” (mandocello), different from the typical Marshall performance but every bit as swampy.

Duilio Galfetti and Luca Pianca, “Italian Sonatas,” www.passacaille.be or www.amazon.com



Duilio Galfetti studied violin at the Dreilinden Conservatoire in Lucerne, Switzerland. Upon graduating in 1989, he joined *Il Giardino Armonico*, one of the world’s great baroque orchestras, and later was a founding member of *I Barocchisti*, another world-class baroque ensemble. In the past quarter-century or so Galfetti has established himself as a leading virtuoso on the baroque violin, with numerous recordings on Teldec, Naïve, Claves, and other major European classical labels. Along the way Galfetti mastered the baroque and Neapolitan mandolin and on these instruments has enjoyed a parallel international career. His accompanist, Luca Pianca, studied in Salzburg and Milan and since beginning his career in 1982 has established himself as one of the world’s leading lutenists. Four of the five mandolin works on the recording are performed on the baroque “mandolino” (using Tyler and Spark’s term) – sinfonias and sonatas by Francesco Piccone, Giovanni Battista Sammartini, Carlo Arrigoni, and Domenico Scarlatti (K88); the

Short Reviews, Volume 6: Recordings of Interest

(continued from page 30)

fifth, performed on a Neapolitan baroque instrument, is a sonata in D Major by Giovanni Battista Gervasio. Interspersed between the mandolin pieces are three late works for archlute from the Filippo Della Casa's 1759 manuscript. Galfetti is an extraordinary mandolinist, with a beautiful, precise sound and remarkable fluency and facility; one can only infer that his long career as a violinist with some of the world's best in early music has given him insights into the baroque mandolin repertoire that the rest of us can only dream of. Possessed himself of a brilliant technique, Pianca shines on his solo outings and, as befits his reputation, accompanies Galfetti with exceptional sensitivity throughout. If you are interested in baroque music in general and the baroque mandolin in particular, I cannot recommend this CD too highly. Available directly from the label's website (above) or from Amazon.

Ensemble trioLogie, "vol.1: soundscapes," www.encora.de or www.trekel.de

Ensemble trioLogie is Kristina Lisner (mandolin), Melanie Hunger (mandolin, mandola) and Markus Sich (classical guitar). The three met while students at Wuppertal, forming their ensemble in 2012. Lisner and Hunger are students of Caterina Lichtenberg and Silke Lisko, while Sich studied with Alfred Eickholt and Gerhard Reichenbach. Prizewinners all with extensive international performing experience, trioLogie takes its place as one of the top European groups with its debut recording (presumably, the first of several volumes judging from the title). The repertoire ranges from baroque to Golden Age Italian to contemporary. Baroque is represented by an arrangement of an Albinoni "Sinfonia" (in G-major), originally for two violins and continuo; Golden Age Italian, by one of Calace's greatest (and most difficult) ensemble pieces, "Mattino d'autunno" and by Silvio Ranieri's ornate set of variations on "La Folia" for mandolin duet; and the contemporary, by Rossen Balkanski's gorgeous "Arioso", Vincent Beer-Demander's angular "Centaures" (for mandolin and mandola), Jeffrey Harrington astonishingly intricate "Erg" (for mandolin and guitar) and Astor Piazzolla's passionate "Tango Apasionado" (for trio). Aside from the instrumental flexibility afforded by various combinations of instruments in the trio, the CD is distinguished by the sophistication and subtlety of the arrangements – such as the Calace, originally for two mandolins, mandola, and guitar but which, to this reviewer's ears, does not seem to be missing anything in the trioLogie version. The performances are impeccable and virtuosic, and the sound quality is world-class. The recording can be ordered from Encora's website if one is fluent in German or, if not, by sending an email in English to www.trekel.de.

Duo Zigiotti Merlante, "Raffaele Calace: Opera complete per mandolin e chitarra," Tactus TC860301, www.tactus.it or www.amazon.com

Duo Zigoitti Merlante is Sergio Zigiotti (mandolin) and Fabiano Merlante (classical guitar). The Duo is part of a new generation of highly-trained Italian musicians who are studying their country's plucked string heritage with a trained musicologist's eye. Formed in 1996, the Duo has been a prizewinner in numerous European competitions and has recorded previously for Tactus, one of Italy's leading classical labels. Zigiotti-Merlante also edit a well-regarded series of plucked string music, "Conserto Vago" for the Italian publishing house Armelin Musica. Their new CD is based on meticulous research into the original manuscripts and the Calace archives, including extensive consultation with Raffaele Calace Jr., the composer's grandson and present-day proprietor of the Calace firm. All of the music on this CD is performed with love, affection, and the kind of deep understanding that is near-impossible to acquire unless to the manner born. The sound is also as authentic as it could possibly be, as both the mandolin used by Zigiotti and the guitar used by Merlante are Calace instruments. Being an integral recording, everything is here, including such favorites as the "Rondo Op. 127" and the "Polonese, Op. 36" but also lesser known gems such as the five miniatures that make up the "Album di ballabili, Op. 13". The recording can be ordered directly from the Tactus website or through Amazon.



Tutti in Philadelphia



Take your ensemble playing to the next level at CMSA's 30th Annual Convention in Philadelphia this November. The Host Committee is building the activities at this convention around the theme of 'ensemble playing'.

The excitement begins with our headlining performers, the Modern Mandolin Quartet. Each of these fellows is a multi-instrumentalist in their own right. Collectively, the members of MMQ have a wealth of experience playing in a variety of ensemble settings.

To kick off the convention, Philadelphia will be offering **four** separate and distinct **pre-convention Technique classes**. Mandolins will hone their skills with Matt Flinner. Dana Rath will work specifically with mandolas & octave mandolins. Radim Zenkl will work with the the mandocellos to address their unique concerns, and Adam Roszkiewicz, who is also classically trained on guitar, will be leading the guitar session. These techniques classes are great opportunities to talk to professional musicians about the roadblocks in your technical skills or to simply learn new tricks and tips to master your instrument and make you a more proficient player. But that's not where it ends! All of this great information can be taken back home, shared with others in your group, with the objective of raising your own group's performance standard.

WORKSHOP CONTENT for ENSEMBLES – Just over 50% of our Workshops will give you something that will benefit your ensemble playing. There will be a greater emphasis this year on group playing, including a session

on 'ensemble playing' given by the members of MMQ. **PERFORMANCES by ENSEMBLES** - Our evening performances will be anchored by the Modern Mandolin Quartet. How often do you have an opportunity to observe North America's top mandolin quartet in performance? In addition to the MMQ, our evening concerts will include duet, trio, quartet and large ensemble performances, as well as a special large-scale collaborative performance on the Thursday evening.

SHEET MUSIC for ENSEMBLES - In the Vendor areas, we anticipate a good selection of sheet music once again, with particular emphasis on compositions or arrangements for ensembles of varying sizes.

And of course, there will be the **En Masse Orchestra**. This is the ultimate ensemble experience!

Talk to your duet partner about attending the convention with you. Or talk to your orchestra during break time at your next rehearsal about sending several of your members. Would one person from each section be able to attend, and bring information back to the larger group? Would enough members of your group attend that you could perform as an ensemble at Open Mic? Is your home orchestra able to subsidize any of your expenses? Or investigate whether a CMSA grant or scholarship could help offset the costs. The annual convention is for you, the members of CMSA . . . plan to be there and take advantage of everything it has to offer!

WARNING – This Convention will be well-attended! Our block of rooms at the Radisson Valley Forge Hotel is almost 50% booked already. Plan to attend, and book your rooms now!

CMSA Welcomes New Members:

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Jennifer Burkett - Mechanicsburg, PA
Bruce Robinson - Nottingham, MD
Emmanuel Pierreuse - Coronad, CA
Maxine Wiltshire - London, UK
Mary Ellen Weston - Gig Harbor, WA

Roger Mace - Pickering, OH
Pamela Esquivel - Moreno Valley, CA
David Deratzian - North Wales, PA
Allen Banner - Smithers, BC, Canada
Sean Cooper - Los Angeles, CA
Carolyn Hanlon - Alliance, OH

REVERIE.

FOR THE MANDOLIN.

C. R. SHIBLEY.

Andante religioso.

The main musical score consists of eight staves of music. The first staff begins with a dynamic marking of *p* and a tempo marking of *Andante religioso*. The second staff features a dynamic marking of *f*. The third staff includes a dynamic marking of *p* and a performance instruction of *rit*. The fourth staff starts with a dynamic marking of *p* and a tempo marking of *a tempo*. The fifth staff has a dynamic marking of *cres.*. The sixth staff continues the piece. The seventh staff concludes with a dynamic marking of *p* and a performance instruction of *D.C. al*. The eighth staff is the coda, starting with a dynamic marking of *pp* and a performance instruction of *morendo*.

CODA.

The coda consists of a single staff of music with a dynamic marking of *pp* and a performance instruction of *morendo*.

morendo

Which Finger?

A Series About Mandolin Technique

Installment 20

by Keith David Harris

Fly Me To The Moon!

Hey diddle diddle...the cow jumped over the moon...cats and fiddles, fish and bicycles...

Well, all that didn't seem so improbable when I was five years old. Our ancestors, too, have known where the Moon is for a very long time - well they thought they did, at least - they could see it practically every night, if it wasn't obscured by clouds, a terrifying eclipse or whatever, and with a bit of imagination they could even see the Man in the Moon. But actually *getting to it* turned out to require quite a bit of thought and organization, although it did work eventually, as Neil Armstrong and a few other people could confirm.

I sometimes see a vague connection when I open a mandolin "method", and see a detailed diagram of the fingerboard on the front page. The chart shows exactly where the notes are, but the books are often a bit short on details about how to reach them.

In this series, I invite you to join me in thinking about how to get to the notes (it's like using a spaceship to get to the Moon - sort of), in a useful way, to get musical results. I think the ideas I've come up with over the years have a lot of merit, and my students generally humor me by agreeing. I do find it a bit humbling, when they apply the same principles themselves, but come up with even better ways of doing things - which seems to be happening more and more often these days!

One of my internet students in England recently asked if she might try one of her favorite mandolin pieces, Vivaldi's Concerto in C for solo "mandolin". It's really a bit too difficult for her at present, but if students really want to do something specific, I like to make use of that motivating energy if possible. Of course I told her all the usual stuff about Vivaldi writing for quite a different instrument than her modern Neapolitan-style mandolin, all the perils and pitfalls of playing transcriptions, and simply the complex technical issues involved in making it sound at least pleasantly musical / musically pleasant, even though different from what Vivaldi expected to hear. My student and I agreed to examine the piece minutely, slowly and modestly, being careful not to arouse false hopes like building a staircase to the Moon, and just enjoying the investigation, which, like "pure research" in other fields, may well turn out to be useful in unexpected ways.

We've been looking at the piece for about a month at the time of writing, and both of us find the discussion really fun. I'm also impressed and delighted by my student's success, and - understandably - so is she! My student has been involved with the mandolin for quite a long time by the way, but before we began to work together, her approach had been, understandably, a bit like earlier misguided attempts to reach the Moon - for example by magical or superstitious means.

This is the section of the third movement we've been discussing so far.

Fig. 1



This piece is like some others, which - like the Beethoven miniatures or the serenade from Mozart's "Don Giovanni", among other things, are part of the experience of every mandolin player. This opening section of the third movement looks fairly uncomplicated, although you probably know that it gets more adventurous very soon after. But then, the Moon sometimes seems pretty close too. My student and I have been working together now for almost a year, but she has been playing the mandolin for a fair bit longer, so has also "known" the piece for years. Because she also knows me now too though, she wasn't surprised that I approached the piece differently from how she had previously attempted it. She also trusts me though, and assumes that I'm not just an eccentric, but that my "unconventional" ideas are worth trying. To her credit, the above excerpt now sounds a great deal better than either of us had thought possible just a few weeks ago.

Precisely because it looks pretty elementary, it offers a lot of interesting points for discussion, which might later be applied to more complicated things as well. Whether you think it's God or the Devil who is in the detail, if it's worth doing at all, after all, don't you think it's worth doing well? At the very least, working through this Installment could be very useful revision for ideas encountered in earlier ones, and might even produce some new insights for you.

(cont. on page 35)

Which Finger?

(continued from pg. 34)

It's easier to play the first note nicely than to land on the Moon, but being "easy" is different from being "self-evident". If you've been following this series, of course you'll take care to stop the note correctly, bearing in mind the three most obvious factors (there are a few **less** obvious ones too...) involved in stopping, viz. orientation, pressure and speed – all subjects mentioned in previous Installments. (If you'd like more discussion, see Game G of "The Mandolin Game" for an introduction.) Try stopping it with each of your fingers in turn, and of course it should sound identical (and equally good), regardless of which finger you use. It's even very informative to try to get the note to sound good if you "press the string down" with your thumb – reaching over the top of the fingerboard. This may not be a sensible way to do it for normal purposes (although good for parties), but it might sharpen your awareness of what's involved, so is worth the few minutes of acrobatics needed to make the experiment. This degree of thoroughness should set the level of care desirable in the whole of this investigation.

Fig. 2



Please take the fermatas seriously, and let the notes ring as long as possible. If you don't get a clear and beautiful note (sounding identical regardless of how you press the string down), you should find out why and rectify the matter. It might be as simple just untrained muscles though. If you suspect this, train the fingers by playing the example a lot in the coming days. Don't forget the GOLDEN RULE though:

IF IT FEELS UNCOMFORTABLE, JUST STOP!

Remember that the word "stop" has several meanings - an everyday one, which the golden rule refers to, but also a technical one, meaning to press the string down. I know it sounds silly, but the rule could also be expressed as "if it hurts, just stop stopping!"

In preparing this Installment, I optimistically set out to discuss not just WHICH finger might be expedient for each note, but also WHY, and then HOW. So, if Figure 1 is a little like our parents or grandparents in 1950, being able to see the Moon, but not having the knowledge to get to it, the later stages deal with a strategy for actually reaching the goal – in this modest instance turning the notes into music. But I soon realized that such a comprehensive discussion would not only take a lot of time and space, but might also be as confusing as instructions for building a rocket ship without the necessary background education. Fortunately, playing the mandolin isn't quite as hard as space travel, but it does work better if one has some background knowledge.

If you've following this series carefully, you will have acquired insight into lots of aspects of mandolin technique. Perhaps it will be fun for you to use this knowledge when comparing the following two fingering ideas. Figure 3 shows how some mandolin players I know would probably try to finger the extract – and like I did myself, years ago, because that was what I had been taught – by nice and well-intentioned people, who just didn't have the knowledge I have gained since. In contrast, Figure 4 shows my suggestions, using this extra knowledge. If you've been following this series closely, you might hopefully recognize and understand a certain approach, and also know how to apply some of the perhaps unusual suggestions. Remember: as my students know, my suggestions only look outlandish to people conditioned to the straitjacket norms of traditional "position playing".

If any CMSA members are intrigued by anything, please feel free to contact me – either via my website or through the Journal. I'd be delighted to publish an explanation of anything at all which you find interesting, strange or just plain downright incomprehensible. So I won't go into enormous detail here, but I will make brief comments on a lot of the indicated fingerings.

Remember that if you only have to stop a single note (by itself, with nothing before or after) it doesn't matter in a physical sense what object (a finger, a pencil, your big toe, if you are extremely flexible) you press the string against the fret with. The trick though is to get to the **next** note in the best possible way. That is why the letters indicating what is being discussed are usually **between** two notes. The numerals above the notes of course indicate fingers, and the letters correspond to the remarks below. So when you read a remark, look for the corresponding letter in the musical example. Careful though: the letters are different in Figure 3 than 4.

(cont. on page 36)

Which Finger?

(continued from pg. 35)

Fig. 3 The Standard Approach

- a. Mandolin players seem to think it's a natural law to stop the note C with 2 (the second finger). It's not. They also seem to think it's a natural law to then stop E with the pinkie. That's not either. Both things are matters of human choice, not destiny, and the latter one is an awfully big stretch. There are sensible and humane alternatives – among others the open E string. People who like doing things the hard way if there is an easy way are called extreme athletes, adventurers, masochists...depending on the context. Playing music, though, strikes me as being none these contexts.
- b. If you have used the open string for the note E, 1 is just fine for the next note, F. If however you have used the **pinkie** for E (for whatever reason), even if the notes are both clean and in tune, the sudden change of tone color from an E, stopped at the 7th fret on the A string, to an F at the 1st fret on the E string, isn't going to sound very nice. The sound might also be indifferent for the reason that the stretch from 4 (E) back to 1 (F) is even further than from 1 to 4 at letter a, and perhaps the fingers just can't cope with this long stretch. Don't forget too, that one finger should stay put until after the next note is played (if you want a good connection between notes, like on other instruments...), meaning that, most of the time, at least two fingers are actively involved in pressing strings down. So playing the E with the pinkie, then leaving a great break in the sound while your 1st finger gropes its way to F, doesn't count as successful! (See also "rules of thumb" at G below.)
- c. 1-2 is a so standard that it might feel like a natural law too. In fact, a closer examination often reveals both unexpected problems with stopping at the first fret, and considerable issues with stretching a whole step with 1-2.
- d. If you don't sense potential danger whenever you see the interval of a 5th, you have lots of company, but it doesn't include me, Signor Leone of Naples 250 years ago, nor lots and lots of serious stringed instrument teachers. It's a very interesting subject... The fingering illustrated ignores the issue of the 5th (as indeed do most people), so the fingering in bar 2 is the same as in bar 1 – with the same dilemma about the note E.
- e. It's easy to finger the note G with 2 and B with 1, and I suppose many wouldn't think it worth talking about. In fact though, depending on what comes before and after, it's by no means more self-evident than e.g. 3-2 or 4-3, even without talking about more exciting finger possibilities.
- f. Sure, it's "normal", but that doesn't make it a good idea. ALL of my students would use the pinkie for D without thinking about it (they've gone through the thinking process before), it would sound excellent, and most (admittedly not all) would be disgruntled if I even suggested 3. They know that using the pinkie and not 3 on D makes F at the first fret – coming up very soon – MUCH easier, and they know why. Do you? They'd usually pull a face and whine "Why???" I'd say, "Well, try it, so you know how most other mandolinists on the planet feel." They might try it just to humor me.
- g. Oops! A "0" slipped" in. But it might even be used, if not always for good reasons.
- h. If you understood the issue with the interval of the 5th before in the comment to d, you would see why 1-1, with changes both of string **and** fret with the same finger, is really asking for trouble.
- i. (Next line.) The issue looks the same as at c, just in reverse. As we said at c though, using 2-1 is a little more athletic than 3-1, although properly trained hands can still do it easily, and besides, who would even think of 3-1 as an option? (Well, I and my students of course...). It's a good idea to understand that on the mandolin, there are several physical differences between say 1-2 and 2-1, i.e. the direction of the change of notes (whether ascending or descending in pitch) and which finger is used first. The issue involved is that covered by some "rules of thumb" which followers of this series might remember. At the risk of laboring the point (Heavens!):
Ascending, the finger of the lower note continues pressing with constant force until after the higher note has been sounded. Conversely: descending, the finger of the lower note should be pressing before the higher finger is taken off.
 Either way, you usually have not one but several fingers applying pressure at any given time. (Please see, as for so many other things, "The Mandolin Game", this time Games J and V).
- j. Do you feel it's hard to decide between 1 and 2 for the note G, when it's clear that the next note is C? I don't. If somebody chooses 2 for the lower note, they're going to blow the higher note. I wrote this possibility in though, because it describes reality; I've just seen so many people doing it – inevitably with the result I expect. Perhaps

(cont. on page 37)

Which Finger?

(continued from pg. 36)

these people just have a nice feeling of being at home in the so-called 1st position, which means the 2nd on anything called G at the nut end of the 1st string. There is even a technical term for desperately and futilely trying to stop the note G with 2 and C effectively with the pinkie at the same time: it's called an "extention", and still counts as the 1st position. I suppose this way of analyzing it avoids admitting that it really means trying to be in two places (well, in this case two "positions", the 1st and the 2nd), at the same time.

- k. Of course the pinkie is the right finger for the high C. The issue for the next note then has already been treated in the remarks to j.
- l. Well, whoever has used 2 for G is going to make a mess of the second high C too, I'm afraid. If you haven't, and finding yourself (in fact since the note G) in the so-called "2nd position", you might decide to stay there, as shown in the fingering for the remaining five notes. There's not much to say against the idea – the **idea**, mind; the **reality** is a different matter, but okay - not here...

Fig. 4 My Way (as it says in the song...)

- a. I indicated 2nd finger as a matter of habit (see how insidious conditioning is!), but one could of course stop the note hard object of the right size at all, as the next note is an open string. Any finger you fancy is equally good, unless you have some theatrical reason for using something else.
- b. The open E string sounds fine if stroked nicely, and you can let the C ring into it a little bit, making the blend even nicer. As Mark Davis said few years ago in a different context, "it's easier, and more musical!"
- c. 1-4 is one correct combination here for the strategy, but it would take too long to explain in this article. It prepares the leap of a 5th, which is about to happen about to happen.
- d. 4-3 could be interpreted as the "Leone solution", which involves squashing both fingers up a little bit at the same fret on adjacent strings, so as to avoid the gap in the sound inevitable with the fingering at this point in Figure 3. It is, however, also one of numerous possible finger combinations for an "analogous position change". See Installment 10 ("A Rose Is A Rose") of this series to remind yourself what it means. My students use the technique (which I've never encountered, far less heard described, elsewhere at all, which is why I gave it a name), without batting an eyelid, and in ways I would never have dreamt of – and it sounds lovely. Does it bother you to use 3 here even if you used something else at this point in the previous bar?
- e. Same as b.
- f. 1-3 seems the most comfortable fingering here. It prepares the fingering for the following bar too.
- g. The **finger** for the note G is different here from at d, because the note following G is also different – B and not C-, so 2 for B is logical.
- h. I find the combination 2-4 sometimes a little awkward, although it looks anatomically straightforward. Perhaps it's just me. The fingering 1-4 would have been easier, and the correct preparation would have been to use 2 on G at letter h. It's essentially a choice between where you want the slight stretch: between 2 and 4 (as indicated at letter h), or between 1 and 2 (if you finger G with the 2nd finger at f.)
- i. Nothing special if you're happy with the open E string – which I definitely am.
- j. The most obvious way to cope sensibly with the leap of the diminished 5th from F to B. There are several other ways, which are every bit as "sensible", but less obvious.
- k. 2-4 here is a little more "necessary" (harder to avoid, which but still by no means inevitable!) than at j.
- l. Accepting the "more athletic" stretch 1-2 prepares the totally harmonious fingering for the next five notes.

Enjoy Vivaldi!

Keith Harris, Marburg.

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**Please let us know of additions or changes for this list, contact CMSAJournal@gmail.com*

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