



The Mandolin Journal

February 2017 • Volume XXXIV #1

CMSA Convention 2017

by Katy Vandenberg

Did you know that in 1895, Milwaukee's City Hall held the title for tallest habitable building in the world for four years and tallest seat of government for 6 years? I suppose that doesn't seem that long, so here's something a little more astounding: Milwaukee has the oldest continuously-operating mandolin and guitar ensemble in the world.

The first mandolin orchestra concert took place in Milwaukee in 1890 and in 1900, a dozen amateur mandolinists and guitarists formed our mandolin orchestra as a way to study music together. Older than our beloved Green Bay Packers and even Harley Davidson, we are officially The Bonne Amie Musical Circle but since 1982, we have performed under what we are known today, the "Milwaukee Mandolin Orchestra" and we are now writing our 117th year of history.

Our repertoire for most of the life of our orchestra has been pulled from the archives we've been compiling since 1900, which with the help of our hometown notable historian Paul Rupp, we are now in the process of digitizing. Most of our tunes are from the golden age of the American mandolin era, late 1800s and early 1900s. Some of the most famous American composers were right here in Milwaukee, for instance William C Stahl, Howard Weeks and Thomas Allen. You may recognize the name William C Stahl from the high quality mandolins he built and that are still sought after today. It has been rumored that our esteemed Milwaukee composers may have sold their compositions on street corners in exchange for barrels of beer. Another little known fact of our orchestra, women weren't allowed in the MMO until 1952 but that didn't stop them from performing! Two of William C Stahl's students were the Young sisters of Milwaukee, and were, in fact, twins. Receiving a salary of \$125 a week, in 1912 they set off for a seven month vaudeville tour of theatres on the west coast and had the reputation of being the

foremost women mandolin players in the country!

With the number of years we've been around, it's not surprising that we have a lot of history and pictures that go with it! Our first performance with a guest artist was on Mother's Day in 1988 and our guest soloist was mandolin virtuoso Gustavo Batista. Since then, we have performed with Caterina Lichtenberg, Mike Marshall, Evan Marshall, Don Stiernberg, Carlo Aonzo and many others and have twice appeared live on A Prairie Home Companion. And for fun, we have pictures of us rehearsing in members' basements, with beer. On a boat in the middle of a lake. Not sure if there was beer. Practicing in back yards. With beer. Milwaukeeans loves their beer and if you go on a brewery tour, you'll appreciate just how good it is! And cheeseheads...we will warn you, you might see some there too. But as cheese gets better as it ages, so does our orchestra.

We are under the directorship of renowned classical guitarist, Rene Izquierdo. Many of you know that Rene guest conducts with Carlo Aonzo at his annual US workshop and so you also know how he challenges and inspires you to play better. The first few rehearsals with Rene, he had us timing downstrokes to an actual tennis ball that he would bounce up and down at irregular intervals! It is with his perseverance and love for teaching that we have made a goal for the orchestra to perform in Japan in the near future. What would we perform? Well we are keeping to our historic roots and will continue polishing and working on our American mandolin era music, but we are also branching out into baroque and classical pieces, which we will unveil at our performance at our convention.

As much as the history of the Milwaukee Mandolin Orchestra is fascinating to us, we do not want to bore our readers. So, here are some fun things to do in Milwaukee if

Classical Mandolin Society of America

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The Mandolin Journal is published quarterly (February, May, August, November) and sent as part of membership in the CMSA. Individual and household memberships are available. Individual: \$35; Household membership: \$35 plus \$10 for each additional membership in a household. Orchestra subscriptions are accepted only for foreign orchestras. Dues should be sent to CMSA, 3925 30th Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55406-3108.

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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!



If you would like to share your orchestra events, please email them to me for publication in our "Orchestra News" column.

A reminder that the CMSA membership year has changed to January 1st - December 31st. If you haven't renewed yet you can find a renewal form on page 26 or you can renew on the CMSA website <https://classicalmandolinsociety.org/>

The deadline for the next issue of the *Mandolin Journal* will be April 1st. Please email submissions to me at CMSAJournal@gmail.com.

Sincerely,
 Jackie Zito

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Presidents' Message

Greetings and Happy New Year to all!

We have a very exciting year ahead with plans well underway for the 2017 Convention in Milwaukee and many upgrades to our website.

In this issue you will hear about some of the plans for the convention.

Sadly, we will begin our year with the absence of a very respected and long time friend and founding member, Antonina Nigrelli, who passed away in December. In the next issue of the MJ, we will be featuring articles and tributes to Toni, written by members who have had long time friendships or collaborative associations with her. Your board of directors will also be discussing an appropriate way to acknowledge and remember Toni's deep commitment to CMSA.

In other news, we have important elections coming up for our Board of Directors with 3 very qualified members running for 2 positions. Details will be circulated shortly via email and on the website. Please take a moment to vote, when the time comes!

Response to the Philadelphia Convention Evaluation Survey was very good, with 98 people participating. We are taking the comments from the Survey very seriously. Going forward, you will see changes and improvements based on the ideas put forward. We also appreciated the positive comments and we have passed along messages of appreciation when they were given.

Coming out of the past two conventions, we've heard many suggestions relating to communication and information-sharing. Acting on these suggestions would make our organization stronger. But to do this, we need the help of many volunteers, each doing their small part. So in this issue, you will also see a starter list of 'small jobs'. If you could spare just a few hours this year to do one of these tasks, it would add tremendous value to CMSA.

We sincerely hope this is a year of many musical adventures and growth for you, and hope you will keep in touch through our website or email us.

Sue and Susan



Sue Lesser



Susan McLaughlin

Appointment to Board-of-Directors

Your board-of-directors always meets during the annual convention. In Philadelphia, Dave Betts advised us that he would be leaving his position as Board Secretary effective December 31st, 2016. Dave has been an Officer on the Board for many years, and we wish him well in his new-found leisure time. With only one year remaining in Dave's term, the Board decided to fill the term by appointment. Joane Rylander, of the Austin Mandolin Orchestra, was recently voted in as Secretary for this one-year term. Congratulations Joane, you will be an asset to the Board of Directors!



Joane Rylander

Antonina Nigrelli - The Matriarch of CMSA

It was with heavy hearts that we passed on the news of Toni Nigrelli's passing just before Christmas.

She was present at CMSA's inception, one of the founding members and early organizers. She was President for several years, taking the reins from founder Norman Levine, and frequently held a board position in subsequent years. She gave workshops & lectures. Her long-standing night owl sight-reading sessions at conventions are legendary. The library of mandolin music which she drew from was immense. And she willingly shared with others. She was a mentor and coach to many other CMSA members, moving us forward on our mandolin journeys. Toni's extensive career in the music field meant that her opinion was sought out and listened to, and her wisdom valued. She was respected.

The recent Convention in Philadelphia was the 30th for CMSA. And it was the only convention that Toni ever missed. Her commitment to and involvement with CMSA are unmatched.

Since Christmas, we have reached out to several people who've had close associations with Toni over the years, asking if they would write something about her. Each one has indicated their willingness to share their thoughts and experiences with CMSA members. Unfortunately, the deadline for this issue of the Mandolin Journal came too close on the heels of Christmas for most people to react to our request, and for this reason you will see the tributes to Toni published in the May issue. If any CMSA member has a anecdote to share with us about their interactions with Toni, please forward it to us directly. We'd be happy to publish it in the May issue.

For the time being, we hope you will read through this write-up of Toni's extensive musical career, provided by her family.

The definition of a 'matriarch' is a mother or older woman who is head or ruler of a family, tribe or organization. In the best sense of the word, this was Toni Nigrelli. She will be missed.

Susan & Sue

Obituary for Antonina G. Nigrelli
Antonina Gaetana Nigrelli
April 18th, 1929 - December 17th, 2016.

ANTONINA NIGRELLI earned a B.S. in Music Education from Hunter College 1952 and an M.A. in Music Performance from Queens College in 1978. She held positions on the teaching staffs of Queens, Dowling and St. Joseph's Colleges, was head of the Music Department in the William Tresper Clarke Jr.-Sr. High School, East Meadow, and was the director of orchestras

at the Elwood Elementary, Junior and Senior High Schools, where she taught for 25 years.

Mrs. Nigrelli was a frequent guest conductor and clinician at countywide and statewide festivals including the Long Island String Festival. She had been actively involved in professional organizations, including LISFA, NMEA and SCMEA, in youth orchestras such as the Training Orchestra (now Gemini) and professional orchestras including the Long Island Symphony, Huntington Festival Orchestra and the Suffolk Symphony. She was first violinist and a member of the Board of Directors of the Long Island Symphony and also appeared as its guest conductor.



Antonina Nigrelli

Antonina was Conductor and Music Director of West Islip Symphony, Long Island, NY for more than 25 years. She also conducted the Long Island Mandolin and Guitar Orchestra for more than 34 years and was president of the Classical Mandolin Society of America for 8 years. She was also the concertmaster of the New York Balalaika and Domra Orchestra and served as a member of the Board of Directors Balalaika and Domra Association of America for 15 years. She conducted festival orchestras in Atlanta, Georgia, Louisville, Kentucky, Jackson, Missouri, Vancouver, B.C., St. Petersburg, Russia and Stockholm, Sweden. In addition, she continued to freelance with the Celebration String Quartet and various New York orchestras including the Island Lyric Opera.

During the winter months she played violin and viola professionally in Florida, performing with the Charlotte Symphony and appearing as guest conductor of "I Musici" in Naples, Florida, and serving as Assistant Conductor and Concertmaster of the Gulf Coast Symphony in Ft. Meyers, Florida. Never one to slow down, she was also delighted to play with Barry Manilow on a recent six city tour of Florida

Antonina is survived by her husband of 63 years, Frank Nigrelli, daughter, Gina D'Amaro, son Terry Nigrelli and two grandchildren, Julia and Andrew Nigrelli.

Rose Nemerow - A Life of Music



Rose
Nemerow

Rose Nemerow, long-time concertmistress of the Tacoma Mandoleers, passed away in late 2016. She is fondly remembered by her fellow musicians as a lively, fun-loving character, dedicated to music and the mandolin. The photos and write-up below were submitted by Paul Pearlstein, Cindy Stroup, Lynn Falk, Peggy Mangum, Pat Kibler and Karen Von Bernewitz.

On October 17, 2016 in Manassas, Virginia, Rose Nemerow passed away after months of failing health in hospice care. Rose began her life on April 10, 1922, in Kushnice, Czechoslovakia in a rural community speaking Yiddish and Czech. Life was hard with no running water in a house her grandfather built, while her father Israel worked as a tailor and her mother, Anna, raised vegetables and livestock. One of Rose's enduring memories is sneaking into the hen-house early in the morning in her bare feet to steal and eat a raw egg. After being sponsored by her mother's sister aunt Goldie and at age seven Rose and her mother began a month's long journey to Ellis Island, which included a voyage on the Steamship Olympic that arrived May 1930. Her father Israel had already immigrated soon after Rose's birth, again working as a tailor and initially was a stranger to Rose. While growing up in Brooklyn and the Bronx life could be difficult for a single attractive strawberry blond girl, Rose had learned English quickly in elementary school while being teased by classmates. She earned straight A's in school to please her extraordinarily demanding 'papa', who tried to remove her from school to work at 15 because money was scarce during the depression. She and her mother worked out a system and would meet with shopping bags holding her textbooks so her father wouldn't see her continue her education, and got evening training from the teachers. In the days where fruit was still delivered by horse drawn

carriages and you rarely had the five-cent bus fair, Rose skipped several grades and managed to graduate with her peers, all the while studying the mandolin.

In 1941, after graduating high school, Rose worked in an office, then as a machinist, and went to City College in N.Y. at night to study accounting and psychology. She received awards, was promoted often and when WWII was in full steam, became a real "Rosie the Riveter" at a defense plant, and was featured in newsreels of the day. She operated drop presses, drill presses, riveting machines, and turret lathes. Tough times during failing health between back operations, while her husband worked multiple jobs, forced Rose to put her first two young children in an orphanage which was a heartbreaking experience. Rose often recalled another very tough time when four-year-old Stanley stopped breathing after drowning at a family picnic and was saved by Rose's sixth sense to look for him, pull him out of a nearby creek and revive him with her own spur-of-the-moment actions. After having 3 children, she was hired by the Department of Defense and worked at Fort Belvoir, the Pentagon, and before retiring from the Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) as a staff assistant, and was honored for her work with Federal Women's Program and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Rose also worked as a substitute teacher while living in Maryland. Rose was extremely supportive of her husband's career and encouraged him to obtain the college courses he needed to advance after moving from New York to Ohio, and eventually become an aeronautical engineer at NAVAIR.

Music was joy to Rose and it saw her through the rough times. Throughout her life, Rose was regularly featured in local and national periodicals displaying her talents for playing the mandolin and balalaika. She started playing at 6 years old in Czechoslovakia, where she would hide from her parents in the outhouse to practice. Afterward she played on the street corners of NYC. By age 15, she performed in an orchestra at Carnegie Hall. During WWII, after a full work day, she entertained troops playing the mandolin at bond rallies and served as a USO hostess where she met her husband Jack in 1945, and married in 1946.

Rose was the concert mistress for the Takoma Mandoleers Mandolin Orchestra of Arlington, VA and belonged to the Fretted Instrument Guild of America (FIGA) and the Washington Balalaika Society. Rose was featured in a cover story in FIGA magazine and also was a regular contributor of articles. She inspired her husband Jack to join in and begin playing the bass at age 67. She traveled and played in foreign countries including France and Russia, and played for celebrities, congressmen, ambassadors, foreign dignitaries, and presidents Nixon, Carter and Reagan. She earlier played with the International Ladies Garment Workers Union

Rose Nemerow - A Life of Music

(continued from page 5)

Mandolin Orchestra and then played on the radio, at the 1938 World's Fair, Madison Square Garden, Kennedy Center, Smithsonian, Wolf Trap, and Ford's Theatre. She appeared with famous entertainers including Edward G. Robinson, Paul Robeson, Bill (Bojangles) Robinson and Eddie Cantor. Later Rose formed her own smaller groups such as the Rose Nemerow and the Music Makers and the Old Village Band at area restaurants, social and family functions. Rose also entertained at various nursing homes, including Potomac Place Assisted Living, where she spent her later years. She played any kind of music including Greek, Spanish, Italian, Russian and German and did so while battling carpal tunnel syndrome, hypertension, and back pain.

Rose was also an accomplished poet, with poems appearing in newspapers, numerous congregation, club and group newsletters, and also several editions of New Voices in Poetry. Rose would also give her children poems as birthday presents.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests donations in Rose's memory to the Congregation Ner Shalom Synagogue (P.O. Box 2085, Woodbridge, VA 22195-2085) she helped found in the 1970s, and where she served on the board and in numerous capacities including Sisterhood President, Cantor and religious school teacher. She was also recognized as one of three "Woman of Valor" by Ner Shalom for all her lifelong contributions. Rose was preceded in death by her husband, Jack Nemerow and her son Stanley Nemerow.

She is survived by Sister Sylvia Kimmel, sons Laurence Nemerow and David Nemerow, daughters-in-law Lynn

Nemerow, and Diane Nemerow, six grandchildren, and eleven great-grandchildren. Funeral Service to be held Wednesday, OCT 26, 2016 at Pierce Funeral Home, 9609 Center Street, Manassas, VA 20110. The family will receive friends at 9 AM with service at 10 AM. Burial after the service: Noon at National Memorial Park, King David Memorial Cemetery, 7482 Lee Hwy, Falls Church, VA 22042. Shiva is currently planned to occur at 7 PM at Congregation Ner Shalom, 14010 Spriggs Rd, Dale City, VA 22193.



Rose and Jack

CMSA Convention 2017

(continued from page 1)

you come early or stay late: 1) brewery tours like Lakefront Brewery, Miller Brewery or the Pabst brewery 2) tours of mansions such as Pabst Mansion, Schuster Mansion or Villa Terrace 3) museums including the Milwaukee Public Museum (Streets of Old Milwaukee is enchanting), Art Museum with the Calatrava, Betty Brinn Children's Museum, Discovery World, Harley Davidson Museum 4) see a show at the Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, Pabst Theatre, Riverside Theatre or Performing Arts Center 5) visit landmarks for example City Hall, Federal Building, Bronze Fonz, Grain Exchange 6) walk around the Historic Third Ward, Historical Old World 3rd St, the Riverwalk or along the lakefront 7) for nature lovers, take a boat tour down the Milwaukee River, fly a kite or ride a Surrey

at Veteran's Park, walk along McKinley Marina 7) relax in Pere Marquette Park, Cathedral Square, Red Arrow Park or Veterans Park 8) visit local restaurants and bars, one of the most unique called SafeHouse, a spy-themed bar and restaurant or an authentic German restaurant, Mader's.

Fred and I are co-chairs for the host convention and on behalf of the rest of your host committee, Dave, Lisa, Mary, Donna, and Ruth, we invite you to see Milwaukee and be part of this wonderful convention. The history of Milwaukee makes it such a great place on a great lake to visit and you'll love it, even more so with a good beer in your hand. Or a good mandolin.

Seeking Volunteers

Over the past two years, many worthy suggestions have been made for improving and strengthening CMSA. A number of these suggestions relate to communication and the flow of ideas & information. However, the only way we can make them a reality is to ask for volunteers. Here is a condensed list of some of the activities that we believe could be done by any CMSA member. Many of these could even be 'job-shared'. You could also elect to do a particular task for a finite term of your choosing. If you'd like more information, contact us directly!

Susan and Sue

carpe_plectrum@sasktel.net & sulesser@gmail.com

➤ Archives-related:

- Someone willing to scan the archive of old convention programs. High quality scans required. Finished product w/b uploaded to CMSA website. CMSA will pay shipping to send the materials to you.
- One or more people willing to receive old music destined for CMSA archives: you would investigate copyright issues (in conjunction with an expert), create high resolution scans for upload to CMSA website. CMSA will pay shipping to send materials to you, and will deal with the hard copies when you are done.

➤ Communications-related:

- Someone willing to be the liaison between CMSA and sister-groups around the world such as BMG, FAME, etc. Could involve cross publication of information on important events, etc. This job could be shared by several people, with each person responsible for a different geographic region.
- Someone willing to be the liaison between CMSA and ASTA.
- Someone with Japanese or Korean language skills, to assist in translating text, or other activities related to building a relationship with their mandolin communities

➤ Feature editors for the Mandolin Journal:

- Technology News. One or more people willing to contribute periodic 'technology' related articles to the MJ
- Where Are They Now? One or more people willing to write follow-up articles for the MJ on previous scholarship winners, on previous convention hosts, etc. Provide brief updates on what they are doing now.
- Orchestra Reports. One or more people willing to keep in touch with mandolin orchestras and ensembles, and solicit MJ articles from them periodically. This is a job that could be split up into regional responsibilities.
- Luthier Liaison. One or more people willing to reach out to luthiers across the continent, then create write-ups for the MJ periodically

CMSA Welcomes New Members:

Nate Roberts - Holland, MI
Paul Patterson - Cincinnati, OH
Christopher Patnoe - Palo Alto, CA
Maureen Spencer - LaGrange, KY
Jean Comeau - Laval, Quebec
Peter Coronado - Los Altos, CA
Steve Ganis

Doug Sneddon - Kalamazoo, MI
Kathleen Alberton - Monticello, FL
Sue Roberts - Tucson, AZ
Barbara Scherer - Denver CO
Amanda Gregg - Middlebury, VT
Nelson Gage - Delanson, NY
Joanne Sheehan - Easton, MA

Save the Music: A Digital Solution in the Works

by Marilynn Mair

Have you got a stack of aging mandolin sheet music at home? Does the mustiness and brittleness of the scores discourage you from organizing and exploring them? Are you trying to figure out how to preserve your collection for future players? Me too. In September I took the plunge and began a mando-sheetmusic-scanning project, with the help of staff and students at Roger Williams University where I am a professor. Stored in my attic for years, this disorganized collection of fragile oversized music for mandolin—solo, small ensemble, and orchestra—came from disparate sources including my first mandolin teacher, Hibbard Perry, Joe Pettine, son of the famous Guiseppe, and from my own research at libraries, publishers, and music stores in Europe and Brazil. Neglected and disintegrating, some pieces more than a century old, I was spurred by former-President Lou Chouinard's plea to CMSA members to begin a project to save this last-century music digitally for future generations.

Luckily, at RWU I have work-study students and scanners that can handle oversized folios with the necessary care. After sorting and grouping parts and scores at home I handed off the first batch and we began. I decided not to impose my opinion as to the musical quality of the scores—after all one player's trash is another's treasure. The collection seems to have a plethora of opera arrangements from Italian publishers, and American amateur pieces with colorful titles like "Hong Kong Gong" and "Temptation Polka". (I see some themed CDs in the future for my octet Enigmatica!) So far we've scanned about 150 pieces with more to go, along with

some really cool illustrated covers. When I'm a bit further along I may put out a plea to CMSA members for missing parts or books in a series. And when I'm finally done I'll figure out how and where to organize and make the music available for download online. I'll keep a copy of the originals for my archives and make any duplicates available to musical colleagues, probably at this summer's AMGuss. Stay tuned for more news on our progress. And think about preserving your own music collection!

On a personal note, I had a great musical year in 2016, including the premiere of several of my new choro compositions, concerts with Brazilian pianist/composer Luiz Simas, most notably in NYC at the II International Choro Festival presented by the Brazilian Music Foundation, and gigs with my many music friends in Brazil. I presented research on the connections between American and Brazilian music at conferences in London and Rio, and I am currently at work on a new mandolin book, requested by my publisher Mel Bay. My octet Enigmatica has given some great performances as well, ending the year with our annual Christmas concert at Blithewold Mansion, here in Rhode Island. For 2017, I'm looking forward to a return to Brazil, finishing my book manuscript, and my two New England summer schools in June and July. You can visit marilynnmair.com for updates on my activities, as well resources for mandolinists and, coming soon, the progress of the mando-scanning project. Happy New Year, and I hope to see y'all before 2017 ends.

Marilynn Mair announces ~ Summer Workshops for 2017

Spend a week playing the instrument you love in a beautiful setting, under the watchful guidance of this internationally-renown mandolinist, recording artist, composer and author.

The American Mandolin & Guitar Summer School June 26-30, 2017, Bristol, Rhode Island

Emphasizing an ensemble approach. You'll play in the all-school American Mandolin & Guitar Orchestra and in small chamber ensembles, directed by a teaching staff of 5 outstanding musicians.

Also includes workshops, concerts, classes and informal evening jam sessions.

Tuition is \$350. Campus room & board available.

Registration limited to 35 players on mandolin-family instruments & guitar.

For more information & to register: marilynnmair.com

SummerKeys Mandolin Week July 10-14, 2017, Lubec, Maine

A more personal focus. Daily private lessons with Marilynn, a daily class on ensemble technique, and individual practice time scheduled in private studios. Also includes concerts, and an opportunity to collaborate with a variety of instrumentalists.

Tuition is \$675. Housing & meals in scenic local inns and restaurants.

Registration limited to 6 mandolinists.

For more information & to register: summerkeys.com

Desert Island Discs:

Classical Mandolin's Classic Recordings, Volume 2: Duo Gervasio

by Robert A. Margo

Back in the day of *Stereo Review* and similar music magazines, record critics frequently published lists of “desert island discs” – recordings of such merit that one could take them to the proverbial desert island. This is the second in a series of short articles about “desert island discs” of classical mandolin music. Because there is no objective definition of what constitutes a desert island disc, the list is obviously personal.¹ Nevertheless, a list maker should have compelling reasons as to why a particular recording is desert-island worthy, and I shall offer them – the music is inherently important in the history of the instrument; the performance is transcendental; the recording is a significant departure from past practice, pointing a path forward. Most importantly, a desert island disc is one to which you can listen repeatedly and never tire. These are the recordings that should be in every classical mandolin collection, in my (humble) opinion.

Duo Gervasio, “Classical Mandolin and Guitar: Beethoven, Denis, Leone, Gervasio,” CPO Recordings 999-291-2.

Duo Gervasio is Carmen Theirgärtner on mandolin and Jürgen Theirgärtner on classical guitar. Born in 1969 in North Rhine-Westphalia, Carmen Theirgärtner won national awards as a teenager before studying with Marga Wilden-Hüsgen in Wuppertal, obtaining her degree in mandolin and baroque mandolin in 1993. Eight years older, Jürgen Theirgärtner also won a national award as a teenager. His principal guitar teachers were Gerhard Vogt and, later, Michael Tröster. The Theirgärtners released two CDs on the CPO label in the 1990s, one devoted to baroque repertoire and the other to classical – my desert island disc.²

There are six pieces recorded on “Classical Mandolin”, all of which are about as standard as repertoire could be on mandolin. The proceedings start with Denis’ Sonata No. 3, followed by two of the Beethoven works, WoO43b (“Adagio ma non troppo in E flat major” and WoO44b (“Andante con variazioni in D major”). Like all of Beethoven’s mandolin works, these are originally for mandolin and fortepiano and are arranged for mandolin and guitar. The Beethoven is followed by Leone’s Sonata II in G major (op. 1) and an anonymous (but well-known) sonata in G minor. The recording concludes with one of Gervasio’s most frequently played works, his “Sonata da camera”.

The performances are among the finest ever recorded of this repertoire. Each note, whether played on mandolin or guitar, is beautifully made – round and full or sharp and bright, as needed. Idiomatic techniques are perfectly realized, dynamics and tempos finely judged. Ensemble is as tight as it possibly could be, and the recording itself

sets a standard to this day.

When the recording was first released, American classical mandolinists were just becoming familiar with the first wave of players from the modern German school, Caterina Lichtenberg and Gertrud Weyhofen (Tröster) in particular. Duo Gervasio is a reminder that there were many others not as well-known outside of Germany as Caterina or Gertrude, but trained to the same world class standard.

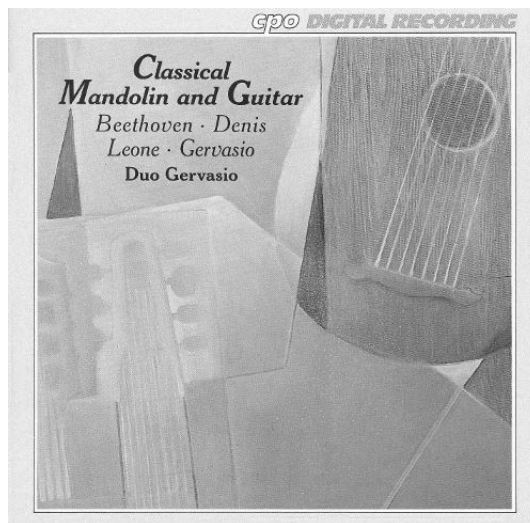
Today, recordings of the Beethoven or of Gervasio are likely to feature modern copies of historical mandolins played with period technique and plectra, accompanied by fortepiano (Beethoven) or the continuo on cello or harpsichord (Denis, Gervasio) realized by specialists in HIP (historically informed performance). For those of us without access to an authentic or reproduction 18th century Neapolitan, though, Duo Gervasio’s renderings can serve as models – for my tastes, in particular, there is no better recording of the Beethoven works using modern instruments to be had.

Trekel has the CD in stock (<http://trekel.de/de/cd-dvd-cd-rom/cd-mandoline/cds-mandoline-und-gitarre/24356-classicalmandolinandguitar.html>). Copies used and new show up from time to time on Amazon and Ebay, and individual tracks also can be streamed from Amazon.

(Endnotes)

1 If, however, I seem to be ignoring your favorite player/recording as the series unfolds, email me -- I will consider suggestions (but no promises!). My email address is robert.a.margo@gmail.com.

2 Their baroque CD is exquisite and without question should be included in any serious collection of classical mandolin CDs. There are many fine CDs of baroque mandolin, however, but fewer of the repertoire on the Theirgärtner’s classical CD.



En Masse Music: Where to Find It by Robert A. Margo

The En Masse Orchestra is always one of the highlights of the annual CMSA convention. En Masse music is distributed to registered attendees in advance, rehearsed daily at the convention, and then performed at the Saturday evening gala concert. En Masse pieces are selected by the En Masse conductor – in recent years, Maestro Jim Bates.

Judging from the written comments in the post-convention survey, more than a few participants would like to know how to acquire the En Masse music (parts and score) outside the convention. For example, one participant wrote on this year's survey to ask if the music could be made "available on the [CMSA] website? I play M2 but would like to have a look at the M1 parts also".

To answer such questions, the following needs to be acknowledged:

- Some En Masse music is under copyright.
- Some En Masse music is newly "commissioned".
- Some En Masse music is in the public domain.
- Some En Masse parts must be arranged.

If a piece is under copyright, CMSA obviously must obtain the music legally. If the music is published and currently in print CMSA negotiates directly with the publisher (Trekell, say). To keep costs for participants manageable, the rights obtained are for convention use only. CMSA cannot, therefore, publish En Masse parts on its website or otherwise make them available without violating the contractual agreement with the publisher.

At recent conventions CMSA has appointed a "composer-in-residence" who may or may not be "commissioned" to write a new piece for mandolin orchestra.¹ In commissioning a new musical work, it is standard for the composer to retain copyright. This is the case with CMSA's commissioning. Again, therefore, CMSA cannot make the music available outside of the convention without violating copyright. The composer, however, has the right to distribute the music post-convention free of charge or for a fee, or not at all.² CMSA members who want to try out commissioned works with their home orchestras will need to contact the composers directly for permission (see below).

Some En Masse music is in the public domain. If the music is in the public domain -- yes, CMSA could make (and has made) the music available outside of the convention (see below).

Except for newly commissioned works most En Masse pieces require some arranging. Generally, arranging is necessary to make the music fully accessible to the mandola and mandocello sections.

The mandola comes in two flavors – CGDA and GDAE. All of the notes that typically are played on the CGDA instrument can be played on the GDAE instrument, although this may require playing (far) up the neck. All of the notes that can be played on the GDAE instrument, however, cannot be played at pitch on the CGDA instrument – anything below the "C" of CGDA, in particular. In addition, players of the CGDA instrument may read one or more of the following – alto clef, 8va treble (sounds one octave below as written), or transposed (written as if the instrument were tuned like a mandolin).³ Players of the GDAE instrument, however, only read 8va treble. In the case of the mandocello, players will read bass clef, 8va or 16va treble (sounding two octaves lower than written), or transposed.

Aside from a tiny number of self-publishing ventures, all commercial publishing of mandolin orchestra music occurs outside of the United States. Outside of the US, the overwhelming majority of ensembles use the GDAE instrument instead of the CGDA instrument and the mandocello is used only rarely. Consequently, most music published by Trekell, say, contains parts for M1, M2, GDAE mandola in 8va treble clef, classical guitar, and bass -- but not parts for CGDA mandola or mandocello. To be sure, exceptions do occur if the music is originally composed for ensembles using these instruments (often the case if the composer is American) -- but these are exceptions, not the rule.

To deal with these issues, CMSA relies on highly skilled volunteers (i.e. uncompensated) willing and able to work many (many, many ...) hours free of charge to prepare the En Masse parts.⁴ "Highly skilled" means the ability to enter a published GDAE mandola part accurately into a notation software program (e.g. Finale) and from it prepare CGDA parts in the proper clef; and, when necessary, the ability to arrange the music, literally, to create CGDA and mandocello parts where none are published.⁵ For music under copyright, CMSA volunteers are able to legally arrange such parts but, again, this is for convention use only (otherwise, it would be too expensive). For newly commissioned music, this is built into the commissioning agreement.

Although, in general, CMSA cannot make En Masse parts available outside the convention it can provide information on where to legally obtain the score and parts of published works under copyright. Again, please note: I am referring to the original published parts, not parts arranged by CMSA's talented volunteers.

Here is a list of published works under copyright performed by the En Masse Orchestra at the past three

En Masse Music: Where to Find It

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CMSA conventions, listed in alphabetical order of the composer's last name.⁶ The publisher is given and also where to purchase the published score and parts:

Websites of publishers listed above are:

Composer	Convention	Title	Publisher	Source
Keith Harris	Portland	Diamantina Suite	Vogt & Fritz	www.trekel.de
Eric t' Hart	Austin	Wild at Heart	Grenzland Verlag – Theo Hüsgen	www.trekel.de
James Kellaris	Philadelphia	Kalamazoo Swag	Trekel	www.trekel.de
Annette Kruisbrink	Philadelphia	Dreamtime	Vogt & Fritz	www.trekel.de
Yasuo Kuwahara	Austin	The Song of Japanese Autumn	Vogt & Fritz	www.trekel.de
Miwa Naito	Portland	Okinawa Suite II	Vogt & Fritz	www.trekel.de
Peter Schindler	Portland	House of the Rising Sun Variations	Edition49	www.trekel.de
Carl Stamitz arr. Wilden-Hüsgen	Portland	Quartet for Orchestra in F Major, Op. 4	Vogt & Fritz	www.trekel.de

Edition49: www.edition49.de

Grenzland Verlag Theo Hüsgen: <http://www.grenzland-verlag.de/>

Trekel: www.trekel.de

Vogt & Fritz: www.vogtundfritz.de

As is apparent in the table, all of the above works can be ordered from Trekel and shipped to the US, provided that someone in your orchestra has a Paypal account.⁷ As an example, suppose that one of your orchestra members came back from CMSA Philadelphia raving about James Kellaris's "Kalamazoo Swag" and your conductor has decided to add the piece to the orchestra's repertoire. As it happens, "Swag" does have published parts for the CGDA mandola and the mandocello.⁸ Send an email ("Dear Trekel") to info@trekel.de with your specific requirements – one copy of the score, 3 copies of the M1 part, and so on – and indicate that you wish to pay using Paypal (for which

purpose you will need to indicate the email address of the Paypal account).⁹ Trekel will acknowledge your order in English, and send you a Paypal invoice, which will include the cost of the music plus shipping and handling.¹⁰ Pay the invoice, and 1-2 weeks later, your order will arrive in the US.

Currently, one public domain piece from the previous three conventions is available for free downloading – Raffaele Calace's "Impressioni Orientale, op. 132" -- which was performed at CMSA Austin. The En Masse version of this piece was prepared from the original manuscript by Robert Puckette. The Puckette edition has been posted free of charge at www.imslp.org (google "IMSLP Calace"). Posting at www.imslp.org means that said music can be made available to a much wider audience than just CMSA.

Over the past three convention cycles two works have been commissioned by CMSA: Joel Hobbs's "Memories from the Future" (CMSA Austin) and Neil Gladd's "Intrada

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and Variations on Chester” (CMSA Philadelphia). As previously mentioned, copyright of commissioned works is retained by the composer. If your orchestra is interested in these works, contact the composer directly through their websites (www.joelhobbs.com and www.neilgladd.com) to find out about availability of scores and parts.¹¹

(Endnotes)

1 Occasionally an En Masse piece may be an unpublished arrangement of a composition not originally for mandolin orchestra (such as John Imholz’s arrangement of Aaron Copland’s “Rodeo”, performed at CMSA Philadelphia). The underlying music for the arrangement may or may not be under copyright, as may also be true of the arrangement. Similar to a commissioned work, if your orchestra is interested in a particular En Masse arrangement you will need to contact the arranger directly.

2 If a commissioned piece is subsequently published, the copyright passes to the publisher and the composer generally gives up the right to make the piece available separately.

3 8va treble is an example of an “octave treble” clef – a.k.a. “universal notation,” the term used in the US during the mandolin’s Golden Age of the early twentieth century.

4 For example, the piece “Dreamtime”, which was performed at CMSA Philadelphia, lacked CGDA and mandocello parts in the original version. CMSA volunteer Lon Hendricks constructed these parts for use at the convention.

5 Strictly speaking, it is not absolutely necessary to arrange new mandocello parts because the cello section could simply play the bass part (past experience suggests that the cello section doth protest, however). It may or may not be necessary to arrange an existing GDAE mandola part – it depends on whether the notes go below the range of the CGDA instrument, among other issues. It is always necessary to prepare mandola and mandocello parts in different clefs, however, for En Masse use.

6 For future conventions CMSA plans to make this information available in the November newsletter, and also by posting to the CMSA website.

7 Please note that European mandolin publishers, as yet, generally do not publish in PDF form, only hard copies.

8 At the past two CMSA conventions your faithful author has volunteered (emphasis added) his time and effort to arrange with Trekel to make a modest amount of its sheet music available for purchase at the convention. At present, I am only able to offer Trekel publications, not those by other European publishers. If an En Masse work is published by Trekel I make every effort to have copies (score, one set of parts; it is your responsibility to order additional parts if you need them, see footnote #9). At this year’s convention, there were three copies of “Kalamazoo Swag” available for purchase (these sold out quickly).

9 Legally, if you plan to play one of the published En Masse pieces, you must purchase sufficient parts for your group; you cannot buy just one part and photocopy the additional copies that you need. This is the case unless the publisher offers an explicit option for purchasing the right to make unlimited copies (or, as in CMSA’s case, this can be negotiated for one-time use). An example of a publisher that does routinely offer this option is the Canadian company Les Productions D’Oz (www.productionsdoz.com).

10 As an example of what the cost might be, suppose that your orchestra has 3M1, 3M2, 3 CGDA mandolas, 3MC, 3 guitars, 1 bass, and you order 1 copy of the score of “Swag” plus parts for each member. The cost of the score and parts would be 41.20 euros, according to Trekel’s website. Based on my experience, a good guess on shipping and handling would be 8-10 euros – so, for the sake of the example, let’s say 50 euros in total. As I write this, the spot (Euro-USD) exchange rate is \$1.04 = 1 euro; Paypal’s rate will be a little higher, say 1.08. The total cost would be ≈ \$54.00.

11 Presently the score and parts to the Hobbs piece can be obtained without charge from the composer under a Creative Commons Attribution license (with certain restrictions). The Providence Mandolin Orchestra (Mark Davis, director) is currently rehearsing the Hobbs piece and hopes to perform it at one or more concerts in the spring of 2017.

Japanese Music and CDs from Ikegaku: Erratum By Robert A. Margo

Unfortunately, a few incorrect spellings of the names of Japanese composers crept into my recent article on Ikegaku, the mandolin shop in Tokyo, for which I apologize. The correct spellings are Keigo Fujii, Yoshinao Kobayashi, and Jiro Nakano. Thanks to CMSA honorary director Ken Tanioka who spotted the errors.

Improvising For All Instruments: Play the Notes that are not Written Down

by Radim Zenkl

This is a brief recap of the 75-min workshop held at the 2016 CMSA Convention.

Improvisation can be viewed as an instant composition in a certain musical style. It can be divided into two main types: scalar and chord based improvisation.

Scalar Improvisation

If a tune stays in one key, for example in C major, the melody of the tune would use only the notes of the C major scale. The chords of that key would be built only from the notes of the C major scale, thus resulting in seven chords, also known as the harmonized scale – C, Dm, Em, F, G, Am, Bm5.

For our first improvisation we would use the notes of the C major scale for creating melodies. We can use this scale to play over the C major chord, but also for any of the seven chords in the key of C. For example, to play over a standard chord progression C – F – C – G – C, also known in numbers as: I – IV – I – V – I. (It really works, even if we play the C scale over the F chord, because the F is not a ‘standalone’ F, but an F in a function of a four chord, also known as the subdominant chord). To start, we simply play the notes of the scale and ‘navigate by ear’. With more experience, we start to hear the melodies in our ‘inner ear’ (or our mind) a short moment before we play them. Our next chord progression to improvise over can include also the minor chords of the key, for example: C – Am – Dm – G – C, or C – G – Am – Em – F – C – Dm – G – C, etc. When we are approaching the end of a phrase, especially on the C chord, we should try to finish our phrase on a chord tone of the C chord (c, e or g), to resolve our musical idea, to ‘bring in home’ so to speak.

Chord based improvisation

After we master the scalar improvisation, we can start working on the chord based improvising, where we musically ‘pay attention’ to each chord individually. The number one rule here is: when a new chord comes, we want to play a chord tone of that new chord. For example, if the chord progression is C – F, we would start playing over the C chord and before the end of its duration we navigate towards some chord tone of F (usually the closest one to where we are at the moment), which could be f, a or c. This can be made into an exercise, where we would set a specific starting point, for example the c note, then play 8 notes over the C chord and ‘land’ on f (our ninth note) above the c and stop on it. We would do it over and over many times, always starting on c and landing on f, but each time playing different notes in between. Then we can change our starting (or landing) chord tone, also extend the chord’s duration (for example to 12 or 16 notes plus 1), play in another octave, choose two different chords, change keys, etc.

The next step is to continue playing over the second chord, then coming back to the original chord by landing on one of its chord tones, playing over it and again continuing to the second chord, playing them back to back many times, always landing on the closest chord tone of each new chord.

Then we can add more chords. It is a good idea to practice with the backup chords (using our own recording or play along computer programs such as Band-in-Box or iReal Pro), but also without the backup, trying the ‘hear’ (or feel) the chords in our mind.

Some tunes go out of key for a moment, for example if we see a D7 chord in the key of C, the tune is for a moment in the key G (D7 is five of G). In our improvising, we want to feature the note that is not in the key of C (meaning in the C scale), which will be the \sharp . We can land on it right away when the D7 chord comes or play it shortly after. Similarly, with the A7, E7, Fm, and other chords in a tune in C.

A summary of the chord based improvisation: A good solo is a such solo, in which we could hear the chord changes from the solo itself, even if no one plays the actual chords.

List of skills and knowledge needed for a successful improvising:

Good Technique

Circle of 4ths/5ths

Major and minor scales

Chord tones of chords (arpeggios)

Knowing the notes on the fretboard, at least in the 1st position, which is up to the 7th fret

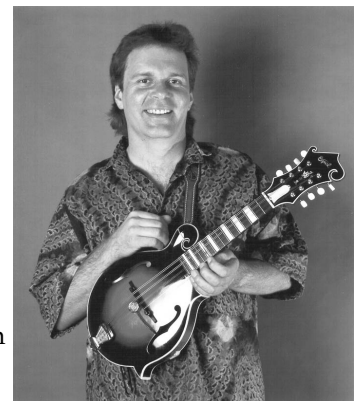
Repertoire of the genre in which we will improvise (folk, bluegrass, swing, etc.)

I hope this will make sense to you, in case of any questions please feel free to e-mail me at: radim@zenkl.com

Happy improvising!

Radim

Radim Zenkl teaches online private lessons and group classes via Skype. For more information please write to: radim@zenkl.com. His instructional DVD “Mandolin Primer” was released on Homespun in 2015. www.zenkl.com



Radim Zenkl

Composer's Corner:

Mark Linkins

“Night is Past and Gone” is the theme upon which this piece is based. The melody is included in P.W. Joyce’s 1909 collection “Old Irish Folk Music and Songs.” This arrangement sets the ancient tune within the context of modern harmonies and mixed meters. If you’d like to hear a midi version of the arrangement, you can listen to it on SoundCloud at: <https://soundcloud.com/mlinkins/variations-duet-for-ref>.

Following are some points that you may wish to consider, if you are interested in learning/performing this piece.

Rhythmic considerations:

The arrangement makes extensive use of hemiola, the juxtaposition of duple (2-beat) patterns against triple (3-beat) patterns. It may take a while for you to become comfortable with the “2-against-3” feel, but once you’ve got it, the rhythms easily fall into place. (Listening to the SoundCloud clip should help you to get the feel/understand the rhythms.)

The arrangement also includes frequent changes of meter. The underlying pulse should remain constant throughout: the quarter note should equal 140 beats per minute whether you are in 3/4, 4/4, or 6/8. Note that there are no pauses between sections. The transitions from one section/meter to the next are direct segues, without pauses or tempo changes. Work to make these transitions as seamless as possible. (Again, playing along with the SoundCloud clip may prove helpful in this regard.)

Technical considerations:

Both 1st and 2nd mandolin parts utilize broken chords (arpeggios) at various points in the arrangement: measures 1-16 (2nd mando), 25-40 (2nd mando), 69-84 (1st mando), and 105-112 (2nd mando). Each section involves a specific picking (or cross-picking) pattern.

In each of these sections, allow the notes within the chord – whether open strings or fretted notes – to ring as long as possible. You want to maximize the instrument’s resonance. In many instances, patterns involve open D, A, and/or E strings with fretted notes (usually a descending bass line) on the G string. You want to keep the fretted notes ringing as long as possible (along with the open string notes). You don’t want the fretted notes to get lost in the midst of so many resonating open strings. Work to maintain an evenness of sound across the notes in the picking pattern.

Note the following:

1. Throughout the arrangement, slur markings are used for only one purpose: to indicate pull-offs. All of these are F-to-E pull-offs on the E-string. `
2. Some picking/cross-picking patterns make use of repeated notes – specifically low D’s – on adjacent strings. For example, in measure 49, the first note (D) is played on the 7th fret of the G string, and the 2nd note (D) is played open on the D string.
3. During the 4/4 section (beginning at measure 57), the 2nd mandolin part strums a four-note chord on the 1st beat of the measure. The open A and E strings ring, while quarter note double-stops are played on the D and G strings (open D and E or F on the G string).
4. Tremolo should be used only where indicated (i.e. only in the 1st mandolin part in measures 85-87).

If you choose to learn/perform this piece, I hope you enjoy it.

I have also arranged this piece for full mandolin ensemble/orchestra. The arrangement is available upon request. If you are interested in performing this with your group (or if you have any questions about the duet version) please e-mail me at marklinkins64@gmail.com.

Mark is the music director of the Munier Mandolin & Guitar Orchestra, and he performs with the Philadelphia Mandolin Ensemble and Syacmore Muse, a mandolin and guitar duo. He enjoys arranging and composing works for mandolin orchestra. Mark studied double bass at the Philadelphia College of Performing Arts.

Variations on an Ancient Irish Theme for Two Mandolins

Mark Linkins

$\text{♩} = 140$

Mandolin

Mandolin

mp *mf*

V etc. V

7

Mdn.

Mdn.

mf *mp*

13

Mdn.

Mdn.

f *mf*

19

Mdn.

Mdn.

26

Mdn.

Mdn.

32

Mdn. *mp* *mf*

Mdn. *mf* *mp*

38

Mdn. *f*

Mdn. *mf*

44

Mdn.

Mdn.

7 0 0 # 6 0 0

50

Mdn.

Mdn.

5 0 0 4 0 0

55

Mdn.

Mdn. Etc.

f *mp* *f* *mp*

61

Mdn. *f*

Mdn. *mf*

64

Mdn.

Mdn.

67

Mdn.

mf

Mdn.

mp

71

Mdn.

Mdn.

76

Mdn.

mp

mf

Mdn.

80

Mdn.

Mdn.

84

Mdn.

mf

Mdn.

mp

87

Mdn.

Mdn.

90

Mdn.

Mdn.

94

Mdn.

Mdn.

99

Mdn.

Mdn.

102

Mdn.

Mdn.

106

Mdn.

Mdn.

112

Mdn. *f*

Mdn. *mf*

118

Mdn. *ff*

Mdn. *f*

124

Mdn.

Mdn.

The Basics Under the Microscope: Revisiting Keith Harris, *The Mandolin Game*, Part Three: Games G-L

by Robert A. Margo

This is Part Three 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 Parts One and Two introduce the book and discuss the first six chapters, or “Games”. In this Part, I describe and comment on Games G-L. My discussion is intended to acquaint the reader with the contents and is not a substitute for an in-depth, hands-on study of the book itself, along with similar close study of Harris’s related articles in the CMSA *Journal*.² As previously, I refer to the book by the acronym “TMG”.

Game G

The activity covered in Games G-L is “stopping,” the term that Harris uses for what the left hand normally does when notes are sounded on a fretted instrument that are not open strings.³ Game G begins by observing that the left hand must do three things in stopping – stop the correct note; use just the right amount of force; and make any necessary movements instantaneously (“in no time”) before playing the note. Game G is about the first two activities: stopping reliably, meaning that the correct note is played; and stopping “cleanly,” meaning there are no extraneous noises and the note is in tune.

Harris outlines a multi-step protocol using the note F# at the fourth fret of the D string stopped by the second finger as his example.⁴ The left hand first makes a “claw” shape; the second finger is placed at the proper fret without pressure; and the thumb does not (as yet) touch the neck. A down stroke at this point produces a noticeable thud – obviously, the note is not (yet) clean. Gradually the player increases the finger pressure until the note sounds good. Next, the thumb is placed on the back of the neck, either straight or (more typically) hyper-extended. Pressure is then transferred from the finger to the thumb so that a balance is struck. At no point in the process does the left hand support the neck and, as much as possible, the player is asked to cultivate using the weight of the left arm – gravity – to assist in stopping. In the last step of the protocol, the player alternates between stopping and unstopping without looking at the left hand.

Games H – K

Games H – K are titled “Towards an Optimal Use of the Left Hand: Parts I-IV” in four parts. Keeping the left hand entirely stable wherever it happens to be on the fingerboard, the goal is to be able to stop cleanly and reliably all notes that may be needed, with finger movements only.

Game H starts with the second finger on F# on the D string. The mandolinist alternates between F# and G, the latter stopped with the third finger. This is done with

and without the thumb, in various combinations, the goal being to keep the left hand stable such that only the fingers move. The object of Games I and J is the fourth finger, separately (in Game I) and in combination with the third (Game J). In Game K, all four fingers are used, alternating the various notes between F on the D string, played with the first finger; and A flat on the D string, played with the fourth finger.

In performing the exercises the mandolinist is asked to carefully observe two “rules of thumb” stated at the end of Game J. First, if one is going from a lower to a higher note, the lower note remains stopped while the higher note is stopped. Second, in going from a higher to a lower note, the lower note should already be stopped when the finger is raised (unstopped) from the higher note.⁵

Game L

Game L is directed at banishing extraneous noises. The activities of stopping the note (F#, on the D string) and plucking it are done ultra-slowly but deliberately at the “wrong” times so that extraneous noises are produced as the outcome. Once the player understands why the noises occur, the player adjusts – again, ultra-slowly – until the note is sounded cleanly.

Discussion

Games G- L are excellent examples of four key virtues of TMG. The first is that Harris takes great care in defining terms clearly and using them consistently – for example, “stopping” versus “fingering”. The second is in developing protocols in which the player consciously and very deliberately makes a mistake – for example, an unwanted or extraneous noise – and in doing so, uncovering the reasons why. Third, whether Harris is interested in having the player make a mistake or produce a good result, the instructions for doing so are detailed, methodical, and sequential – if one does exactly as one is told, you will get the outcome that Harris is seeking.⁶

Fourth, and perhaps most important in my view, the discussion in TMG is not bound by mandolin “tradition” but rather by outcomes – what works in practice vs. what doesn’t. This distinction is based primarily on Harris having taken the trouble to develop a rigorous understanding of the proper physiological mechanics and the most effective way to teach the necessary skills, always drawing on his long experience as a player, teacher, and as a conductor of amateur plucked string ensembles.

The orientation of the left hand towards the fingerboard is a case in point. The orientation described in TMG is essentially the same as taught to classical guitarists and

The Basics Under the Microscope: Revisiting Keith Harris, *The Mandolin Game*, Part Three: Games G-L

(continued from page 20)

lutenists. So, too, are the ideas that one should use the weight of the arm to aid in stopping notes; that the left hand does not support the neck of the instrument; and that there needs to be a balance of forces between fingers and thumb. In recent years, much attention has also been paid in guitar circles towards minimizing and eliminating unwanted sounds, historically a major problem in guitar performance.

Yet, in my personal experience, these ideas are not part of common pedagogy in classical mandolin. Instead, mandolinists are taught from day one that the instrument is “different” from the guitar or the lute. For example, on the mandolin, proper left hand orientation allegedly should mimic the violin; instead of the left wrist being (more or less) parallel to the fretboard, it should instead be twisted towards the headstock (that is, at an angle). This might be a good idea if the mandolin were held up to the chin like the violin, but it is not. The importance of using gravity in stopping is never mentioned – certainly, it never was to me -- and consequently, mandolinists often use too much pressure in stopping or else push the string to the side, either of can cause the note to be out of tune. The two rules of thumb in Game J are also widely ignored. For example, when playing a descending line on a given string the typical mandolinist will stop the next note just before it is to be played, rather than prepare in advance (the second rule of thumb). This produces an audible choppiness so ubiquitous in mandolin performance that a listener might be forgiven in thinking that it was inherent

in the instrument or its technique, when most definitely neither is the case.

In the next Part of this series, I will focus on Games M – T.

(Endnotes)

1 I thank Keith Harris for helpful comments.

2 In other words, as with any book review, if you are intrigued by the discussion and don't already own a copy of TMG, you can order the English-language version from Trekel's website; the direct link is <http://trekel.de/de/22880-themandolingame.html>

3 Harris reserves the word “fingering” for the choice of which finger(s) to stop which note(s). Fingering is discussed in Games U-Z in TMG and in greater length in Harris' ongoing series of articles in the *CMSA Journal*.

4 The claw shape is illustrated on p. 37 and thumb placement on p. 39, both very helpful diagrams.

5 The second rule of thumb is a good illustration of the importance of preparing for what comes next in advance when playing the mandolin, an idea that figures prominently throughout TMG.

6 Or, as one of Harris's European students puts it: “You are the only one who again and again leads us to the real issue and analyses the problem on the mandolin exactly. And the most important thing: you do this in such a way that we students can accept it, and can also make the necessary changes!”

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+49-176 800 22 531 (cellphone)



Which Finger?

Installment 22

by Keith Harris

A New Year Present

The real truth is that I'm running late with lots of things at the moment, including the next installment for the Journal series "Which Finger". Sorry!

Instead of a real article such as I usually write, here's a little arrangement I did as a New Year present for my internet students. I hope you might enjoy it. There are really two slightly different arrangements – one is for mandolin (can also be played on octave mandola) and the other is for alto mandola.

In the spirit of this series though – where the discussion is often really a sort of "thinking aloud" – I'd like to let you in on some of my thoughts when doing the arrangement.

1. I considered how elaborate it should be, and decided it should be a bit of accessible holiday fun, meaning interesting, but not too challenging. For most of my students, except some who are just starting out, it should be a chance to apply technical things they've already dealt with. I know this may not be the case with everybody though.
2. Then there was the consideration about how much *technical advice* I should add. In fact, I think most of my students would have used fingering and stroking pretty much as I've suggested anyway. Looked at in that light, there is much too much in the way of technical advice.
3. But then, having been brought up myself in the traditional system of positions, fingering expectations and so on, I think I can anticipate pretty much how lots of players who are not my students would play the notes. As I now emphatically believe this is not the best way to do things, I nervously and pedantically indicated often where I believe an open string works better than a stopped note, or a certain non-standard fingering would be better. I know I wouldn't have to convince my own students of such things, and on the contrary, I expect they'll rather be surprised at the conservatism of this edition.

If Journal readers have friends who take lessons with me, please ask my students about anything which seems odd to you, and I'm sure they'll be happy to talk about it.

I suggest you print the music out twice. On one copy, please feel free to write in your own fingering, stroking, etc. and use the other copy to compare your ideas with mine. Lots of things should be familiar to regular followers of this series.

Happy New Year!

Keith Harris – currently in Australia for the holiday season.

About Keith Harris: He gave his first major European solo concert in London's Wigmore Hall in 1980 and his first major Asian concert in Tokyo's ABC Hall a year later. Germany has been his base since 1979, but he has taught, played and conducted wherever in the world the mandolin is popular. From 1986-1998 he was music director for the BDZ in the German state of Hesse, and from 1990-1998 lecturer in Mandolin (as a major) at the Music University in Heidelberg. Multiple sclerosis stopped him playing in 1990, but not teaching and conducting. Summer 2010 has seen him holding masterclasses and seminars in Japan, Australia and Scotland, for example.

Through his friendship with Norman Levine, he was instrumental in the planning and establishment of the CMSA and he has conducted the CMSA Convention orchestra several times. He has performed and taught widely all over the USA.

Of his book *The Mandolin Game* (pub. Trekel, Hamburg, in both English and German), the famous Russian domra player Tamara Volskaya wrote: "We have never had anything like it. It is essential for every mandolin player, and in fact for anybody who plays a plucked string instrument."

He is both outspoken and free-thinking on mandolin-related matters.

He has published numerous arrangements and compositions for plucked string ensemble and solo mandolin, and contributes regularly to journals concerned with the instrument and its music.

cont.

Which Finger? Installment 22

Auld Lang Syne

Arr. Keith David Harris
©2016

Mandolin

Mandolin sheet music for 'Auld Lang Syne' in G major, 4/4 time. The score consists of four staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The music features a mix of eighth and quarter notes, with various fingering numbers (0, 1, 2, 3, 4) and accents (V) above the notes. The second staff continues the melody, including a triplet of eighth notes. The third staff shows a change in the bass line with a 3/4 time signature. The fourth staff concludes the piece with a final chord and a fermata.

Auld Lang Syne

arr. Keith David Harris
© 2016

Alto Mandola

Alto Mandola sheet music for 'Auld Lang Syne' in G major, 4/4 time. The score consists of four staves of music. The first staff begins with an alto clef (C4), a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The music features a mix of eighth and quarter notes, with various fingering numbers (0, 1, 2, 3, 4) and accents (V) above the notes. The second staff continues the melody, including a triplet of eighth notes. The third staff shows a change in the bass line with a 3/4 time signature. The fourth staff concludes the piece with a final chord and a fermata.

Now Online:

Now Online: Workshop Video of

“The Care & Feeding of the Modern Mandolin Orchestra”

<https://classicalmandolinsociety.org/members/video-library/>

At the Philadelphia convention **Beverly & Mark Davis** did a reprise of their presentation on “*The Care & Feeding of the Modern Mandolin Orchestra*”. If you weren’t able to attend, you can now listen to it at home over a cup of coffee. You can also download either the course outline, or the accompanying slide presentation. The topics touched on in this workshop have relevance for every member of CMSA. During this workshop, it was suggested by several people that CMSA host a discussion forum on its website. The topics discussed in the forum would be loosely based on the workshop content, all of which was geared towards creating and maintaining a flourishing community of mandolin orchestras across the continent. A discussion forum would provide CMSA members with a year-round opportunity to pose questions, share experiences or learn from others who have wrestled with the same problems in their own orchestras. Watch for a future announcement about a discussion forum.

Our thanks to Beverly & Mark for allowing us to videotape their workshop, and to Michael Tognetti for compiling the finished product.

Orchestra News

The Kalamazoo Mandolin & Guitar Orchestra will be hosting Brian Oberlin and Evan Marshall for a concert on Saturday, May 20th and workshops on Sunday, May 21st. We welcome CMSA members to join us for the concert and workshops. For more information and to register for workshops please email us at administrator@kalamando.com



CMSA Acknowledges New Lifetime Members:

Richard Rava - Redwood City, CA
Stephen Puckett - Hillsville, VA
Judith A. Fallat - Morris Plains, NJ
**Kevin Metzger & Malgosia Drabowicz -
Redondo Beach CA**

**DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS TO THE
NEXT JOURNAL IS APRIL 1st
PLEASE SEND SUBMISSIONS TO:
CMSAJournal@gmail.com**

Snowshoer's Reel

Evelyn's Mandolin Book

Arr. E. Tiffany-Castiglioni

Traditional French-Canadian

The musical score is arranged in four systems, each containing three staves: Melody, Descant, and Harmony. The key signature is D Major (two sharps) and the time signature is common time (C). The score includes guitar chords (D, A7, Em) and measure numbers (5, 9, 13) indicating the start of new phrases. The melody and descant lines are written in treble clef, while the harmony line is in bass clef. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Mandolin Orchestras - North America

The following orchestras have registered with the CMSA

Atlanta Mandolin Orchestra
 Aurora Mandolin Orchestra
 Austin Mandolin Orchestra
 Baltimore Mandolin Orchestra
 Bloomfield Mandolin Orchestra
 Boston Mandolins
 Dayton Mandolin Orchestra
 Denver Mandolin Orchestra
 Enigmatica - Providence, RI
 Florida Mandolin Orchestra
 Gravenstein Mandolin Ensemble - Sebastopol, CA
 Kalamazoo Mandolin & Guitar Orchestra
 Las Vegas Mandoliers
 Long Island Mandolin & Guitar Orchestra
 Louisville Mandolin Orchestra
 Mandoleers - Arlington, VA
 Mandolin Consort of Atlanta
 Mandolin Orchestra of Niagara
 Mandolin Orchestra of Northwest Arkansas
 Mandolinata

Mandophonics
 Melodious Mandolins
 Milwaukee Mandolin Orchestra
 Minnesota Mandolin Orchestra
 Munier Mandolin & Guitar Orchestra
 New American Mandolin Ensemble
 New Expressions Mandolin Orchestra
 New York Mandolin Orchestra
 Oregon Mandolin Orchestra
 Orpheus Mandolin Orchestra
 Philadelphia Mandolin & Guitar Ensemble
 Pittsburgh Mandolin Orchestra
 Preville Mandolin & Guitar Orchestra
 Providence Mandolin Orchestra
 Regina Mandolin Orchestra
 San Diego Mandolin Orchestra
 San Francisco Mandolin Orchestra
 Sarasota Mandolin Orchestra
 Seattle Mandolin Orchestra
 Toronto Mandolin Orchestra

To be added to this list contact Mandolin Journal editor Jackie Zito at cmsajournal@gmail.com

THANK YOU FOR RENEWING!

Please send membership dues for January 1, 2017 - December 31, 2017

To: Classical Mandolin Society of America, 3925 30th Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55406-3108

Dues: *Single Membership:* \$35 per year U.S. currency
Household Membership:* \$35 plus \$10 for each additional member of a household.
Lifetime Single Membership: \$300
Lifetime Household: \$300 + \$125 for each additional household member

**The same privileges will be afforded each member, but one Journal will be sent.
 Join or rejoin now. A tax deductible contribution would be appreciated.*

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CMSA Mandolin Journal

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