

Guitarist

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Sundin Hall Concerts An Exciting New Season Begins!



Lucas Harris, baroque lute
Saturday, September 29

Berta Rojas, classical guitar
Saturday, October 27



Also In This Issue...

News and Notes about OpenStage,
Local Artists concerts, and more

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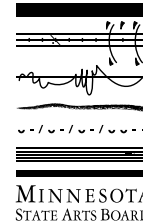
To promote the guitar, in all its stylistic and cultural diversity, through our newsletter and through our sponsorship of public forums, concerts, and workshops.

To commission new music and to aid in its promotion, publication, and recording.

To serve as an educational and social link between amateur and professional guitarists and the community.

To promote and help create opportunities for Minnesota guitarists and players of related instruments.

The Minnesota Guitar Society concert season is co-sponsored by Sundin Hall. This activity is made possible in part by a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board, through an appropriation by the Minnesota State Legislature and a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. Matching funds have been provided by General Mills, AT&T, and Ameriprise Financial.



NATIONAL
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To reserve tickets for any Sundin Hall concert, call our phone line at 612-677-1151 and leave a message.

*As a member of the Minnesota Guitar Society, you receive ticket discounts on all MGS-sponsored events, a year's subscription to the Guitarist and the opportunity to place free classifieds in each issue. To join the Minnesota Guitar Society, please fill out the information on this coupon and mail it to: **Minnesota Guitar Society, P.O. Box 14986, Minneapolis, MN 55414***

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Concert Spotlight: Lucas Harris

Lucas Harris: Rising Star of the Lute

by Annett Richter

On Saturday, September 29th, the Minnesota Guitar Society will feature Lucas Harris from Toronto, a young, up-and-coming lutenist, for the opening concert of our 2007–08 Sundin Hall season. We are excited to be bringing Harris here for the first time, and contacted him this summer by email to learn more about his background and plans for the concert.

Interview with Lucas Harris

AR: Lucas, tell us about the repertoire and lute you will play on September 29th.

LH: I'll be bringing one of my two Baroque lutes, a "bass rider" style thirteen-course lute by Michael Schreiner (after Hans Frei), and presenting a mostly or all German eighteenth-century program. The plan at the moment is to play some or all of a late sonata by Silvius Leopold Weiss, a set of pieces by David Kellner (ending with his extended Chaconne in A major), and a sonata by Bernard Joachim Hagen. If time permits, I may add some other short works, maybe some French lute pieces by Jacques Gallot. I'm really enthusiastic about the concert and honored to have the opportunity.

AR: This sounds like a very exciting evening of music by some of the most prolific lutenists of the High Baroque. What drew you to these composers?

LH: I have loved Weiss and Kellner since hearing them transcribed for classical guitar as a teenager (I'm thinking of a recording I used to have of Bach/Kellner transcriptions by the German guitarist Hubert Käppel and a Weiss recording by Eliot Fisk). There is so much sophistication and invention in how these two composers use the instrument, and yet it all fits under the fingers in such a natural and satisfying way.

Hagen's music has interested me a lot since I performed one of his lute concertos a couple of years ago on my CBC radio recital (the lute soloist is accompanied by a muted string quartet). Hagen's compositions are the closest analogue we have in the lute/guitar world to the spooky clavichord sonatas of C. P. E. Bach—it's really from that bizarre pre-classical period, the period of the lute's final swan song before its decline. Many people think the lute was already long gone by that point.

AR: It is often the case that lutenists make their start in the plucky world through the guitar. Was this true for you, and if so, when and how did you get to the lute? And who were your teachers?

LH: I'm absolutely a guitarist at heart. I played equal amounts of jazz and classical guitar throughout my musically formative teen years (and would continue both even now if I had the time). I started to play the lute during my undergraduate years at Pomona College, without a teacher at first (though my classical guitar teacher Jack Sanders was very supportive). After Pomona, I finally got some regular lessons for a year in Milan, Italy, with Paul Beier (I was one of the first scholars of the Marco Fodella Foundation, which is run by the parents of a talented young Italian lutenist who tragically died at age 26). I then studied for a year with two of the finest continuo players anywhere at the Hochschule in Bremen, Germany—lutenist Stephen Stubbs and early harpist Andrew Lawrence King. I moved back to the U.S. after that and have been having periodic lessons with guitar/lute guru Pat O'Brien in New York for the past eight years. I still go to see Pat whenever I can get to New York in spite of how much it humbles me. I wish that more professional musicians continued to take lessons. How can we keep improving if we no longer get any external analysis of our playing?

AR: Yes, indeed, the learning process is indefinite for each of us, regardless of what we play.

Lucas Harris *continued on p. 4*

2007-2008 Sundin Hall Season

Sat. Sept. 29th, Lucas Harris

Sat. Oct. 27th, Berta Rojas

Fri. Nov. 16th, Michael Chapdelaine

Fri. Dec. 7th, Flamenco Guitarathon

Fri. Jan. 18th, Lily Afshar

Sat. Feb. 23th, Le Trio Joubran

Fri. Mar. 14th, Thomas Viloteau

Sat. April 5th, Paulo Bellinati &
Monica Salmaso

Sat. May 17th, Classical Guitarathon

For tickets, call (612) 677-1151.

Lucas Harris Masterclass

Co-sponsored by the Twin Cities Lute Cooperative
and the Minnesota Guitar Society

Sunday, Sept. 30th, 2 to 4 pm

Olivet Congregational Church,
1850 Iglehart Ave., St. Paul

For lutenists or guitarists (you are welcome
to play modern instruments)

Soloists, duos, ensembles, all welcome

\$40.00 for performers;

suggested donation \$10.00 for auditors

Limit of 4 performers

To register or for more information, call 651-699-1808.

Lucas Harris Interview

Harris, *continued from p. 3*

You are very active as both a solo lutenist and a continuo player in early music ensembles and distinguished Baroque orchestras such as Tafelmusik. Both venues are demanding on practice time. How do you divide your time between the two? Does your performance schedule more or less set those priorities or do you maintain both types of repertoire on a continuous basis?

LH: To make sure I get enough time at home, I try to get my Tafelmusik and Toronto Consort dates set for the year, and then fit other engagements in between. Often I'm lucky and end up with a healthy mix of solo playing, chamber music, orchestral and opera gigs, teaching and directing.

To be really truthful, I think that in the last couple of years I have finally arrived at a point where I don't have to practice my continuo parts too much, at least not real practicing with a lute in my hands. My preparation time is often better spent doing other things such as putting extra figures into the music, organizing page turns, reading the texts and translations if it is vocal music, making sure the instrument I'm going to use has good strings and frets and is set up well. Since I get to invent my own part, I often need the inspiration of being with the whole ensemble anyway to know how I want to shape my accompaniment, so I experiment and learn the music in rehearsal.

Solo playing for me is the other extreme: I need as much practice time as I can get with the instrument in my hands. I feel it's very useful to keep up my solo playing to some extent since it's so much better for my technique than continuo playing (compare painting a miniature portrait to painting a house!). So I'll throw some solos into the suitcase for whatever instrument I'm bringing to a continuo gig.

AR: Who and what inspired you to get into continuo playing and what part of your jazz background do you find particularly useful for accompanying Baroque music from bass lines and figures?

LH: When I first heard about basso continuo, I was immediately interested because of my background in jazz harmony. It seemed that continuo playing was a lot like "comping chords" in jazz, but using a different notation. Another similarity is that the notation works for any chordal instrument, allowing the player to invent a part that uses the resources of a certain instrument. Just like in jazz where you can use any combination of piano, guitar, vibraphone, Hammond organ, etc., for improvising from the same chord symbols on a lead sheet, so you can use any combination of lute, theorbo, Baroque guitar, harp, positive organ, harpsichord, etc., in the Baroque for improvising from the same figured bass.

I always liked doing lots of chamber music with classical guitar, but I was often frustrated that there isn't more chamber repertoire with guitar by the most famous composers. When I realized that almost all Baroque chamber music is continuo-based, I realized that there was this enormous body of literature that could include the lute by all the great Baroque masters: Monteverdi, Purcell, Scarlatti, Bach,

Handel, and so on. When I also came to understand that continuo playing was not so much about filling in missing information that the composer hadn't bothered to specify but rather about improvising a multicolored accompaniment inspired by the rhetoric of the music and the interpretation of the soloist, I was hooked. It completely changed my whole concept of music (not only Baroque!).

There were a lot of lutenists whose recordings and coaching got me going in the first year or two: Nigel North (especially his continuo instruction book and his recording of Corelli's op. 5 with Monica Huggett), Stephen Stubbs (especially the early recordings of his group Tragicomedia), Paul O'Dette, and Scott Pauley (a fellow Pomona graduate).

AR: Renaissance lute, Baroque lute, Renaissance guitar, Baroque guitar, archlute, and theorbo—all of those are plucked instruments in your extremely versatile bag of tricks (any I forgot?). Which instruments do you use for continuo playing and how do the repertoire and your knowledge of historically informed performance practice dictate whether you play, for example, a theorbo, an archlute, or a Baroque guitar? And what is your secret in keeping up with practicing them all?

LH: There are just a couple more instruments to add: I also play the wire-strung bandora and English cittern a little bit. And also the early classical guitar! (Norbert Kraft has recently loaned me his ca. 1800 French guitar for a Giuliani project and a Boccherini project).

Whenever it's possible, I try to use the most historically appropriate instrument I own for a given repertoire (i.e., for a certain national style from a given period): Renaissance lute for a Dowland song, Baroque guitar for a Spanish villancico or an Italian canzonetta, theorbo for early Italian Baroque, archlute for Handel and other late Italianate music, d-minor Baroque lute for Bach and other eighteenth-century German composers, etc. Sometimes I get into trouble when playing mixed programs, since I can only schlep/tune two or three of these beasts with me at a time (I sometimes play with a sort of "punk" early music group in Toronto called *I furiosi* that does themed programs that mix all of these repertoires back to back, and I never know what instrument to bring!). In most cases the "correct" instrument also feels like the "right" tool to create an accompaniment within the sound world of a given Baroque style or genre.

I have to admit that I feel spread thin at times. I don't really want to be somebody who plays a dozen instruments but none of them really well. I would rather specialize and dig more deeply into fewer repertoires and own fewer (but better) instruments, but that doesn't seem to be what the groups I work for need right now. I think they need somebody who is available to play any repertoire or instrument and who has really good ensemble skills and flexibility.

AR: You recently moved to Toronto. Aside from your activities with Tafelmusik, Canada's period instrument orchestra, do you find Toronto an exciting place to be as a lutenist? What other early music performance venues does this city

Harris, *continued on p. 6*

Concert Spotlight: Berta Rojas

First Minnesota Appearance for Classical Virtuoso

The second concert of our Sundin Hall season, on Saturday, October 27th, brings Paraguayan-born classical guitarist Berta Rojas to Minnesota for the



Berta Roja (photo above and cover photo by Javier Valdez - Paraguay)

first time. Her concert here is scheduled between appearances in New Orleans at Tulane University and in Asunción, Paraguay, a schedule that reflects the widespread acclaim her playing receives, and the wide range of influences in her music.

The program for her concert is an example of the breadth and depth of her musicianship. Rojas plans to play a wonderful mix of well-loved classical favorites and lesser-known gems of the repertoire, several of which are her own published arrangements.

Berta Rojas is a musician who easily moves from classical to other musical genres. Whether working in collaboration, as with the legendary Brazilian guitarist Carlos Barbosa-Lima, or as a soloist, Rojas has captivated music lovers in the Americas, Europe, and Asia. Most notably, she has appeared at both the Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall and the Frederick P. Rose Hall, home of Jazz at Lincoln Center in New York. Her performances at Washington DC's John F. Kennedy Center and the South Bank Centre in London sold out in advance. In 1995 and 2005 she opened the International First Ladies Summit in Paraguay, the first one with special guest Hillary Rodham Clinton.

She has been praised by the *Washington Post* as a "guitarist extraordinaire." Her musicianship and cordiality have made her a favorite at the renowned John Marlow Guitar Series in Washington DC. The Kennedy Center has recognized Rojas's artistic excellence and selected her as a Fellow of the Americas for the Performing Arts. This award, as well as a grant by the Organization of American States, allowed

her to earn a Masters Degree in Music from Baltimore's prestigious Peabody Conservatory. While there, she was awarded the Zaidee Thomas Award and a Harold Randolph Prize.

She has released four CDs, including 2006's *Cielo Abierto*. Two new discs were recorded in 2007, both collaborations. Rojas and Carlos Barbosa-Lima recorded a CD titled *Alma y Corazon* (Heart and Soul) featuring mostly Brazilian and Paraguayan music. They first performed together in the United States at the International Conservatory of Music John E. Marlow Guitar Series in Washington, DC, in October 2005. Rojas and guitarist Juan Cancio Barreto recorded a new CD called *Flores de Asunción* (Flowers of Asunción) devoted to Paraguayan music. The duo started performing together in 2001 and their first album sold over 23,000 copies in Paraguay.

Beyond her musical talents, Rojas is committed to supporting South American artists. She has produced a series of concerts in the U.S. that feature folk music played by Latin artists. In addition, she has served as Artistic Director to several South American competitions including the Agustín Barrios International Festival, the City of Asunción Music Competition, and, currently, the Cardozo Ocampo Competition. For her contributions to cultural life, she was honored as the Personality of the Year 2000 in the magazine *Cartelera*. In October 2004, Paraguay's Minister of Tourism, Evanhy de Gallegos, named Rojas Paraguay's Ambassador of Tourism.

This year, Berben in Italy published Rojas's arrangements of Paraguayan music, including "Navidad" by Lobito Martinez, "La Balada del Indio" by Ismael Ledesma, and "La Jornada" by Juan Manuel Acevedo. Berta Rojas is an adjunct professor of guitar at George Washington University in Washington, DC.

Join us on Saturday, October 27th at 8 pm in Sundin Hall for a great concert!

Directions to Sundin Hall on the Hamline U. Campus

From I-94, head north on Snelling Avenue in St. Paul, past University Avenue to Hewitt Avenue. Turn right, Sundin Hall is on your left, a half-block east of Snelling. Free parking is available one block past the hall, in lots off Hewitt (on your right) or off Pascal (1 block north).

Rojas Concert Program

"El ultimo Canto" by Agustín Barrios

Preludes #2-4 by Heitor Villa-Lobos

Three Paraguayan Pieces:

"Navidad" by Jorge "Lobito" Martinez

"Renacer" by Oscar Cardozo Ocampo

"Balada del Indio" by Ismael Ledesma

"Mother" and "Run I, II" by Byeoung Woo Lee

"Invierno Porteno" by Astor Piazzolla

"Cielo Abierto" by Quique Sinesi

And more by Agustín Barrios:

Waltz Op 8 No 3 and 4 Andante Religioso

"Las Abejas" Allegro Solemne

"La Catedral" "Maxixe"

Preludio Saudade

Lucas Harris Interview

Harris, *continued from p. 4*

offer and have you been involved in bringing some of those to life yourself?

LH: I've been in Toronto for three and a half years now, and I love it (we just bought our first house there). Aside from Tafelmusik, I also work in Toronto for the Toronto Consort, Opera Atelier, *Ifuriosi*, Toronto Chamber Choir, Scaramella, and Baroque Music Beside the Grange. I'm also in the middle of a three-CD project with viola d'amore specialist Tom Georgi (we record in Stockholm, Sweden for the BIS label). I also work in Montréal a fair amount for groups like Les voix humaines, Arion, Masques, and Les voix Baroques. Many people in the U.S. don't realize how strong the music scenes (especially the early music scenes) are in those two fantastic Canadian cities. I actually had twice as much work in Toronto as in New York and Boston combined, and that was before I moved. I'm now a permanent resident of Canada and basically plan to stay there (my partner Geneviève Gilardeau is a superb Baroque violinist and a core member of Tafelmusik, which is one of the only full-time jobs in early music on this continent).

Since there are already many Baroque ensembles in Toronto, I decided not to start another one but rather to launch the Toronto Continuo Collective. The ToCC is a student continuo band (lutes, theorbos, guitars, Baroque harp, viola da gamba, and harpsichord/organ) that works with guest soloists (mostly professional singers and violinists I gig with) to learn the art of seventeenth-century accompaniment. It is such fun to play in a huge pluck band! It's a sister organization to the New York Continuo Collective that I used to teach for. I hope there will be a continuo collective in every city one day. Why isn't there one yet in the Twin Cities, Annett???

AR: Well... you are definitely on to something here. We have many wonderful and experienced lutenists in the Twin Cities, so we really have no excuse! A continuo collective here would create a new and unique musical community and foster new collaborations among early music artists. My own continuo work with vocalists Linh Kauffman and Dawn Sonntag has been an inspiring avenue for studying baroque accompaniment on the lute, and there is certainly much room to grow.

What are some of the challenges you face when playing a plucked instrument in a large ensemble and how do you deal with changes in period tuning and temperament depending on what group you play with?

LH: Cutting through big ensembles is always tough. I do it partly by playing close to the bridge and by using right-hand fingernails, but more importantly I simply try to play with a lot of volume and confidence (my goal is to contribute as an "inside" member of an ensemble rather than to "pluck along" with it). One challenge I face is that I often get placed on a different part of the stage from the harpsichordist/organist. The keyboard player is like my "stand partner" in the continuo section, and my favorite place to sit is actually

right beside them, even reading over their shoulder (this is where the lutenist was often placed in eighteenth-century orchestras, which meant that they saved the trouble/cost of making another part, plus the two players had really good contact and could help each other with page turns).

As for tuning, I try to keep my instruments at a comfortable stringing for $a'=415$ (where I most often play), so they can go up to $a'=440$ or down to $a'=392$ without excessive restringing to adjust the tension. I usually set my frets most often to 1/6-comma meantone, which matches most of my open strings at least to many keyboard tuning systems. Occasionally I play in 1/4-comma or 1/5-comma meantone for earlier seventeenth-century music, or equal temperament if I'm playing with a modern instrument group (i.e., I did some Bach and Handel last year with the Orchestre Symphonique de Montreal as well as the Boston Symphony Orchestra). Having multiple instruments (including two theorbos) sometimes helps with the problem of working at different pitch levels simultaneously. I can also re-temper my frets pretty quickly now using a well-tuned keyboard or a tuning machine. I can actually do it visually now since I shove frets around all the time when moving from sharp keys to flat keys. I have a visual sense of where the frets lie in various temperaments.

AR: As a lute and continuo student of yours, I know that a wonderful addition to your professional life has been your joining of the faculty at the annual Baroque Performance Institute at Oberlin Conservatory where you are in charge of directing a staged opera scene project. Tell us a little bit about the lute/continuo class you lead at Oberlin and what you enjoy most about teaching at this summer institute.

LH: As you know, Annett, I've been teaching at BPI for six summers now and working as hard as I can to increase the size and experience level of the lute class. The student Baroque ensembles at BPI are always hungry to have good plucked continuo! The morning lute class usually gets split into masterclass time and continuo time where we do figured bass "calisthenics" or invite guest soloists to accompany. A wonderful thing about pluck bands is that players of different levels can easily play together—the stronger players carry the group while the less experienced ones grab whatever they can and learn quickly "on the job."

I'm really happy that Oberlin Conservatory has now taken possession of a brand new Baroque guitar and theorbo (both by Michael Schreiner) to augment their huge existing collection of period instruments that are available to students at BPI as well as students who attend the conservatory during the year. There will be at least one more new lute coming to Oberlin in the future, so please spread the word about BPI, especially to classical guitarists who have been curious to try an early plucked instrument but need to borrow one to get started.

BPI has been around a long time and has traditionally favored more High Baroque repertoire (Bach, Handel, Telemann, etc.). I feel that one of my roles as the "young

Harris, *continued on p. 7*

The Childbloom / PMI Guitar School of St. Cloud

by *Kevin Carlson*

The Childbloom Guitar Program began over 25 years ago as a high-caliber children's guitar education system, and is now entering its third year of successful operation in central Minnesota. The program is based in Austin, Texas, and requires its directors to attend a week of training, purchase a license, and pay a monthly percentage of tuition in order to teach the specialized Childbloom system and use its graded variety of materials. By belonging to a "larger system" students are able to participate in contests and teachers are able to network with each other across the nation with a common purpose. Parents are a part of the learning process as well. They attend class, follow home practices, and are supported through recitals and monthly newsletters specific to children's guitar pedagogy.

Students begin this program between the ages of 5 and 12 as a general rule. There is company support, marketing, and a wonderful manual for teachers to "tweak" their classes from a child development perspective. Classes are very small, grouped by age mostly, and offer individual and group learning at every meeting.

Childbloom students learn to play using finger style/classical technique in much the same way as the widely practiced Suzuki system, but Childbloom seems to me as a teacher to be more user-friendly and offers students the most engaging curriculum I have ever come across.

The bulk of my studio (30 families) is made up of Childbloom students. I have about 10 committed private students of varying styles as well that are not enrolled in Childbloom.

I teach year round with plenty of pre-planned vacation time

as well. I hold several recitals and special events per year that cross over with both types of students; plus, I hold a weekly electric guitar ensemble named after the famous Tony Rizzi "Wire Choir" of the LA guitar scene of the 1970s. It is extremely rewarding as a teacher to go from group to private lessons in the course of any given day.

My school is located in downtown St. Cloud (about 45 minutes north of the Twin Cities) in the Paramount Arts District. I rent a commercial space that affords me two classrooms that I have set up to accommodate group or private lessons. One is a "quartet room" for older student groups and the other for smaller children groups and private lessons. There is a video learning/children's area apart from all this as well as a bathroom and waiting room. I have to admit that it is the personal touches, like decorating one room with famous guitar LP covers, that get me excited about teaching here. Students can check out guitar CDs and books as well.

Financial gain for teachers and value for families are immediate upon beginning this program because it is just so well thought out. You would have to work to fail at it. I easily doubled my income in the first year.

Childbloom is an incredibly exciting option in today's world of guitar pedagogy.

If you are curious about Childbloom, you can visit their website at <www.childbloom.com> or search for "Childbloom" on YouTube to see some of the guitar soloists and ensembles for yourself.

Kevin Carlson is active in the St. Cloud area as a performer and a teacher, and is a long-time MGS member.

Harris, *continued from p. 6*

guy" on the faculty has been to promote and coach seventeenth-century music. The opera scene projects started three years ago when the workshop theme was music in Venice. To my mind, the most interesting thing about Venice was that it was where the first public opera houses were opened, and I realized that the rich body of early Venetian opera wouldn't be experienced at all during the workshop unless I organized a student opera project (I figured we would do enough Vivaldi that year...). So we did two scenes from Cavalli's *La Calisto*, and I've tried to pick opera scenes since then a propos to the theme every year.

I should also mention that I have a lute class now at the Tafelmusik Baroque Summer Institute, which is another very strong two-week Baroque workshop that takes place at the University of Toronto in the first part of June (I usually head to Oberlin just after it finishes).

AR: What kinds of projects are in your plans for the next few years? Given that solo concerts on Baroque lute are a somewhat rare gem for audiences these days, what do you envision for your concert activities in the future? More solo lute or more continuo performances, or both?

LH: I'm always trying to get more Baroque lute time into my

schedule, of course! It's the lute that I play most often just for pleasure between gigs. I directed my first full Baroque opera this year, and I'd like to more of that from time to time if I get asked.

I've also realized that my favorite concert genre is the duo recital, and I have a plan to do more of those. I've already done some duo recitals with an amazing musician named Wen Zhao, who is a virtuoso of the pipa, the traditional Chinese lute. I met Wen doing an experimental Tafelmusik program that juxtaposes Vivaldi's Four Seasons with non-Western music from the eighteenth-century about nature. I'd also like to play more duos with my partner Geneviève (one of our current projects is BWV 1025, the violin/harpsichord sonata whose harpsichord part is a transcription Bach made of a Weiss lute sonata—it works as a violin/lute duo with some adjustments to Weiss's tablature). And I'll be recording a new solo CD that will include some of the repertoire I will present on the Minnesota concert.

AR: Thank you, Lucas! We look forward to hearing you in September!

Annett Richter is a member of the Minnesota Guitar Society Board of Directors, a doctoral candidate at the University of Minnesota, and an avid lutenist who has studied with Lucas Harris among others.

Local Artists Series Continues

Join us for free concerts around the metro area featuring members and friends of the Society who have donated their time and talent in support of our Society this year. Visit our website for full details. The series is co-sponsored by the U of MN guitar program and the Woodbury Park and Recreation Department. Here's what we have planned:

Local Artists Concerts

Phillip Rukavina, lute

Sunday, November 11th, 2 pm
Banfill-Locke Center for the Arts
6666 East River Rd, Fridley

**Kevin Carlson and Mike Cramer,
guitar and mandolin duo**

Sunday, January 20th, 2 pm
Woodbury Central Park Amphitheater
8595 Central Park Drive, Woodbury, MN

Paul Hintz, solo jazz guitar

Sunday, February 10th, 2 pm
Woodbury Central Park Amphitheater

U of MN Guitar Dept. "Guitarathon"

Sunday, February 24th, 2 pm
U of MN Lloyd Ultan Hall

**Brent Weaver and Annett Richter,
classical guitar duo**

Sunday, March 9th, 2 pm
Banfill-Locke Center for the Arts

Chris Olson, jazz guitar and more

Sunday, April 13th, 2 pm
Woodbury Central Park Amphitheater

Guitar Student Opportunity

Thursday Musical is once again offering two Guitar categories in its Student Section. The Thursday Musical Student Section has a reputation for counting some of the area's most highly gifted young performers among its members, and now your guitar students can be a part of this challenging and motivating group!

Last season, Thursday Musical awarded over \$17,000 in scholarship prizes. Twin Cities guitar students received more than \$2,000 of this prize money. The combined Junior High and High School Guitar category was won by David Tramm, with 2nd Place awarded to Stephen Krishnan. David and Stephen are both students of Alan Johnston. Brad Horras, a student of Jim Flegel, was awarded First Prize in the College Guitar Category. Winners of the Young Artist Competition are also offered performance opportunities at several area venues, including the Thursday Morning Artist Series at the Bloomington Center for the Arts.

Membership in the student section is a bargain at \$35, and is open to students from grade 7 through age 25. This

one fee entitles the student to perform on a student recital and to participate in the Young Artist Competition on March 1, 2008. In addition, members are welcome to attend any of the concerts given by Thursday Musical: from the Thursday Morning Artist Series, to Community Concerts, to Home Concerts. These concerts can help to further inspire young musicians, as they feature some of the finest classical performers of the Twin Cities and beyond.

Please see the Thursday Musical website <www.thursdaymusical.com> or contact Mary Goetz at 612-940-4203 or <goetzm@comcast.net> for more information or an application form.

The Lute Cafe Continues

The Lute Café is a series of casual lute concerts sponsored by the Twin Cities Lute Cooperative. It is a coffeehouse kind of setting in which the performance of live lute music is at the center of attention rather than a background experience. The series is called "Thursday at the Lute Cafe" because it takes place on the last Thursday of every month. The Cafe opened its doors last May, and the 2006-07 season included performances by some of the area's best known lutenists and early music performers. Information about the Lute Café can be found at <www.twincitieslutecoop.com> and the calendar at the MGS website, <www.mnguitar.org>. A full listing is also available at each show. There is no set charge, but a \$10 per person donation is suggested to help defray costs. Call 651-699-1808 for further information.

Upcoming Lute Cafe concerts

Thursday, September 27th, Phil Rukavina
plays early Renaissance lute music

Thursday, October 25th, Richard Griffith
plays early 17th-century lute music

Home for the Lute Café is the Village View Room in the Hillcrest Recreation Center, at 1978 Ford Parkway in St. Paul's Highland Village.

Volunteer Opportunities

We need help. Contact us at <editor@mnguitar.org> to learn more about the following opportunities (or to suggest ideas we haven't thought of yet):

1. We need help identifying and gathering contact information for community groups and media outlets that might be particularly interested in one or another of our Sundin Hall concerts.
2. We want to increase our newsletter distribution to area guitar teachers, especially those at private music schools. We need help finding and contacting these teachers and schools.
3. We need help distributing the newsletter, either with the by-car deliveries to area stores and schools, or with the bulk and subscriber mailing.

SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS!

Open Letter to Our Members (and Friends)

by Joe Haus, MGS President, and Paul Hintz, Managing Director

In July, a generous member of MGS contacted us because he noticed that, in our annual summer fundraising letter, we had “downsized” the perks given to above-average donors. Here’s the gist of how we replied:

Dear Friend,

Thanks for your email. And your support! We want to give you some background on our decision to change the benefits.

As you can imagine, our financial situation is determined by income from ticket sales, contributions, and grants, balanced against expenses.

Income is a mixed story. Ticket sales have leveled off the past two seasons. Although contributions have increased, grant money has become much harder to get. Many people have moved their charitable giving away from the arts since 9/11. This has caused increased competition for the funding sources (grants) out there. We applied for four major grants for the coming season. We only received one (from the MN State Arts Board).

At the same time, expenses and artist fees have gone up. Sundin Hall has been very good to us in many ways, but their legal counsel recommended that organizations renting the hall now have insurance. That added to our costs. By April, we were tapping the Society’s credit line with our bank to tide us over till fall.

We had a board meeting just this past Sunday. The Minnesota Guitar Society is committed to all the programs we present (the Sundin Hall series, the Local Artist series, masterclasses, the Youth Guitarathon...). We went over expenses with a fine tooth comb. We decided to raise ticket prices slightly this season and re-negotiate fees with some artists. We reduced the paid hours for our one staff person (the Managing Director) by almost 20%. Some guest artists will be housed with board members instead of at a hotel. We submitted an application for another grant, and continue to look for other sources of funding.

Unfortunately, the two season tickets for benefactors was one of the things that we felt we should cut back on. I hope you’ll continue to support the MGS. Your contributions have made a big difference. Your attendance is greatly appreciated and enjoyed. Please let us know how you think we’re doing as the season goes along!

Sincerely,

Joe and Paul

And readers, we want to hear from you, too! Talk to us at concerts, email us. Renew your membership early, at the highest level you feel appropriate. We intend to publish a list in the next newsletter, acknowledging the wonderful generosity of our members. Buy a T-shirt in the lobby at a concert! Host a fundraising dinner of guitar-loving friends, and ask one of the MGS board members to play! Bring another friend to hear our wonderful concerts! An increase of 25 people attending each concert alone would solve the financial issues that came up this year, and make sure it doesn’t recur, by making us much less dependent on unpredictable grant funding. Next spring’s Classical Guitarathon will be the 30th annual such event for the MGS. Help us make it the capstone of another stellar season by joining us each month for amazing music in a great hall. On behalf of the Board and the entire membership, thank you.

OpenStage Returns

OpenStage is a structured but informal way for guitarists of any level and any style to experience the joy of playing for each other. Begun in 2002 at the suggestion (and with the leadership) of long-time MGS member the late Dennis Burns, these events are a great way to get comfortable playing for other folks, or to try out that new piece you’ve been woodshedding. Meetings start at 3 pm on the first Sunday of each month from October through next May. This season we’ll be rotating between three different locations. Please note that the Banfill-Locke room is a strictly “unplugged” venue. Mark your calendars, and start polishing your renditions of classical, folk, and jazz favorites. Contact <editor@mnguitar.org> for more information. By the way, you’re always welcome to come and just listen—you’ll hear some great music and meet some friendly people who love the guitar just as much as you do.

OpenStage Schedule

Sun Oct 7th, Banfill-Locke Center for the Arts,
6666 E. River Rd, Fridley

Sun Nov 4th, Betsy’s Back Porch,
5447 Nicollet Ave. So., Minneapolis

Sun Dec 2nd, Audubon Coffee House,
2852 Johnson St. NE, Minneapolis

Sun Jan 6th, Betsy’s Back Porch

Sun Feb 3rd, Banfill-Locke Center for the Arts

Sun Mar 2nd, Audubon Coffee House

Sun April 6th, Betsy’s Back Porch

Sun May 4th, Audubon Coffee House

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Mary Goetz, 612-940-4203
www.thursdaymusical.com

Classified Ads

CLASSIFIED ADS are free to MGS members. Place ad by mailing (please type or print clearly) to: MGS, PO BOX 14986, Mpls, MN 55414 or by emailing to <editor@mnguitar.org>. Please limit ads to a 6-line maximum. Ads will run for a maximum of 6 issues (1 year) unless renewed. Ads are due the 15th of each odd-numbered month for the next issue.

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FOR SALE: 2005 Lance Litchfield classical guitar with travel case, \$6,000.00. Spruce top, Indian rosewood back and sides. Excellent condition. Exclusive US dealer for Australian Litchfield Guitars. Visit <www.litchfieldguitars.com> for details. Call 715-865-6068 for additional information.

FOR SALE: 10% Percent Off all in-stock Fender, Taylor, and Martin guitars when you show your MGS membership card. GuitarZone, 12763 Central Ave. NE, Blaine, 763-757-8555.

TWIN CITIES JAZZ Information! Call the Twin Cities Jazz Society JazzLine: 651-633-3134; <www.tcjs.org>.

FOR SALE: Classical guitars. 2006 Ramirez AE SP/IN \$1,500 (list \$3,200); 2006 Burguet AC-2AS SP/IN \$950 (list \$1,495); 2006 Lorient Clarita SP/IN \$1,500 (list \$1,800); Alhambra 8P SP/IN \$1,360 (list \$1,600). Call 952-322-1310.

MUSICIANSHIP: Music Theory Software ear-training, sight-reading, instrument study, rhythm at <musicgoals.com>.

FOR SALE: Artesanas Classical \$295; 1970 Fernandes Grand Concert No.40 \$850; 2005 Amalio Burguet Model 3H \$995; 1973 Garcia No.1 \$1250; 1981 Alan Chapman \$2750; 1968 Jose Ferrer \$4500; 1993 James Olson Small Jumbo Acoustic \$10,000. Call 651-292-4929.

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