

Lauderdale Guitar Society NEWSLETTER

by Avron Goss

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September roundup

It was delightful to be able to have a meeting back at Lauderdale House. See what was played below.

Practice corner

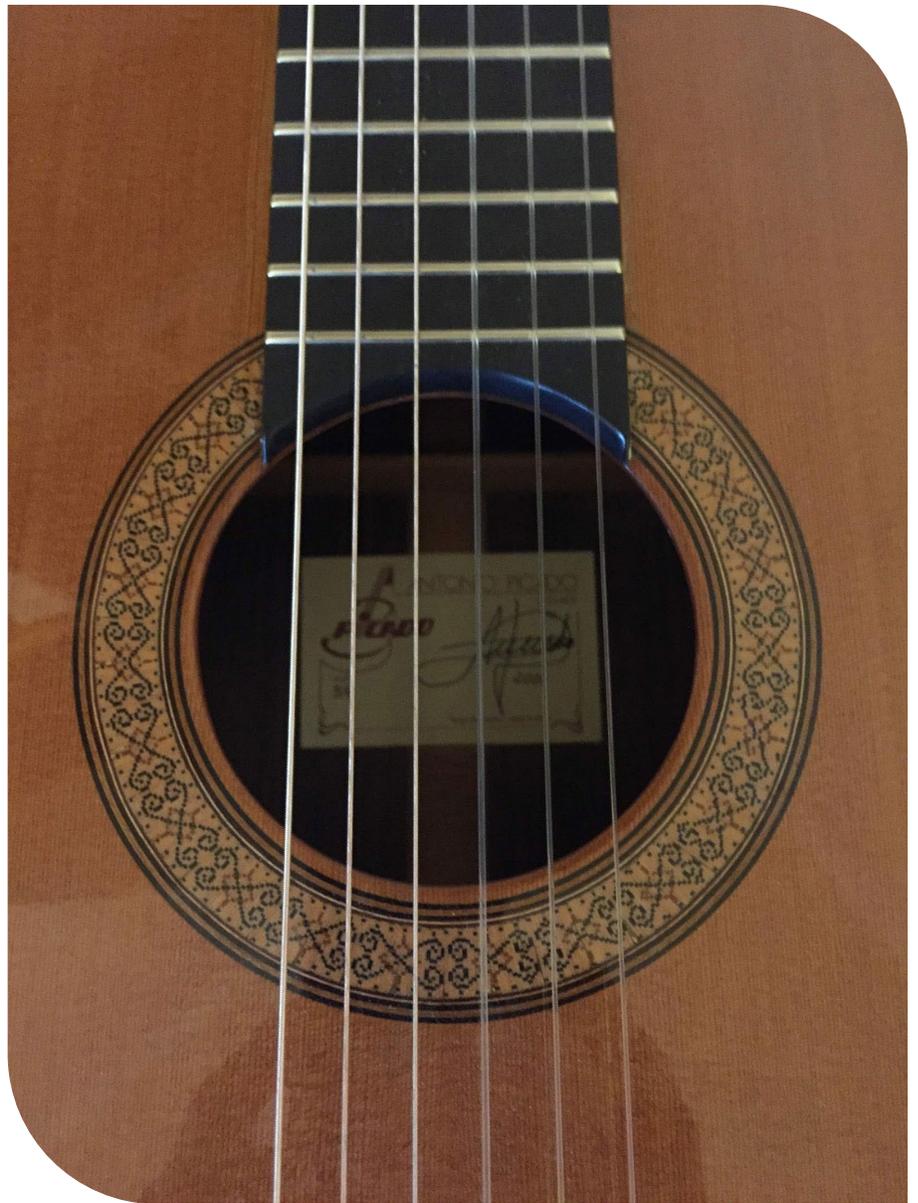
Get your practice “nailed”.

Housekeeping

Our next meeting will be held on the 14th October.

The ache for home lives
in all of us

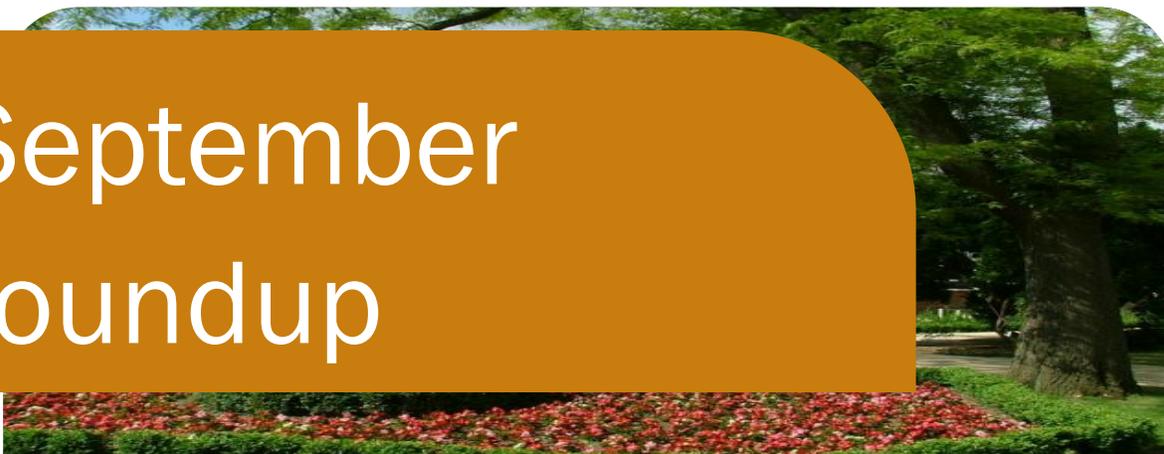
- Maya Angelou -



AUTUMN'S EMBRACE IS UPON US

Days are getting shorter and the skies a little greyer. This is the time to explore galleries and enjoy early afternoon walks with the sound of leaves crunching under our boots. It is also the perfect time to sit in front of our music stands and tackle those pieces that we have been meaning to tackle.

September roundup



Programme

We were treated to the following delightful range of pieces, in order of performance:

| | | |
|-----------|---|--|
| Nick H | Bach, BWV 1001 | Nick quipped that Carcassi must have been a butcher, but indeed he started his music career on the piano before become well knows as meaty virtuoso guitar performer. |
| | Matteo Carcassi – Etude 6 | |
| | Encore: | |
| | Villa Lobos, Suíte popular brasileira No 3 Valsa Choro | Benjamin Zander aptly points out in one his master classes that Bach is able to take a group of people who have randomly walked in off the streetand in a matter of seconds transform their mood. ¹ |
| | Agustín Barrios Mangoré, Study in Cm | Thankyou Nick for demonstrating this with our motley crew at the Lauderdale Guitar Society. |
| Richard B | Ponce, 1 st & 2 nd Movement of the Classical Sonata | |
| | Encore | |
| | Villa Lobos, Study No 1 | |
| Avron G | Fernando Sor, Study in Bm and Study in D | |
| Sara M | Villa Lobos Prelude No 1 | |

¹ Bach: BWV998 - 1st movement - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l1dvg2Ofk70>

| | | |
|----------|---|---|
| Stuart M | Rafael Calcion, studies 80, 81 and 82 | Rafael came from a family of mandolin makers and was a virtuoso player. He took the mandolin to Japan. Indeed, one of the biggest festivals for Mandolin became the Osaka festival. |
| Dennis | Fernando Sor, Study No 11 in Gm Encore Agustín Barrios Mangoré, Julia Florida | Dennis chose these etudes to exercise is anular finger. Having broken his nail a little over a month ago it had just started growing back sufficiently to play reasonably. |

Zoom

| | | |
|------------|---|--|
| Nick | Jorge Morel. Danza Brasileira | |
| Alan J | Villa Lobos, Prelude No 3 | Alan commented that playing it once without the repeat is sufficient as to hear the runs no less than 4 times can be tedious. Julian Bream, in a master class he gave on this prelude, comes to Alan's defence and prosecution. In the master class he too seems to dismissively note "and then it just repeats again" with no suggestion of making it sound any different. But (bold and underlined) he also states that if Villa Lobos took the time to make notes on the music (and I include repeats in this instruction) then we should follow. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iAXUzlrukt0 |
| Danielle P | JS Bach, Sarabande from the Lute Suite in Em BWV 996 Encore John Dowland, Lachrimae | It is believed that Bach wrote this piece for the lautenwerk (a lute-harpsichord). It was wonderfully performed on the guitar by Danielle who did a superb job playing clear ornamentation. |
| Richard B | Manuel M. Ponce, Prelude from a set of 24 Preludes (arr. Miguel Alcázar) | The 24 Preludes were original composed in support of a project for Segovia and Ponce to co-author a Guitar Method. For a variety of reasons, the project never really got off the ground. One big stumbling block was that Segovia felt that several of the preludes were too difficult for the intended audience of beginners – he was right! |
| Dennis | Villa Lobos, Prelude No 3 and Prelude No 4 | |
| Nick | Villa Lobis, Mazurka Choro | |



Nail care

When Dennis mentioned he had broken a nail in August I am sure we all collectively thought “I am so glad it did not happen to me”. When I was a young student, I remember my guitar teacher used to use super glue to attach a piece of a ping-pong ball when to the tip of his finger when this occurred. A remedy which is strongly advised against as it ruins the integrity of the nail.

I have suffered from fragile nails my whole life, but I have finally managed to solve this issue. My top tips for not breaking a nail:

- Do not use your right hand if you do not need to.
- Do not glue false nails to your nail, this ultimately weakens the fingernail further
- Wear gloves when washing up or working in the garden – ALWAYS!
- Apply vitamin E oil at least once a day.
- Moisturise the nails frequently.
- Maintain an optimum length (if they grow too long I find the become brittle and more susceptible to breaking).

Tatyana Ryzhkova discusses this in more detail in her video on nails.

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fDzFTBJRjnl>).

Practice corner



Start every performance in tune, even when you practice

Like the ancient visage in the desert whose passions the sculpturer well read, art has the ability to survive the memory of the subject or artist. On a recent trip the Tate Britain I stumbled across a painting by Peter Lely where one of the subjects was holding a baroque guitar. It struck me that this would have been a conscious choice I was driven to discover why she may have chosen to pose with the instrument.



Peter Lely (1618-1680)
Two Ladies of the Lake Family c. 1660
Oil on canvas

On display at the Tate Britain

For a real challenging bonus question - which chord might the lady in the painting be playing.

The precise identity of these women is unknown, but they have traditionally been associated with the Lake family of Cannons house and estate in Middlesex, later the property of the Duke of Chandos. Portraits of women by Lely, like this one, tend to conform to the standards of ideal beauty which were current at court. In such paintings, the artist was more concerned with asserting a sense of glamour and sophistication than conveying individual personalities. The woman on the left is shown playing a French-made baroque guitar, then the latest fashion to

arrive from Paris and which was replacing the Renaissance lute as the most common instrument found in homes throughout Europe. Indeed, this instrument was played from the bars of Madrid to the Court of King Charles II, who studied the instrument with Francesco Corbetta.

My curiosity as to why she may have posed with a guitar being satisfied, I continued to muse over how this young lady might have tuned her baroque guitar.

The Baroque guitar is a 5 course 9 string guitar. The reason it did not have 10 strings was the 1st string (the “chanterelle” or “singing” string) was a single string and not a pair of strings. It was always tuned E-B-G-D-A, but not in the way we tune the first 5 strings on a guitar, as the D and A strings went up the scale rather than continuing the down the scale, Furthermore, some composers tuned the either the D or A course in octave (see the table below). The great advantage of this tuning is allowed players to use a technique called “Campanellas” (meaning “little bells”). By playing cross string because of the re-entrant tuning they were able to allow the bells to over-ring like a harp.

There is one final complication, in that Baroque tuning was one half tone down compared to modern tuning.

| Composers | Tuning | Scale |
|--|--|---|
| Ferdinando Valdambrini (Italy, 1646/7) Gaspar Sanz (Spain, 1674) |  | E - B - G - D - A |
| Antoine Carre (France, 1671) Robert de Visée (France, 1682) ^[12] Nicolas Derosier (Netherlands, 1690) |  | E - B - G - D (in octave) - A |
| Girolamo Montesardo (Italy, 1606) Benedetto Sanseverino (Italy, 1620) Giovanni Paolo Foscarini (Italy, 1640) Francisco Guerau (Spain, 1694) |  | E - B - G - D (in octave) - A (in octave) |

If you have the time, I recommend watching Brandon Acker introduce the Baroque guitar (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jVI7TaAqb2A&t=501s>).

And having learned all of this, my mind returned to the problem of tuning and the words of Scott Tennant in an online workshop I attended run by him a few weeks ago – “Always tune before your practice. If you do not do so you will soon find yourself playing one half tone down and your ear will not get used to the sound of the music you are rehearsing”.

Benjamin Zander too takes pains to point out that we should do what it takes to be in time to perform with a tuned instrument. Indeed, he recounts, his harpist at the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra arrived 1 hour before rehearsals to ensure her harp was in tune.

Perhaps I will return to the problems and solutions of tuning another time.

Housekeeping



Next Meeting

Meetings are held on the 2nd Wednesday of every month and the next meeting will be on the 14th October 2020.

We will also hold Zoom meetings once a month, a link to join will be sent out prior to the meeting.

For further information and contact details please visit our website:

www.lauderdaleguitarsociety.org