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SEPTEMBER 1995

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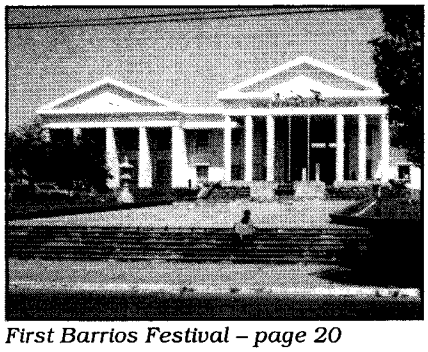

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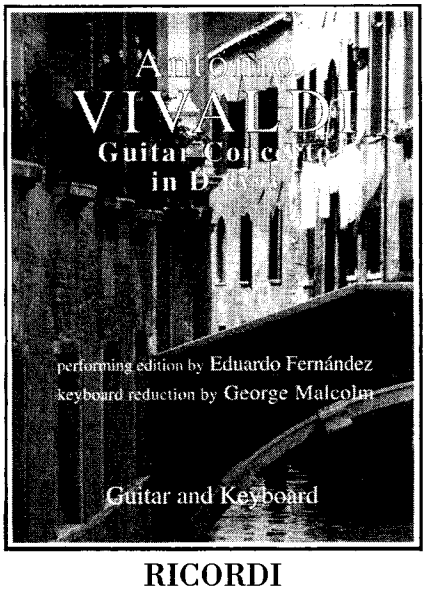

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FREDERIC ZIGANTE

Interviewed by COLIN COOPER

Frédéric Zigante was born in Roubaix, France, on 2 May 1961. His parents were musical but not professional: his father played the piano, and his mother (who came from Ghent, in Belgium), was a singer. His surname is explained by his Italian father. He now lives in Turin, Italy, and is a prominent figure on the international guitar scene — not only as a performer but also as a scholar and a historian. The occasion of our meeting was an auspicious one: the first performance (or World Premiere, if your taste runs to hyperbole) of Alexandre Tansman's *Concertino for Guitar and Orchestra*, a work written for Segovia 50 years ago but never before performed.

As a child, Frédéric Zigante played the piano for three years. Then he saw that his friends were playing the guitar, and he wanted to play one too. He became passionately devoted to it. He said: 'I didn't know anything about classical guitar, but my parents knew Ida Presti and Alexandre Lagoya personally, and so they supported me.'

A meeting with the famous duo followed. His teachers were, first, Bruno Mattioli, though his 'real maestro', he says, was the late Ruggero Chiesa in Milan, where he gained his diploma.

What Frédéric Zigante has achieved he has achieved without the benefit of winning a major competition. He is one of those rare guitarists who have no time for competitions — 'a nonsense', he says, although the august annals of international competitions are not without his name here and there. But in his younger days, at least, competitions did not offer him any serious opportunity for earning a living by playing the guitar, which is what he wanted to do. Despite his uncompromising attitude to competitions, he agreed to serve on the jury at Gdansk, no doubt believing (as most of us do) that if we don't take on the job occasionally, someone much less qualified is going to slip in instead.

My first experience of Frédéric Zigante was in Esztergom in 1985, when he played Bach with a poetic insight that appealed to me. So personal a style inevitably produced criticism from some quarters, but Frédéric Zigante's intensity and musicality certainly get through to an audience. Now his producer has asked for a series of CDs to include all the important repertory for the guitar, and you can be sure that Bach will figure largely in there.

He has recorded the complete works for guitar by Paganini, a 4-CD set. Recently he attracted more notice when he recorded all six of Giuliani's *Rossiniane*, a 2-CD set that received rave reviews, not least in CG. He has a way with Giuliani, and his recording of the vocal music (with the soprano Jeanne Marie Bima) is a particular

PHOTO: ALBERTO RAMELLA

Frederic Zigante.

favourite of mine. But he says that Bach is still the number one for him. 'A professional guitarist must play Bach. His music is very important for our repertory.'

He is critical of the way many guitarists play Giuliani's *Rossiniane*. The players, he feels, do not know the works from which the tunes come. 'In preparing my record, I worked in two ways. I listened to every opera to which Giuliani had been attracted. I read the score to find out what the dramatic situation is. Because Giuliani knew. The last Rossiniana, No.6, has a very rapid section, representing a *temporale* (thunderstorm). You have to know what a *temporale* is. Throughout all my repertoire I do the same research.'

This led to some interesting discoveries. 'For example, in Villa-Lobos I was surprised to find that in the manuscript the accompaniment was in little notes, the melody in bigger notes. It is very clear that Villa-Lobos was asking the player to play it in a certain way. It's very interesting, because he uses the same system in his piano music. But the publisher did not respect these differences. In the 6th Etude, for example, the chords are written with big notes at the top and very small notes underneath.'

He has now recorded, on the ARTS label, the complete guitar works of Villa-Lobos, due to be released in June and probably available by the time this article appears. This is particularly interesting, because when he asked his editor at Max Eschig, Gerald Hugon, to show him the

Villa-Lobos MSS, he discovered that the published version (1953) of two of the Etudes is very different from the original MS of1928. It is not merely a question of the fine details: the very notes are different. In Etude No.10, there is a difference of no fewer than 34 bars. What happened to them when the Etudes were published in 1953?

Etude No.11 also had extra bars in its MS version. Frédéric Zigante has not recorded them, because he thinks the published version is better. Among the MSS is a simple version of the Mazurka-Chôro with an introduction, hitherto unrecorded. He thinks that Villa-Lobos himself made the second version, which has a page of modern music somewhat reminiscent of the cadenza to the Concerto. It definitely was not written for Segovia.

Fredéric quoted from a 1937 article about Segovia in Montevideo. In it, Segovia says (and this is a paraphrase): 'One month ago, in Brazil, I discovered two things. The paisaje; and the Etudes of Villa-Lobos.' But the MS of 1928 is without any dedication. Segovia began to play Villa-Lobos only in 1949, and only two Etudes.

Frédéric Zigante had come to Gdansk to give the first performance of Tansman's *Concertino for Guitar and Orchestra.* It was written (and I am indebted to Frédéric Zigante's research here) in Hollywood in June-July 1945 at the request of Segovia. Tansman himself was supposed to conduct the first performance, but it never happened. Speculation may find a reason, and Frédéric quotes a musicologist:

'...the commanding imperative of following his own stylistic research prevents Tansman from writing a work with a part too virtuosic for the guitar; the composer therefore utilises this instrument rather in a constructive than in a demonstrative way, which is far from the expectations of a soloist willing to celebrate himself and his guitar.'

In other words, Segovia probably didn't like it!

It was not until after the deaths of both Segovia and the composer that the work was published, by Max Eschig. Tansman's heirs gave Zigante the exclusive right of public performance of the Concertino for a period of five years, beginning in September 1993.

The Concertino is divided into four movements: Introduzione, Toccata, Intermezzo and Finale. It lasts about 20 minutes, and the orchestra consists of strings, wind, celesta and timpani. As to why it failed to meet with Segovia's approval — if, indeed, that was its fate — Frédéric Zigante feels that it was just too dissonant for Segovia. In 1945 it must have sounded even more dissonant than it does now, which to my ears is not very dissonant at all. As with Mozart's dissonances, you have to consider them in the context of the time in which they were written.

"A professional guitarist must play Bach. His music is very important for our repertory"

'The other thing is that Andrés Segovia didn't like the *Aranjuez* Concerto, because it was high. He felt the guitar lost its beauty when played high up on the fingerboard. I think he asked Tansman for some music in the lower positions. In fact, I changed some of the figuration.'

This editing, tampering, call it what you will, did have the effect of making the guitar part more prominent. When you are playing with an orchestra, of whatever size, the guitar's low register is a handicap more than anything else.

'I read the piece and decided it was beautiful music,' says Frédéric. 'Not great guitar music, but beautiful music. I think it was a unique experience. But if I play it again, I will make a few more changes.'

In Gdansk he had only two rehearsals. One of them was a read-through by the orchestra. 'It was not enough. It is never enough when the guitar has to play with other instruments. But I was very happy to be able to play the very first performance. It has been undeservedly forgotten.'

Now he has another 'new' piece by Tansman: *Ballade in homage to Chopin,* for solo guitar. Originally the first piece in the suite *Homage to Chopin*, it was (again) too modern and dissonant for Segovia, who seems to have recorded only the Prelude.

'It is in my collection for Eschig,' said Frédéric. 'I also have a new version of Sor's *Gran Solo* — the first version, I think, and a longer one. '

Frédéric Zigante is an energetic editor and researcher, but most of his time is taken up with performing and teaching. He teaches at the Trieste Conservatoire 'Giuseppe Tartini', and at the Fondation Ciem-Mozart in Lausanne. He has held masterclasses as far apart as in Vigo (Spain) and Beijing (China). He is a member of the editorial committee of the guitar magazine *il Fronimo.*

"In each piece, however small, I have to look for a reason why it exists. If I find one, then I play it"

'I like teaching. I prefer playing — I perform mainly in Germany and France — but I like masterclasses. Last year I was in Japan for a month, and in China and Singapore. I think there is a future for the guitar in China. There are a lot of students there, and the teachers are wide open to new experience.'

In addition to the Villa-Lobos CD, a new Paganini CD for the Stradivarius label is in the

pipeline. There is, perhaps even more interestingly, a record of the Lieder of Spohr, recorded with a mezzo-soprano. These songs were published, as was often the case in the 19th century, in a double version, for guitar as well as piano.

For the future, Frédéric is not too sure — and how many performing musicians can be? After Villa-Lobos and Paganini, what then? He is quite attracted to some contemporary music, and has given some important first performances, including music by Franco Donatoni, Frank Martin (the French premiere of *Poèmes de la mort* for three male voices and three guitars), and some new chamber music with the Arditi String Quartet. He plays, though rarely, Petrassi's *Suoni notturni*.

The meticulous attention he brings to music results generally in revealing some aspect of it that you hadn't noticed before. He summed up his philosophy thus:

'In each piece, however small, I have to look for a reason why it exists. If I find one, then I play it.'

One can only wish that more guitarists would look for a similar reason, and not play a piece until they are quite sure that they have found one.

Discography

Paganini - Complete Works for Solo Guitar. Originally released by Europa Musica, 350.205, 1991. Now on four separate CDs: ARTS 447192-2, ARTS 447193-2, ARTS 447194-2, ARTS 447195-2 CD.

Heitor Villa-Lobos. Complete works for guitar: STRADIVARIUS STR 33378 CD.

Giuliani - Six Rossiniane op.119-124: ARTS 447146-2 2 CDs.

Giuliani - Variazioni, Valzer, Ariette, Lieder, Romances. With Jeanne Marie Bima, soprano. FREQUENZ AMADEUS 031-033.

Recital - J.S. Bach, Villa-Lobos, Martin. DRUMS CLASSIC EDLC2175. LP.

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THE GUITAR IN IBEROAMERICA

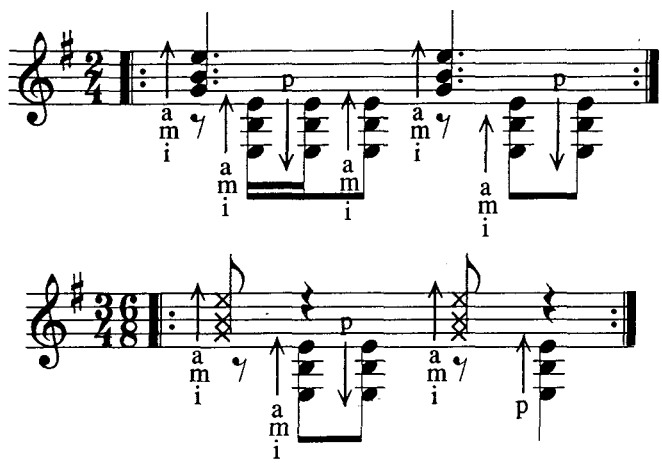
PART 17: RASGUEADOS, PART 4.

By RICO STOVER

IF you have been following the last few instalments here you will by now have come to the realisation that rasgueado technique is more complex than you had originally thought; that it contains different kinds of movements for the right hand from punteado technique, and that to truly master any style of rasgueado – be it Argentine, Mexico, flamenco, or whatever – one must do a lot of listening because attempting to understand this from purely printed sources is, as I stated, the *least desirable way* in which to learn.

Unless you can go to Latin America first hand, then you must obtain recordings. This can be done through private correspondence from people who are collectors. When I look at my own record collection of Latin American guitarists, I note that most of the labels are indeed South American and were never even available in other parts of the world. CDs are now a bit better, but most of the really good material by artists like Alirio Diaz, Eduardo Falú, Cacho Tirao, Atahualpa Yupanqui, Raúl Garcia Zárate, Luís Bonfá, etc, has not been re-released in CD format, and I doubt that it ever will be. I hope I am proved wrong on this. A case in point: in addition to all his 'mainstream' recordings on Vanguard, EMI and Angel over the years, Alirio Diaz has also recorded about a half dozen albums, starting in the 1960s, on small Venezuelan labels, some of which are now no longer functioning. I recently asked Alirio if anyone were working to bring all these recordings together into a multi-CD set. He did not know and indicated that nothing was happening in that direction. These recordings, featuring his interpretations of Barrios, Lauro, Sojo and other Venezuelan composers, as well as his own marvellous arrangements of waltzes and songs, represent a major legacy and are absolutely necessary listening for any guitarist wishing to learn about the Venezuelan style and school. Too bad they are next to impossible to obtain. Keep trying. As I said, private collectors seem to be the way to go now.

Continuing, nonetheless, with our explanation of rasgueados, here are two more popular rhythms: the *cueca* from Chile and the *marinera* from Peru.

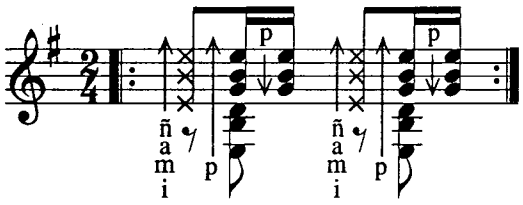


Music Example 1: Rasgueados of Cueca and Marinera

Both these rhythms, as well as the *zamba*, descended from a more ancient dance called *zamacueca*. This was a 'lascivious' dance in which a man and woman danced apart, the woman with a handkerchief. The name *cueca* was a phonetic rendering of a chicken's 'cluck'. The so-called 'lasciviousness' of this dance comes into play when one views it as representing the wooing and courting of the rooster towards the hen. Not a dance for 'proper church-approved' gatherings . . .

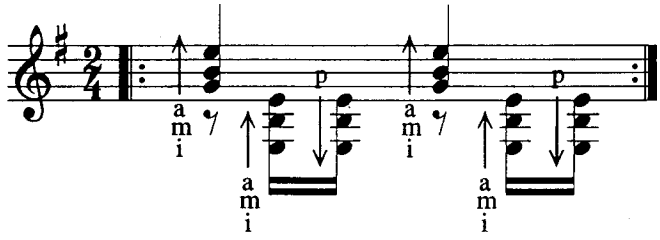
These forms – the *cueca*, the *marinera* and the *zamba* – developed over the centuries in the areas along the Andean trail that swept southward from Lima, Peru to Córdoba, Argentina. They are what I term 'Hispanic Andean' as opposed to 'indigenous Andean'. Here I am referring to the fact that a good deal of the music from the Andes is in fact descended more from pre-Columbian musical forms and pathos than Hispanic influences. Today these musics, which are more 'Indian sounding', can readily be identified. We all know the tune *El Cóndor Pasa*. This melody contains many of the traits of the genre which it represents: the *huaino*. This musical form so typical of Peru can be sung or danced and is duple in metre, as is the *carnavalito*, a related Andean form. The *huaino* is almost always in the minor and has a metronome

marking of 80-84 per crotchet. A basic rasgueo of the *huaino* is this:



Music Example 2: Rasgueo of huaino

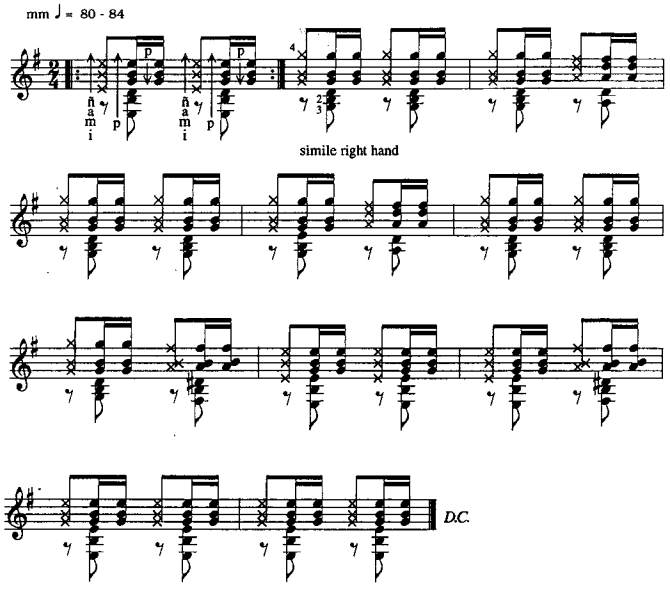
There is an accent on the first quaver marked by an open handed damp. The thumb then strokes down across all six strings, then strokes upward on the trebles only. A basic rasgueo of the *carnavalito* is this:



Music Example 3: Rasgueo of carnavalito

Here is an exercise to practice the *huaino* rhythm. Incidentally, this passage can serve as accompaniment to the first part of the aforementioned melody *El Cóndor Pasa.*

Huaino Exercise



IS ANYONE LISTENING?

PART 2: HEARING IS NOT ENOUGH

By NEIL SMITH

EAR training, aural tests etc, are all part of the attempt to educate the ear of a player/singer. I feel certain that the lack of early, basic choral singing *all through* school in the UK is a major hindrance to those of us who develop late in music. Until the 80s most schools had some kind of choral tradition, but not any more; this is becoming rarer, and the only musical diet fed to some youngsters is quite simply taken from the head-banging menu. Beat is everything; harmony, balance, melody, articulation, words. . . what do they mean in such an environment? Sadly, when, in later teens or beyond, the person begins to take to the 'classics' they do so from a point of a late-starter all round. Only masses of time spent in musical pursuits can make up the loss. For the would-be soloist, time has been lost in possible ensemble situations, and this can only be made up (if ever) when the player becomes quite competent all round.

Once we have a technique of sorts in our hands, our ability to listen critically will need to increase in proportion to the level we wish to attain. I have played in very many ensemble settings over the years, and at first, it can be quite distracting as other voices or instruments literally 'cross your path', musically speaking. Look if you can at a score for *The Rite of Spring* and recall that it has been a regular 'in-rep' item for many years now; can you read along and *listen* to any particular instrument? If this work is too demanding at present, select an older classic or read along to some basic guitar duets. This can be tricky at first and will take many months to become fluent, but the listening and reading aspect is valuable to all. It can be tiring, confusing and frustrating to go through a work in this way, yet eventually the reading-listening faculty will slowly develop.

As implied before, not everyone has this facility and is able to develop it. Even in professional terms, with the recordings I have mentioned careful listening is evidently *not* enough. On disc I have heard door-bangs, pages being turned, breathing. All should have been detected by a *listening* engineer. Perhaps the most astonishing case on disc was where a dog was heard *barking* in the middle of a guitar solo! It just goes to show what can happen if we don't listen. Once, at a major national festival, two top violinists were brought in to play the Bach Double Concerto. The press were ecstatic, praising the whole thing to the skies. A studious audience member noted that the duettists were in fact half a bar out with each other on several occasions. Listen, listen, *listen.* It can of course be an easy matter to spot mistakes in a performance; the day a critic stops listening purely for these, some progress is being made. We all can make mistakes. Does it matter, out of thousands of notes in an evening, if half a dozen go wrong, does it *really* matter? What if a much better musician plays then, with 25 mistakes: is this worse? One point here when we consider the dog bark on that LP: was everyone in the studio listening to only the guitar and not the ambience? Yes, that is possible, since we must hear the total *and* the individual, stereo, quadrophonic, call it what you like, this is listening. 'Everyone asks have you *seen* Paganini: no-one asks if you have heard him play!' True words from Paganini himself. We can see that it is possible to be drawn in by hype and even to take home recordings and bask in the glory of the music without really listening. But then, some music is literally made for relaxed listening. Some years ago, one of my broadcasts was repeated in a radio programme called *Mainly for Pleasure.* An interesting title this: what else is music for? Or should we sit around commenting on the use of this or that Dorian mode or the tritone element in the 4th bar of the 2nd movement of the Obscure Symphony by Maestro Obscure? The spectacular use of lighting by Jarre across giant cities shows another impressive avenue open to music, but are we watching the 'show' or listening to the music, or both? Speaking personally, there was a time when I did not *listen* as I can do today. Training has helped, and I include in that ten years of singing in a choir at schools: this I now consider indispensable, though at the time it seemed a chore to me, and the choir put me at the front, projecting what then was a decent, clear high voice. Owing to this type of work, I do think that one can develop an all-round listening capability second to none early in life; later, it can be extremely difficult to grasp this along with instrumental technique.

For some reason, the way in which our eyes alter automatic focus on a particular object near or far cannot be instantly available in music: to listen for the cello part, one must first know what a cello 'sounds' like. To replicate a superb sound, one must study and know how to make that sound *and* to have in mind exactly what a good sound should be like. The listening will confirm this or not as the case may be. Some people without professional training have fine musical ears, others with all manner of expertise, intense study with great masters can still fail to inspire, to release, to pass on that special sonority. I talked to a composer about conductors and he told me of one conductor still active who is very uncertain about the harmony in a work and yet, he produces magical playing from the orchestra. Even so, a number of superb instrumental virtuosos have moved over to conduct and have failed miserably. I used the word nebulous earlier deliberately; perhaps the reader of this will still emerge from this essay with something concrete. 'If music could be translated into human speech, it would no longer need to exist,' said one writer in 1967. Ever since the first person battered a stick in time, twanged a tight string or blew down a pipe, we have been listening to what each generation calls music. We hear first, *then* we listen.

ART AND ORNAMENT

THÉRÈSE WASSILY SABA LOOKS AT RICORDI'S NEW VIVALDI EDITION

IN 1986 Eduardo Fernández made a recording of the Vivaldi *Concerto in D major RV93* with the harpsichord player George Malcolm and the English Chamber Orchestra for Decca Records. That recording was well received and a performing edition has now been published by Ricordi which includes Fernández's realisation of the solo line and a keyboard reduction by George Malcolm.

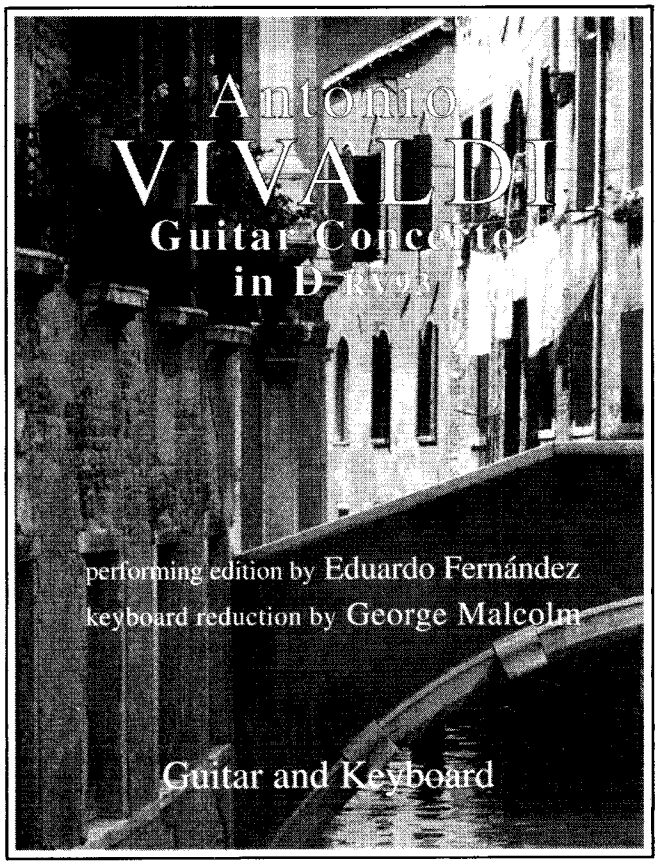
Antonio Vivaldi became *Maestro de' concerti* at the Ospedale della Pietà in Venice in 1716. Vivaldi was responsible for instrumental performance at this institution for girls, which had a noted musical reputation. He left and returned to this position a number of times during his life, and in 1723 was commissioned by the governors of the Pietà to write two new concertos a month. The autograph on the *Concerto in D* carries a dedication to Count Johann Joseph von Wrtby, an official who served as royal governor and hereditary treasurer in Bohemia. Vivaldi visited Bohemia in 1730 and it is thought that he may have written this concerto during his visit there.

Although the *Concerto in D* was originally scored for lute, two violins and basso continuo, the lute part is frequently played by a guitar. Eduardo Fernández based his edition on the Urtext of this work published by Ricordi in 1949 in the *Istituto Italiano Antonio Vivaldi* series under the artistic direction of Gian Francesco Malipiero. Despite his use of a modern instrument, Fernández followed the baroque style and practice of ornamenting repeats and it is the publication of his ornamentation that makes this new edition such an attractive prospect.

Ornamentation is not previously unheard of in recordings or in editions of the *Concerto in D.* John Williams makes subtle additions to the melody during the repeats in a version which he recorded with Leslie Pearson on harpsichord and organ continuo in 1982. John Williams plays his own eloquent variations in the repeat of the second half of the *Largo.* He also interprets more of the semiquaver passages with *inégal* in this movement than are notated in the Malipiero edition.

Eduardo Fernández's version of the *Concerto in D* incorporates all the ideas from the John Williams version but takes some of them one step further. Throughout the first movement, Fernández adds a bass line to the solo melody. This bass line, however, does not deviate from the original score because it is derived from the part for basso continuo.

It is the second movement of the concerto, the *Largo,* which contains the most new material. Fernández follows the same *inégal* interpretation



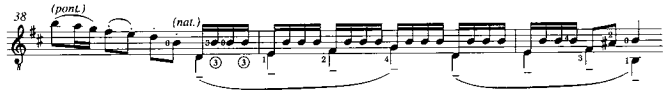
of semiquavers that John Williams played on his recording. The ornamentation added by Fernández enhances the melodic line with elegance that never loses the essence of Vivaldi's idea and contributes considerably to the enjoyment of listening to this movement. He plays it with a balanced poise that allows the music to breathe comfortably. One becomes even more aware of his skill of interpretation in this work on hearing that he had not written down his version until Ricordi invited him to publish it.

There are a number of published versions of the Concerto in D but this is the first British edition, which will mean that it is more readily available in the United Kingdom and, of course, that the price is very reasonable.

The Max Eschig Edition dates from 1957 and was edited by Emilio Pujol. Pujol made an arrangement for strings and guitar – violin, viola, cello and guitar. The second violin part of the original has been given to the viola, and the basso continuo part to the cello. In the first movement Pujol adds a considerable number of bass notes to the original but these are all doubling the cello/continuo line. He adds fewer bass notes in the second and hardly any to the third movement. Apart from this, his score varies little from the Malipiero edition.

Another edition of the *Concerto in D* is published by Doblinger and edited by Karl Scheit. This publication is for guitar, two violins and basso continuo as with the original work; however, the guitar part is sold with a piano reduction of the other parts for rehearsal purposes. Scheit has added some bass notes but these have more of a structural function rather than forming a melodic line of their own.

No fingerings have been added to the guitar part of the Pujol edition, although Pujol has occasionally changed the direction of stems on the notes to prompt the choice of right-hand fingering. Karl Scheit gives detailed left-hand fingerings throughout and some right-hand fingerings. Little has been left for the player to choose. Eduardo Fernández also adds left- and right-hand fingerings throughout, including vital points such as where he employs cross-string fingerings:



*First Movement – bars 38 to 41 of guitar part**

In the second half of the first movement both Scheit and Fernández write out the semiquaver and septuplet arpeggiation of the chords which are printed as block chords in the Urtext. These are more often arpeggiated in performance, despite their appearance as chords in the score. Sometimes the arpeggiation is played only on the repeats.

The Pujol edition is completely unadorned. The Karl Scheit edition includes a complete realisation of the ornaments. The movement is written out in full without using repeats. In the Ricordi edition, the ornamented repeat is printed above the original part so that Fernández's additions can easily be seen. This offers the player the chance to either copy his version completely or to use it as a basis for devising one's own ornaments. Thus Fernández's version is an invaluable guide to anyone wishing to write their own ornaments.

Comparing prices of the three editions looked at in this article: the Max Eschig publication, edited by Emilio Pujol, is priced at £17.50; the Doblinger publication, edited by Karl Scheit, is priced at £11; and the Ricordi, London, publication, edited by Eduardo Fernández, is priced at £8.95.

George Malcolm is a distinguished concert pianist and harpsichordist whose career has also embraced conducting and training choirs. The Ricordi edition includes a keyboard reduction with some of his realisation of the continuo part. Although this edition (Catalogue No. LD920) is for guitar solo and keyboard reduction, the orchestral parts are also available for hire. Boosey & Hawkes is the distributor for Ricordi, London, in the United Kingdom.

Eduardo Fernández has a strong interest in the guitar and orchestra repertoire, having made several recordings for Decca of guitar concertos including concertos by André Previn, Ponce, Villa-Lobos, Lamarque-Pons, Herbert Chappell, Malcolm Arnold, Leo Brouwer and Rodrigo. The Vivaldi Concerto in D *was originally released by Decca with the Giuliani* Concerto in A *and two other Vivaldi concertos (Decca 417 617-2).* The Concerto in D *is now available as part of Decca's* World of *series on* The World of Vivaldi (433 866-2).

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MUSIC SUPPLEMENT

EDITED BY NEIL SMITH

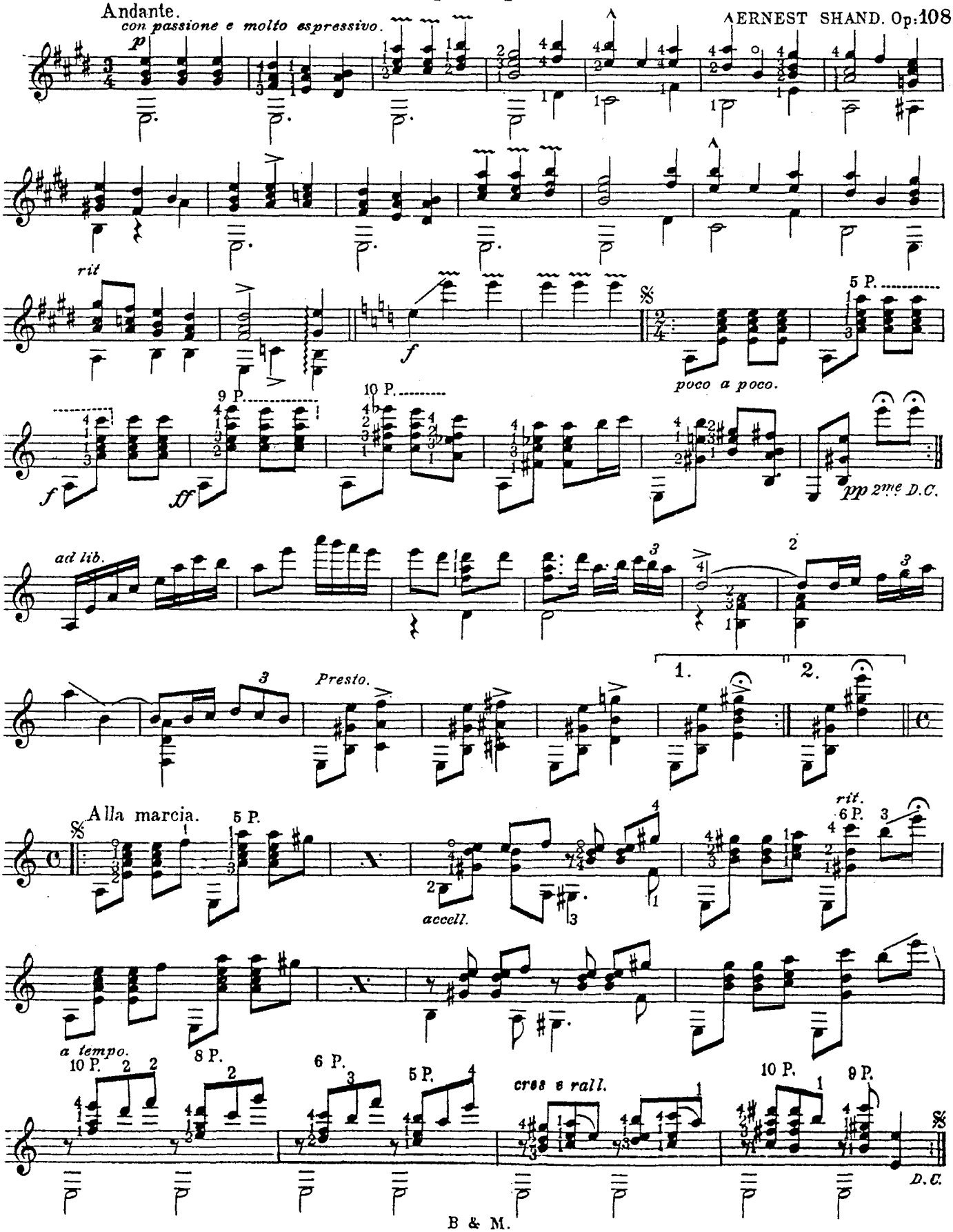
IMPROMPTU OP. 108 by Ernest Shand

I am grateful to David E. McConnell for this copy of the Impromptu. A number of technically awkward moves should be noted in page 2, lines 6 and 9 where the composer has fingered long reach chords; these can be modified. Also, Shand uses early in the work 4th finger barré notation and this was quite common at the time. Regarding the layout, I have left this as per the original; line 8, last bar seems to have G sharps missed.

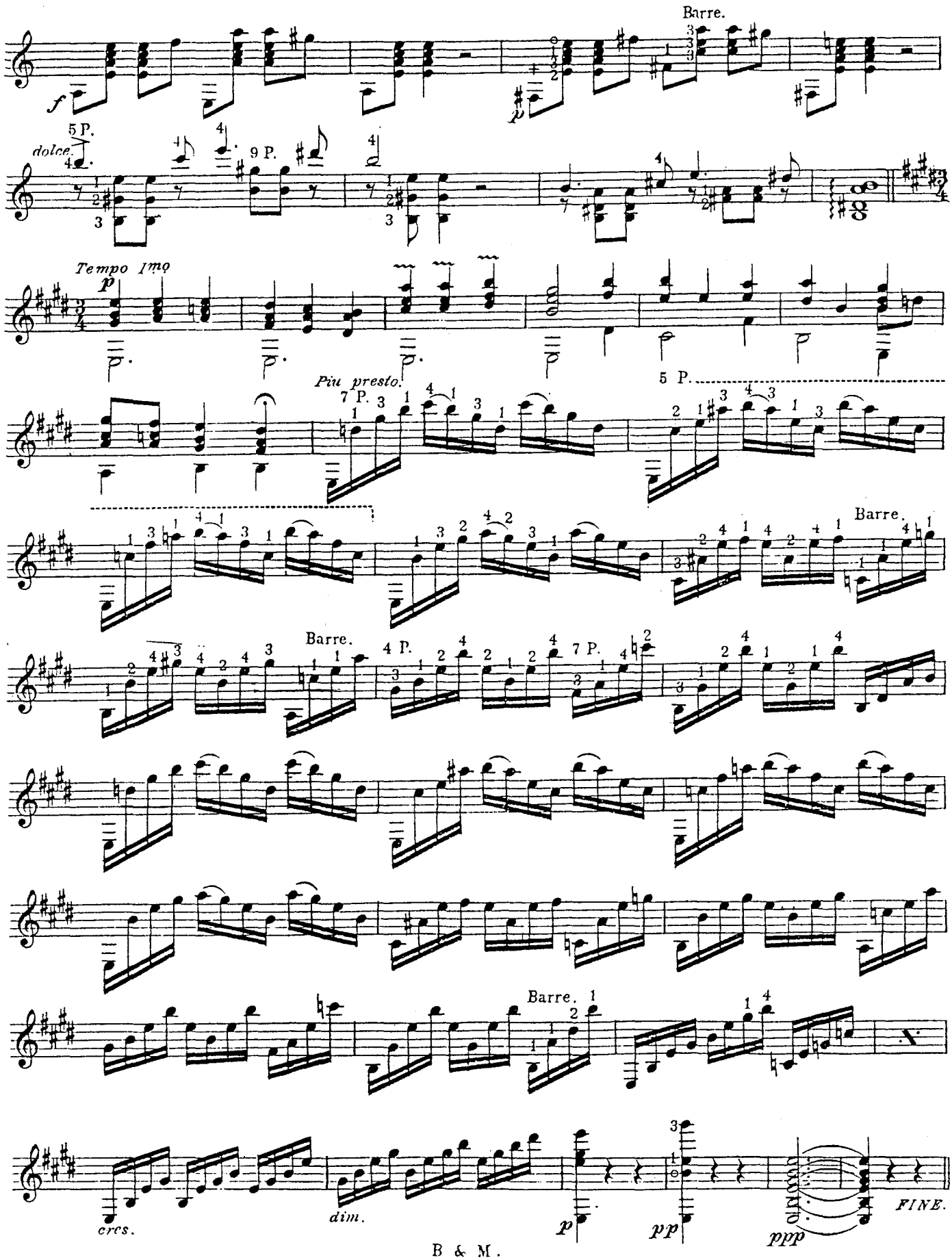
To A. F. Cramer Esq.r

GUITAR.

Impromptu.



B & M.


Barre.
f
p
5 P.
dolce.
9 P.
Tempo Imo
p
Piu presto.
7 P.
5 P.
Barre.
Barre.
4 P.
7 P.
Barre.
cres.
dim.
p
pp
ppp
FINE.

B & M.

FUNDAMENTAL PERSPECTIVES

PART 25: DEALING WITH STAGE FRIGHT

By JIM FERGUSON

AFTER fishing the June issue of *Classical Guitar* from my mail box, I immediately turned to the Letters to the Editor section. There it was: a letter by Les Wright of Brighton, who said that even when he plays pieces he is extremely familiar with, his right hand begins to visibly shake. Deep breathing, relaxation and visualisation have brought no relief.

Les's detailed description leads to only one conclusion: that he is experiencing stage fright, also known by the somewhat politically correct term, performance anxiety. So, Les, the next two instalments are for you and the many others who share this syndrome. The following comments, observations and information may not instantaneously provide a solution, but they won't hurt, either. And maybe you'll find something here that will help you solve, or at least come to terms with, a problem that irritates so many.

In past columns, I've vaguely touched on stage fright by addressing musicality and what constitutes success (see Part 21, Classical Guitar and the NBA). While you can't play musically if your right hand is shaking because your brain is exploding with a rush of adrenalin, a certain percentage of the results is not perceived by the listener, a fact that should be somewhat comforting. In an ideal world, misery shouldn't love company; however, take heart in the fact that most players – professional and amateur – have experienced stage fright to one degree or another. Manifestations can range from right hand shaking (it's always the right hand) to memory slips to even nausea. But solid performance comes from security – personal, technical and musical. Here are some observations, comments and tips that just might help you get to the bottom of your own condition.

Stage fright – What it is and where it comes from: Right hand shaking and all the rest frequently are reactions to a perceived threat that triggers a 'fight or flight' response similar to how you'd behave in a life-jeopardising situation. (Scenario: You're happily hiking along a trail until it dawns on you that might have strayed into bear country. Unsure of the way back to where you started, your concern over encountering a bear begins to intensity. Finally, you turn a corner, and a monstrous grizzly rushes at you). The irony of stage fright, however, is that its most common grizzly comes from within yourself. Although that jolt of adrenalin can arise from something specific (the knowledge that you aren't prepared, for instance), it often results from a general lack of confidence and the fear that you'll screw up in front of a group of strangers who will go home thinking less of you. In other words, the thought of being observed, scrutinised, and even judged strikes fear into your heart. Anticipating that you'll be watched can initiate a process of self-sabotage, where the smallest mistake takes on exaggerated importance. When this process is set in motion, things can only go in one direction: downhill.

Now, there is a certain class of performers who experience just the opposite when faced with an audience – usually because they have what I call the 'ham factor'. Anywhere there's a crowd, these folks are inclined to pull their guitar out of its case. They thrive on attention and frequently perform better in front of a group of strangers than they would if they were playing by themselves. The adrenalin they're producing is used in a positive way. Frequently, hams have been performing for many years, and, in many cases, have been doing it from a very early age. They love to communicate with others, and they take great pleasure in having people enjoy the beautiful music they've worked so hard on. They usually look forward to a concert, and even on the rare occasions when they don't, they still consider playing in public to be no big deal. But while you can't become something you're not, the ham's example has a lot to offer in terms of rethinking and improving your own attitude.

Building confidence: is essential to having positive playing experiences – especially for musicians who aren't natural-born performers. But security is often built from successes that take place gradually over time. Since a person who suffers from stage fright early on in his or her performing experience isn't likely to enjoy much success, one strategy is to seek safe environments that are relatively free from the usual stresses.

I probably won't get much argument if I state that solo classical guitar is the single most demanding way the instrument can be played. Therefore, one of the most obvious ways you can take pressure off yourself and begin to establish a personal history of success is by joining (or starting) some sort of ensemble. While you still might experience stage fright, it won't be nearly as intense as if you were playing alone.

Once you've joined an ensemble, here are a few other measures to take to gradually acclimate yourself to playing before an audience by yourself:

- Form a stage fright support group. Find a couple of other guitarists who want to improve their comfort level in front of an audience (ask

a music teacher for the names of people who might be interested, put up a sign at a music school, or advertise in a paper), and perform for each other on a regular basis. Make a point of talking about how being the centre of attention affects your performance.

- Surreptitious performance can also be constructive. Take your guitar to a public place – a park, for instance – and find a location that is remote enough to make you feel comfortable, but also gives people a chance to hear you at a distance and approach you should they choose to do so. Once you get used to being casually observed, move closer to an area with more traffic.
- Since the presence of a tape machine can be enough to trigger a 'fight or flight' response, frequently record yourself at home to accustom yourself to playing under pressure. With enough experience, you'll learn to ignore the recorder and finish a piece with few mistakes.
- Along the same lines as the preceding suggestion, get a gig playing background music in a restaurant. The fact that people are eating and talking and not always focused on you can help minimise the stress of playing in public. Warning: noisy places can prevent you from adequately hearing yourself, which can lead to sloppiness that is unacceptable in recital situations.

Physical measures: Being physically uncomfortable when you play can drive the first wedge into your confidence. I've attended many masterclasses where students hastily assumed their position in the 'hot seat' and rushed through adjusting their footstools or apoyos and finding a comfortable sitting position. The results were often disastrous. Here are a few thoughts that can be useful:

- While left hand classical guitar technique is demanding, its movements are relatively simple compared to those of the right. Since the intensity of stress-related right hand shaking can approach the size of the right hand's relatively small movements, work on playing with larger right hand gestures, including more follow-through (discussed in Aaron Shearer's *Learning The Classic Guitar, Part 1).* If shaking has plagued you in the past, begin a 'concert' with a slow piece that is well within your technical capabilities.
- How you sit and position your body, arms and hands is very important. Beginning in a position other than one that is completely comfortable can trigger and exaggerate nervousness. When playing in a strange locale, don't hesitate to take all the time you need to find a suitable chair and adjust your footrest or apoyo. Make sure your nails are well filed and polished. Lubricate your nails and fingertips with either petroleum jelly or the natural oils on your forehead. Loosely dangle your arms and shake your hands to stimulate circulation. Playing in a short-sleeve shirt or blouse can cause your forearm to stick on the instrument and limit your movements. Get to a concert location early so you can run through at least part of your program, which will not only help you adjust to the room's acoustics, but also familiarise you with the overall environment.
- Never perform without being thoroughly warmed up.
- Ignore external pressures that would place you in a situation that you aren't entirely comfortable with.
- Maintain a healthy lifestyle; especially avoid excessive amounts of caffeine and other stimulants.

Before you diagnose yourself with chronic stage fright, though, review how often you perform. If you're a casual guitarist who only plays in public once a month or less, you really have no basis upon which to make such an assumption since infrequent gigs tend to take on exaggerated importance. While guitarists who are apprehensive about playing in front of an audience don't like to hear this, one of the most reliable ways to rid yourself of stage fright is to tough things out and perform as frequently as possible. I've seen several guitarists who claimed to be terrified of playing in public grow accustomed to it after only three or four closely spaced recitals. More next month.

THE WORKS FOR SOLO GUITAR
BY ANTONIO LAURO
Analysis and Interpretation

By LUIS ZEA

PART 8: THE VALSES – EL NEGRITO

PLAYING through the score of *El Negrito* suddenly reminded me of a letter I received from Vic Galib, a former student of mine, in which he tells me about his experience of listening to a guitarist whose playing was notorious for his indiscriminate use of accents and unjustified changes of tempo. This experience made Vic reflect and comment on the importance of 'singing' when playing an instrument, and in his letter he made the following remarks which are quite relevant to my discussion of *El Negrito* this month:

'Don't do when playing an instrument what you would not do if you were singing.

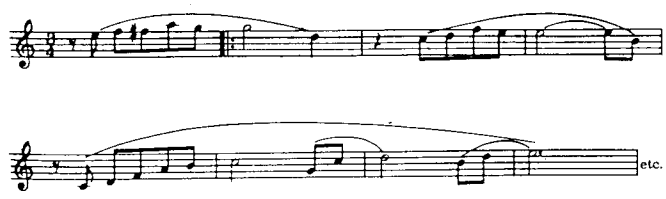
'It also made me think of a swan gliding along *effortlessly*. Music should be like that except/ unless there is a good reason for accents, for even a swan will sometimes speed its movement, or slow down or even take flight. But these changes should be deliberate and for a good reason, and not done indiscriminately.'

The misuse of accents is a problem that deserves serious consideration. In his remarkable book about Schnabel's teaching and interpretation of piano music Konrad Wolff [1] (1979 page 26) refers to the most common causes of this problem:

'If a disturbing accent is given on a note that should not be emphasised the reason may be lack of finger control, of ear discipline or of musical understanding.'

In my own experience as a performer I have found that when I have played a wrong accent the reason – in most cases – has been that I was not listening properly, or that I really did not understand what was happening in the music. I have also noticed the same situation in my students; wrong accents disappear by inducing them to listen more carefully and to become more musically aware. There is no doubt that the task of refining one's perception and gaining genuine musical insight can easily take a lifetime to accomplish. Finger control is of course an important aspect of performance too, and surely something we all like to have. I believe, however, that its pursuit is worth while in so far as our efforts are guided by, and directed to, *specific musical goals.* I like to think that every technical problem worth considering is at the same time a musical problem, to the extent of often disappearing once the musical problem is solved. Having specific musical goals means having something concrete to work with, i.e. a piece of music, and something meaningful to look forward to, i.e. music-making. The lack of musical goals easily results in failure to relate the physical and musical sides of performance, and obsessive pre-occupation with technique, indeed a sad reality.

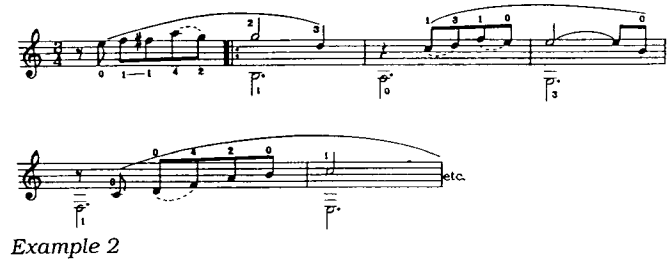
Let us now turn our attention to *El Negrito.* No accents are required on any of the notes of its melody. If we ask a (good) singer to sing the following bars of *El Negrito,* for example, we would immediately perceive the clarity of the phrases and how naturally they unfold as the music moves along (not unlike Vic's image, in which the swan is 'gliding along effortlessly'):



Example 1

Because there are no accents in the music the question of avoiding them does not really arise (although it is true that downbeat notes are frequent victims of unjustified accents). So instead of approaching the music with an attitude of avoidance it seems wiser to cultivate a feeling for good, *positive* phrasing, which will not admit any accents unless, as Vic pointed out there is a good reason for them to be heard. This reminds me of a comment once made by Hans Keller[2]: 'Avoidance never communicates, for the simple reason that the listener does not know what is being avoided'. I fully agree with him, and if I may paraphrase Vic's remark I would say: *Do when playing an instrument what you would do if you were singing'.* And talking about singing I recommend trying out the following:

a) Sing the melody of *El Negrito* and then play it (the melody only). It is very likely that after a few times you will spontaneously begin to phrase it correctly, and that accents will be notorious for their absence.
b) Sing (or hum, if you like) the melody and play the bass line at the same time. Listen with open ears.
c) Now play both the melody and the bass, as shown below:

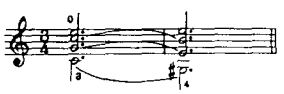


Example 2

These simple ideas can help to enhance your understanding of the music. Notice that I have changed Lauro's fingering in the first phrase. You

might find it easier to achieve the desired *legato* quality of the phrase by using your second finger for both G's, as I have indicated.

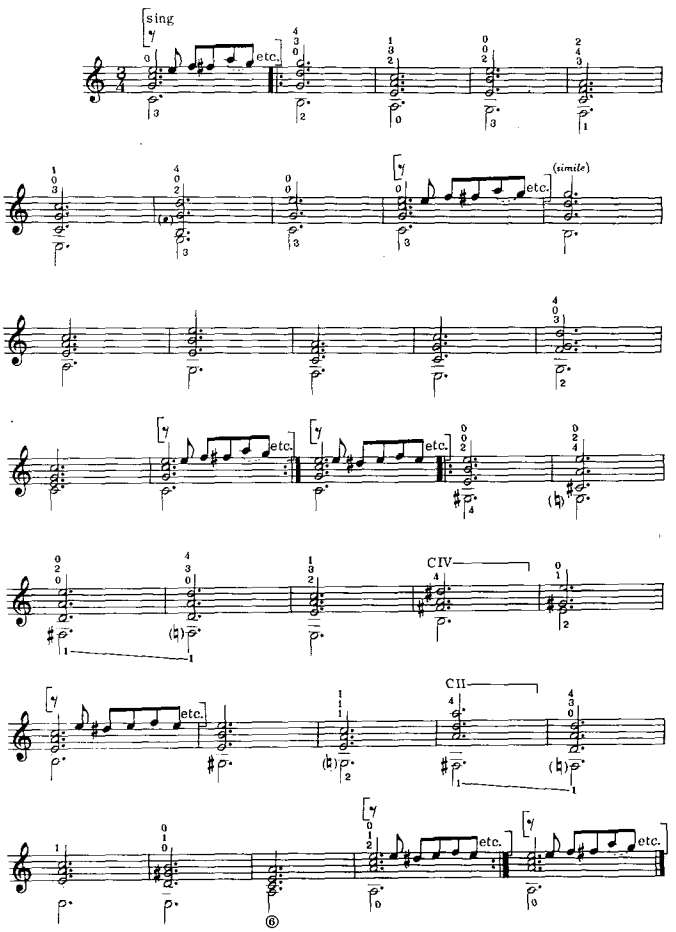
In my previous article I referred to the usefulness of listening to the rhythm of the harmony when playing *Petronila.* Harmonic awareness in *El Negrito* is also beneficial, especially because it is the harmony that provides the main source of movement in the piece. Continuity of movement is essential in performance. Awareness of the harmony means experiencing a sense of motion and direction from chord to chord as you play the music. Notice, for example, how beautiful is the move from the final C major chord of the first section to the E major chord (1st inversion) at the beginning of the second:



Example 3

Being aware of it will help to carry the forward flow of the music on from one section to the other. This is something that has to be actually *experienced,* and not merely understood in intellectual terms. In order to induce this experience of harmonic awareness I have thought it useful to make the suggestions that follow:

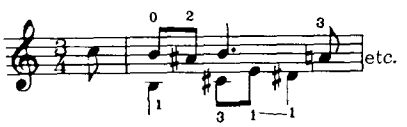
Again sing (or hum) the melody of *El Negrito* but this time accompany yourself with the following sequence of chords (which is just a harmonic reduction of the piece):



Example 4 *Musical examples from El Negrito reproduced with kind permission of the publishers, Universal Edition.*

As we did with *El Marabino* in Part Six, listen to the beautiful profile of the bass line, follow the forward flow of the music and, gently, let yourself go with it. Try this several times until you no longer find yourself listening or looking for any detail in particular, until you are simply singing and playing away. Do not feel discouraged if you do not succeed at first. It is just a process of learning to *let things happen.* Be guided more by your musical instinct than by any preconception about what should or should not happen. All this can be a very enjoyable and rewarding thing to do, certainly something I recommend trying more than once.

Concerning the tempo of *El Negrito,* I must praise John Duarte for very wisely suggesting the marking ♩ = 120-132 which allows the rather gentle character of this *vals* to emerge naturally. Duarte's editorial policy is also commendable for the clarity and economy of his fingering directives – a valuable service to the performer and an example worth following. By the way, Lauro forgot to write a natural sign in the original manuscript and as a result we have the same mistake in the printed edition. On the second page, first system, bar 2, the last A of the bar is natural:



Example 5

Finally a word about colour and dynamics. In *El Negrito* (as in many of Lauro's compositions), the frequent repetition of material invites and indeed welcomes contrasts of colour and dynamics. Again my advice is: do use your imagination but make not more than the amount of contrast that you need to keep the attention of the listener alive. If you make too many contrasts your playing becomes predictable or unintelligible, and your listeners will have the same reaction as Vic, who also makes a further complaint about his guitarist:

'. . . he changes his colours too often, which is not to my liking. It is like adding a bit of food to the seasoning. I prefer to season my food, not the other way round.'

Notes

[1] This must be one of the best books ever written on musical interpretation – certainly the most illuminating that I have come across. Strongly recommended.

[2] Hans Keller. 1919-1985. Austrian-British musicologist.

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Wolff, Konrad. 1979. *Schnabel's Interpretation of Piano Music.* Formerly titled 'The Teaching of Artur Schnabel'. 2nd. ed. London: Faber & Faber.

LAURINDO ALMEIDA
(1917-1995)

IT was with great sadness that I received a brief message from Didi Almeida on July 27 to tell me that her dear husband Laurindo had died of leukemia the previous night. Only a few months ago, over dinner in Los Angeles, they told me of all their professional plans for 1995 and 1996. Their calendar was already full for many months ahead with composing, recording and concert projects. It is hard to believe now that Laurindo is no longer with us.

Laurindo Almeida was one of the most important guitarists of the 20th century. He was one of the few musicians to achieve great success in both the classical and the jazz fields of music. He was the total musician, not only a brilliant soloist and accompanist, with a distinctive warm sound, but also an outstanding composer and arranger. His overall musical talent and original concepts gained him enormous international respect amongst his peers in the 60-plus years of a professional career.

Almeida received his early music tuition from his mother, who was a concert pianist. She hoped that he too would become a pianist, but Almeida fell in love with a guitar owned by his sister Maria. In a short time it was evident to all around him that he was on the way to being a master guitarist. In 1936 he signed on as guitarist on a Brazilian cruise liner, the 'Cuyaba'. During the voyage to Europe he absorbed a wide variety of musical styles including his first exposure to jazz. On a visit to Paris he heard the 'Hot Club of France' string quintet, starring the Gypsy virtuoso guitarist Django Reinhardt. This group made a great impression on him. On his return to Brazil he settled in Rio and took on the post of staff guitarist/arranger with Radio Mayrink Veiga. By 1944 Almeida had reached the heights of his profession in Brazil. In 1947 he decided to move to the USA, settling in Hollywood. Here he worked as a studio musician in films, and as a classical soloist with violinist Elizabeth Waldo. His interest in jazz helped him get the guitar seat in the famous Stan Kenton orchestra, which became a legend over the whole world for its innovations in jazz music. His most outstanding recordings with Kenton were his solo work in Pete Rugolo's *Lament*, and his own composition *Amazonia*. In 1950 Almeida left the Kenton orchestra to lead a more diverse musical career.

In 1953-54 Almeida joined forces with saxophonist Bud Shank and, with the addition of bass and drums, recorded three brilliant recordings entitled 'Brazilliance'. These recordings were the forerunners of bossa nova, mixing Brazilian rhythms with American jazz. Almeida's impeccable taste as a composer, arranger and guitarist shines through on all these recordings. It was during this time he made the first of many solo guitar albums of both classical and popular music for the Capitol and Decca labels. In 1963-64 he toured the world as a featured soloist with the Modern Jazz Quartet. This association originally began as a project for the 1963 Monterey Jazz Festival. In 1966 he made the American debut recordings of Radamés Gnattali's *Concerto de Copacabana* (Capital SP 8625), and the Villa-Lobos Guitar Concerto (Capital SP 8638). Throughout his career Almeida was years ahead of his peers in his promotion of the music of Barrios, Gnattali, Villa-Lobos and other outstanding South American composers. From the 1960s he performed, recorded, and published (through his Brazilliance Publishing Company) the guitar works of these and other great South American composers.

In the 1970s Almeida once more gained great international popularity with his 'LA Four' quartet, which featured saxophonist Bud Shank, bassist Ray Brown and drummer Shelley Manne. This group was a direct continuation of his original Brazilliance quartet.

From the 1970s right up to the time of his death Laurindo Almeida remained one of the most popular and sought-after guitarist/composer/arrangers in Hollywood. He often concertised and recorded with his delightful wife Deltra (Didi) Eamon, the talented Canadian soprano, whom he had married in 1971.

Laurindo Almeida won ten Grammy Awards and, as well as performing on the guitar, had a long list of film scores to his name including, amongst others, *Viva Zapata, The Godfather, A Star is Born, Camelot* and *The Agony and The Ecstasy*. He was a prolific composer. One of the Grammy Awards was for his composition *Discantus* which tied with Igor Stravinsky in 1961 for best contemporary composition. His many original works included concertos for guitar and orchestra (he recorded his first concerto on the Concord Concerto label – CC-2001 – in November 1979) and his recently finished guitar quintet. Almeida received an Oscar for composing the music to the animated fable *The Magic Tree*. In October 1977, he was awarded the Certificate of Appreciation from the American String Teachers Association for 'a lifetime of dedicated and distinguished service to the guitar in the United States'. He also published many valuable books of arrangements of classical and jazz standards for guitar, and an excellent tutor. These works are an enormous contribution to the 20th century repertoire of the guitar. He recently donated his unique collection of over 1000 items of music and original scores to the California State University at Northridge.

Laurindo Almeida's death will leave an enormous void in the world of music. However, we are fortunate that through the legacy of his many recordings, arrangements and original compositions, his great musical talent will live on for future generations.

Laurindo Almeida: Born Sao Paulo, Brazil. 2 September, 1917. Died: Los Angeles, USA. 26 July, 1995.

Maurice J. Summerfield