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## Nylon, Nails and Playing It Again: Insider Dynamics in a Classical Guitar University Program

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THE FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF MUSIC

NYLON, NAILS AND PLAYING IT AGAIN: INSIDER DYNAMICS IN A  
CLASSICAL GUITAR UNIVERSITY PROGRAM

By

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	iv
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION .....	1
CHAPTER 2: ANDREW.....	14
CHAPTER 3: SAM.....	22
CHAPTER 4: SILVIU .....	31
CHAPTER 5: ADAM.....	42
CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION .....	53
REFERENCES .....	63
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH .....	67

## ABSTRACT

The Western art music (“classical”) guitar tradition flourished in Europe during the mid nineteenth century. Guitarists like Andrés Segovia contributed to a revived interest in the tradition in the early twentieth century and stimulated its assimilation into the modern concert hall and the university. Historical musicologists have paid increasing attention in the last forty years to art music written for the guitar, coinciding with the resurfacing of past works. Although previous ethnomusicological studies have considered the guitar’s role in different world music traditions, this thesis constitutes a first study of the classical guitar tradition through an ethnomusicological framework.

In the present document I explore the insider and outsider dynamic in an American university as seen through case histories of four doctoral students at The Florida State University guitar program. Previous scholars have debated the insider/outsider dynamic primarily by considering the researcher’s level of insidership in a researched population. I problematize the insider dynamic by focusing upon the experiences of informants who were born outside of the U.S., and who are either permanent U.S. residents or international students. This thesis thus constitutes an examination of the tenuous nature of cultural insidership, seen through the FSU guitar cultural cohort.

I contend that shared habits constitute insidership in the cohort regardless of the member’s national origin and immigration status in the U.S. I support this argument by considering the past and present *habitus* of four members (born in Britain, Canada, Belgium, and Romania). Moreover, my informants’ musical experiences also inform how the insider/outsider dynamic operates in areas such as immigration, international study, and familial relationships.

I conducted my ethnographic research considering Tim Rice’s model of time, place, and metaphor (Rice 2003). I use Rice’s framework to create a narrative that accounts for each informant’s past and present experiences; each of the four main chapters is devoted to one musician. Having been a member of the cohort myself during the years 2005-2011, I include my own experiences and shared moments with my informants-colleagues and our professor, Bruce Holzman, within the text.

Besides contributing to the discussion of insider/outsider dynamics, the present document also forms part of the relatively recent wave of ethnomusicological studies of Western musical institutions by Western musicians (“at home”). My study is informed by the sensitivities of those who are both “at home” in their musical tradition and, to varying extents, away from their “home” country of origin. I hope this study will also illuminate some of the different practices and dispositions found in one of the country’s most renowned classical guitar university programs.

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### **Approaching the Classical Guitar Tradition**

The Western art music guitar tradition was well established in Europe by the mid-eighteenth century. The nineteenth century repertoire (originally published in cities like Vienna, Paris, London and Madrid) includes tutors, virtuoso works, concerti, ensemble music, and collections of amateur pieces. After flourishing in the mid nineteenth century, the demand for guitar art music diminished. Towards the end of the century the tradition was kept active by scattered players and pedagogues in Europe and Latin America.<sup>1</sup> The term “classical guitar” emerged during the twentieth century, usually to designate the Spanish nylon-string guitar in art music settings, and to distinguish the practices associated with Spanish guitarist Andrés Segovia’s (1893-1987) personal playing style. As part of a lifelong quest, Segovia spearheaded a revitalization of the guitar art music tradition. He promoted nineteenth-century works, commissioned new ones from prominent composers, and highlighted the guitar’s suitability as a concert hall instrument. Part of his effort included promoting the study of the guitar in conservatories and music school settings. In the United States, the first guitar programs at major institutions began appearing in the 1960s, and they have proliferated since then.

The study of Western art music (“classical”) for guitar in the historical musicological literature is a relatively recent development—not surprising, if one considers that a substantial number of primary sources have only resurfaced within the last thirty years. The ethnomusicological literature, on the other hand, has yet to consider different aspects of the classical guitar, such as its music, the musicians who play it, and

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<sup>1</sup> See Javier Suárez-Pajares, “The rise of the modern guitar in Spain,” in *Music in Spain During the Eighteenth Century*, eds. Malcolm Boyd and Juan José Carreras (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), and Graham Wade, *A Concise History of the Classic Guitar* (Pacific, MO: Mel Bay, 2001).

its many cultural functions.<sup>2</sup> Recent ethnomusicological studies, however, reflect the guitar's use as a crosscultural instrument.<sup>3</sup>

At present there is a considerable effort on the part of individuals (players, pedagogues, composers) and institutions (conservatories, universities, music suppliers, publishers) to foster and promote the study of classical guitar among people of different socio-cultural levels. Almost a century after the Segovian revival of the classical guitar, and as we become further acquainted with the challenges and possibilities of the twenty-first century, we find ourselves at a crucial moment in which to study this musical tradition. The present project is part of a wave of studies on American higher education musical institutions. To my knowledge this is the first attempt at approaching the classical guitar tradition through an ethnomusicological framework.

In the present document I explore the insider and outsider dynamic in an American university, as seen through case studies of four doctoral students at The Florida State University guitar program. All four musicians were born outside of the United States, and either hold international student visas or are permanent U.S. residents. I selected foreign-born informants in order to highlight the intersection between being an insider in the FSU guitar program and being an insider in the U.S. Multiple elements inform such a dynamic: immigration and student travel; legal issues pertaining to living and working in the U.S. as a foreigner; transition to life in the U.S.; plans to go back to one's country versus staying in the U.S.; assimilation into the American university system and into the FSU guitar program, etc. Three of the participants are current doctoral candidates in guitar performance, and one is a recent graduate. In such manner, I will consider the perspectives and challenges of currently-enrolled students, as well as the prospects and reflections of a former student (almost a year after graduating).

My discussion will be centered on the FSU guitar program as a *cultural cohort*. According to Thomas Turino, cultural cohorts are social groupings formed “along the

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<sup>2</sup> This void in the ethnomusicological literature may be explained by the fact that, despite the guitar's popularity, the study of Western musical traditions by Western ethnomusicologists (“at home”) is a relatively recent development in the field.

<sup>3</sup> See for example Andy Bennett and Kevin Dawe (eds.), *Guitar Cultures* (New York: Berg, 2001), and Anthony Guest-Scott, “Categories in Motion: The Use of Generic Multiplicity in Music Store Guitar Lessons,” *Ethnomusicology* 52:3 (2008), 426-57.



lines of specific constellations of shared habit based in similarities of parts of the self.”<sup>4</sup> It is “the emphasis and development of *selected habits*,” explains Turino, which separates a cultural cohort from a *cultural formation* (one where members share a majority of their habits, though they are not closely bound by shared experiences).<sup>5</sup> Thus, while most members of the classical guitar cultural formation use acoustic, nylon-string instruments, pluck the strings with their right-hand fingernails, and play art music, it is the specific practices that take place in the FSU guitar program that separate it as a cohort. With these considerations, I will contend in the present study that shared habits provide insidership into the FSU guitar program regardless of the member’s national origin and immigration status in the U.S.

### ***Habitus* and Musical Study**

My discussion of FSU guitarists’ shared habits is informed by Pierre Bourdieu’s concept of *habitus* (the common-sense, everyday dispositions intuitively understood by members of a culture).<sup>6</sup> Bourdieu explains that *habitus* is “an acquired system of generative schemes,” which produces “all the ‘reasonable,’ ‘common-sense,’ behaviours” in regular life, and which are prone to being perceived as a normal part of a particular field.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, he asserts that *habitus* constitutes “a system of dispositions common to all products of the same conditionings,” and argues that “‘personal’ style,” rather than denying the *habitus* principle, ratifies it by providing “a deviation in relation to the style of a period or class, so that it relates back to the common style.”<sup>8</sup> By considering how musicians share similar elements from their *habitus* (or how they are different), I seek to emphasize specific practices that facilitate insidership within the cultural cohort.

Turino has problematized *habitus* elicitation in ethnography, arguing that since *habitus* normally falls outside of informants’ awareness, such elicitations run the risk of constituting “artificial accounts” of experience, which may also complicate studies that

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<sup>4</sup> Thomas Turino, *Music as Social Life: The Politics of Participation* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2008), 111.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 112-3, emphasis added.

<sup>6</sup> To be consistent with Bourdieu’s usage of the term, I am retaining the italics in “*habitus*.”

<sup>7</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice* (Stanford: University of Stanford Press, 1990; first published in 1980), 55-6.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 59-60. See also Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984; first published in 1979), especially chapter 3, “The *Habitus* and the Space of Life-Styles”; see also Alan Barnard, *History and Theory in Anthropology* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 142-143.

consider the “difference and contradictions between and within individuals.”<sup>9</sup> He explains, nonetheless, that he developed many of his understandings of the musical *habitus* in a rural Peruvian town precisely after observing how individuals *didn’t* match all the other parameters of what was otherwise the norm.<sup>10</sup> Turino has argued how although the notion of *habitus* may seem to deemphasize the individual’s power to alter his or her habits and environment, the concept does allow for “dynamism and individual agency” through distinctions like “social habits” and “internal contexts.”<sup>11</sup> Moreover, he has contemplated how using *habitus* as a cultural framework allows for a middle-ground between earlier anthropological theories that contemplated unchanging, homogeneous subjects, and more recent postmodern approaches that emphasize “extremely fluid social constructions.”<sup>12</sup> Similarly, such a framework provides a means with which to consider how my informants’ practices intersect and shine light upon the cohort’s insider/outsider dynamic.

### **The Insider/Outsider Dichotomy in the Ethnomusicological Literature**

The insider/outsider dichotomy has been discussed in the ethnomusicological literature mostly in regards to the researcher’s status within the researched population. Lawrence Witzleben has debated European and American ethnomusicological practices in relation to the specialized needs of non-Euro-American scholars. He has delineated some issues arising from establishing an insider versus outsider dynamic, highlighting that these constitute “multiplex and relative perspectives.”<sup>13</sup> He has also observed the increasing tendency in musicological studies to consider “the more subtle layers of boundary-crossing faced by researchers studying” their “own” musical traditions.<sup>14</sup> He has described the rise of “emic” perspectives as a “significant development” in the

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<sup>9</sup> Thomas Turino, “Structure, Context, and Strategy in Musical Ethnography.” *Ethnomusicology* 34:3 (1990), 401.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 403. See also Bruno Nettl, *The Study of Ethnomusicology: Thirty-one Issues and Concepts* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2005; first published in 1983), 13-4 and Michael Bakan, *Music of Death and New Creation: Experiences in the World of Balinese Gamelan Beleganjur* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999), 220.

<sup>11</sup> Turino, *Music as Social Life*, 120-1.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> J. Lawrence Witzleben, “Whose Ethnomusicology? Western Ethnomusicology and the Study of Asian Music,” *Ethnomusicology* 41:2 (1997), 223.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 224.

ethnomusicological field.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, J. H. Kwabena Nketia has considered how, in the context of African scholarship, insiders may bring out aspects of meaning not easily available to outsiders.<sup>16</sup> He has also underscored the need for insider/outsider scholarly communication to best express the values of the cultures studied.<sup>17</sup>

Mellonee Burnim has debated the tenuous insider/outsider division that researchers may experience—especially those with characteristics that would seemingly grant them insidership with the research population. She has posited that such a dynamic may take place on multiple levels, such as those of actor, analyst, performer, and researcher.<sup>18</sup> Chou Chiener has highlighted how Burnim’s study problematizes the emic/etic distinction, and has stressed the necessity of researchers to analyze their own insidership in relation to what they consider “home.”<sup>19</sup> Bruno Nettl has also discussed the insider/outsider dichotomy, emphasizing the problems that outsiders face in musical study.<sup>20</sup> He has considered the dynamics of cultural insidership, concluding that such distinctions are not always clear, and suggesting that outsider researchers embrace the idea of “providing a limited if unique view” of their research subjects.<sup>21</sup>

The present study thus seeks to contribute to the ethnomusicological discussion on insider/outsider dynamics. Perhaps most relevantly, I problematize the insider/outsider distinction by means of the fact that, to varying extents, my informants and I are both insiders and outsiders in the cultural cohort and in the U.S. The reader may consider, for example, that the dynamic takes place on multiple planes: country of birth; permanent residence versus international student status; previous guitar studies in the U.S. versus those in other countries, etc. Furthermore, beyond the central discussion of insidership within the FSU guitar cohort, I will consider such a dynamic in other instances of the

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 236.

<sup>16</sup> J. H. Kwabena Nketia, “The Problem of Meaning in African Music” *Ethnomusicology* 6:1 (1962), 3.

<sup>17</sup> J. H. Kwabena Nketia, “The Scholarly Study of African Music: A Historical Review,” in *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music*, eds. Bruno Nettl, Ruth M. Stone, James Porter and Timothy Rice, volume 1, “Africa,” ed. Ruth M. Stone (New York: Garland Publishing, 1998), 48-66.

<sup>18</sup> Mellonee Burnim, “Culture Bearer and Tradition Bearer: An Ethnomusicologist’s Research on Gospel Music,” *Ethnomusicology* 29:3 (1985), 444.

<sup>19</sup> Chou Chiener, “Experience and Fieldwork: A Native Researcher’s View,” *Ethnomusicology* 46:3 (2002), 456-8.

<sup>20</sup> Nettl, *The Study of Ethnomusicology*, 150-1.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 154-60.

informants' lives: within their own countries; within their familial environments; and outside of their countries of origin (besides the U.S.).

### **Studies “at Home” in American Musical Institutions**

The ethnomusicological study of Western conservatories by Western scholars (“at home”) is a relatively recent development in the field.<sup>22</sup> Henry Kingsbury has researched the social and power dynamics in a U.S. conservatory (pseudonymously referred to as the Eastern Metropolitan Conservatory). He has contended that a conservatory may be understood as a “cultural system” that operates under an “open-ended framework of cultural concepts and social configurations” centered on the notion of musical talent.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, he has considered the distinction he experienced during his research between being an insider (a Western-trained performer and educator) and an outsider (a researcher and analyst). He perceived that his own insidership affected the informants' accounts—they assumed specific knowledge on Kingsbury's part, and thus were at times prone to provide implicit statements.<sup>24</sup> While my own insidership in the cultural cohort informs my research, I have strived to obtain as detailed a testimony from each informant as possible, as well as to convey it in such a manner that non-guitarists may understand it.

Bruno Nettl has also done ethnographic research in American schools of music. He regards music schools as cultural “points of entry,” through which to understand such institutions' hierarchical systems, canon constructions, and intercultural interactions.<sup>25</sup> To negotiate his insidership (and his analysis of data and personal observations gathered over the span of fifty years), Nettl adopts an outsider perspective.<sup>26</sup> Interestingly, he comments on the fact that an outsider perspective was, at times, in diametrical opposition to that of his informants.<sup>27</sup> Beyond his own assumed perspective from the outside, he argues that the universal image of an orchestral conductor stands out as one whose outsidership is institutionally emphasized—as that of an eccentric, heavily-accented foreigner, analogous

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<sup>22</sup> Bruno Nettl, *Heartland Excursions: Ethnomusicological Reflections on Schools of Music* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 2. Nettl has called Western conservatories and musical institutions “the last bastion of unstudied musical culture.”

<sup>23</sup> Henry Kingsbury, *Music, Talent and Performance: A Conservatory Cultural System* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988), 14.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 28-31.

<sup>25</sup> Nettl, *Heartland Excursions*, 1-5.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 8. Nettl discloses his intention to study his musical “home” as a total outsider. He suggests he is trying to view the institutions familiar to him as an “ethnomusicologist from Mars.”

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 67.

to a nineteenth-century general in charge of an army of mercenaries.<sup>28</sup> In the present study, I don't claim a temporary outsider's view of the subject as a researcher. I believe, instead, that the tenuous insider/outsider dichotomy that I, as the researcher, share with my informants is central to my approach to this subject.

### **The Florida State University Classical Guitar Program**

American guitarist Bruce Holzman has directed the Florida State University Guitar Program since 1972. He is a graduate of New York University and New York's High School of the Performing Arts, and his teachers include Gustavo López, Alirio Díaz, Albert Valdes Blain, and Oscar Ghiglia. The FSU Guitar position was initially offered to Ghiglia, a former student of Andrés Segovia and founder of the Guitar Department at the Aspen Music Festival. Ghiglia declined the offer and recommended Bruce Holzman instead.<sup>29</sup> For almost forty years, FSU guitarists have won top prizes in competitions; they are a constant presence at international guitar festivals, and they occupy teaching positions in music academies and universities throughout the U.S.<sup>30</sup>

Despite the regard for Bruce Holzman in the international classical guitar world, one may only find scattered sketches in the guitaristic literature of his pedagogical approach, and of FSU guitarists' habits and practices. One such account, for example, highlights the high demands placed on FSU guitarists, and includes former students' anecdotal accounts.<sup>31</sup> I hope my thesis will inform future inquiries regarding some of the components of Bruce Holzman's pedagogical practices, as well as some of the aspects of FSU doctoral guitarists' musical lives. Although one may find multiple documentaries on the life and guitaristic methods of Andrés Segovia, I know only of one previous attempt to document the practices of one major American guitar pedagogue (Aaron Shearer), informed in part by former-student accounts.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 35.

<sup>29</sup> Leo Welch, "Bruce Holzman, Interviewed by Leo Welch," *Soundboard* 30:4 (2005): 68-72.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid. As part of the volume's back matter, there is a full-page, FSU-sponsored advertisement that lists the names and teaching positions of thirty-five FSU Guitar graduates, along with a congratulating message on the occasion of a then-current student winning first place in a national competition.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, 69-72. The article includes short anecdotes of FSU alumni Adam Holzman, Lily Afshar, Ricardo Cobo, Mary Akerman, Steve Walter, William Yelverton, Andrew Zohn, Elliott Frank, and Laura Oltman.

<sup>32</sup> *Aaron Shearer: A Life With the Guitar*. DVD. Directed by Michael Lawrence (Baltimore, MD: Michael Lawrence Films, 2004).

## The Present Study

My research is centered on the musical-biographical experiences of four guitarists. Jonathan Stock has considered the ethnographic importance of individual musical experience (for both researchers and study subjects). He has asserted that placing one's initial focus on individuals (rather than entire social groups) may be a way of understanding how "the conduct of specific individuals forms the larger social entity."<sup>33</sup> He has conceptualized culture as a "mosaic" made up of individuals, highlighting the need for the researcher to include him- or herself in the narrative and discuss his representational stance.<sup>34</sup> Moreover, Michael Bakan has also emphasized the importance of reflexive ethnography, affirming that "the 'science' of ethnomusicology inevitably begins and ends in understandings and perceptions that stem from the researcher's personal experiences, especially during the fieldwork process."<sup>35</sup>

To approach the biographies of my four informants, I used Timothy Rice's "three-dimensional" model as an ethnographic framework.<sup>36</sup> Rice presented his framework as an alternative to Alan Merriam's 1964 model of intercultural research.<sup>37</sup> Rice suggested that a focus on "atomized studies of individuals and small groups of individuals" linked under parameters such as time, place, beliefs, and experiences provides a useful way to account for musical experience.<sup>38</sup> In Rice's model, time, place, and metaphor constitute spatial axes in the manner of a three-dimensional Cartesian graph.<sup>39</sup> I used this framework to initially delineate my interview questions, and I adapted my initial outline using the biographical data I already knew from each informant. Some initial considerations that guided my inquiries during the ethnographic interviews include the following:

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<sup>33</sup> Jonathan P. J Stock, "Toward an Ethnomusicology of the Individual, or Biographical Writing in Ethnomusicology," *Worlds of Music* 43:1 (2001), 10. See also Anthony P. Cohen *Self Consciousness: An Alternative Anthropology of Identity* (London: Routledge, 1994), 68-9.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid. Dale Olsen has also used the term "mosaic" in ethnomusicological contexts, to describe the musical panorama in Latin America, where different traditions gave unitary coherence to the regional musical sphere. See also Dale A. Olsen and Daniel Sheehy (eds.), *The Garland Handbook of Latin American Music*, (New York: Routledge, 2000).

<sup>35</sup> Bakan, *Music of Death and New Creation*, 13.

<sup>36</sup> Timothy Rice, "Time, Place, and Metaphor in Musical Experience and Ethnography." *Ethnomusicology* 47:2 (2003), 151-79.

<sup>37</sup> Alan P. Merriam, *The Anthropology of Music* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1964).

<sup>38</sup> Rice, "Time, Place, and Metaphor in Musical Experience and Ethnography," 152.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 158-67.

- Location: Home country; location of early musical studies; location of studies in the United States before FSU (if any); Florida State University; Tallahassee; the South; the United States; experiences outside the U.S. and country of origin (e.g. international competitions, festivals, other studies).
- Time: Early musical studies; elementary and high school studies; undergraduate studies; graduate school; future plans; in-between stages.
- Metaphor: The guitar and guitar playing as art; as social behavior; as a means to belong; as a way to relate to family and peers; as entertainment; as a source of personal understanding; as solitary practice; as commodity; studying music and altering one's life.

Such a framework guided my interviews with each informant as I attempted to understand their musical habits and frames of reference. It granted me the flexibility to adapt the framework to each informant before the interview and to explore additional elements pertaining to each informant's experience. By doing so, I was surprised to learn many new things from people I regard as colleagues and close friends.

Although Rice conceived his model as a three-dimensional representation (which could be outlined graphically), I used the model exclusively as a framework to outline my initial inquiries. In this thesis I have assembled the interview products into a textual narrative. I am dispensing with the graphic notation principally because the model is itself an abstraction and does not occupy an actual position in physical space. To retain a sense of time within the narrative, I nonetheless resort to grammatical time shifts to separate the subject's previous experiences from the "present time" of the interview.

The main narrative of this thesis contains four chapters, each devoted to a member of the FSU guitar program. The first is Andrew, who was born in England and emigrated with his family to the U.S. at the age of ten. Before pursuing graduate studies at FSU, Andrew obtained a bachelor's degree at Stetson University (DeLand, FL), where he studied with both FSU alumnus Stephen Robinson and French guitarist Judicaël Perroy. Andrew's experience is informed in part by his European and American upbringing, and by his transition to life in the U.S. as a child.

The second chapter is devoted to Belgian international student Sam, who came to FSU in 2010 to pursue a doctoral degree after obtaining both a bachelor's and a master's

degree in Belgium. Sam's experience is characterized in part by his struggle to pursue musical studies in the face of family and personal conflicts, and by his debating whether to pursue a career in the U.S. or to return to Belgium after graduating.

Romanian international student Silviu is the subject of chapter three. Silviu attended a vocational arts school in his home country. In his teens he spent three years in Cádiz, Spain, where he studied flamenco with a Spanish-born Gypsy teacher. During that time, Silviu not only acquired proficiency in the flamenco guitar and vocal traditions, but he also grasped the insider/outsider dynamics in the city's Gypsy culture. Upon a chance encounter with FSU alumnus William Yelverton, Silviu came to the U.S. in 2004 to pursue a bachelor's degree at Middle Tennessee State University (Murfreesboro, TN). He has been a graduate student at FSU since 2009.

In chapter four I examine the musical experiences of Adam, a Canadian guitarist. After completing his undergraduate studies in Canada, he came to the U.S. as an international student. Adam obtained a master's in guitar performance at the University of Nevada in Las Vegas, after which UNLV hired him as a full-time faculty member. After working with temporary work visas for four years, Adam married a U.S. citizen and adjusted his immigration status to that of a permanent resident. He then came to FSU to pursue a doctoral degree. Adam graduated in May of 2011, and he is presently on the search for a university teaching position.

### **The Researcher's Background**

Although I, myself, am not the subject of one of the chapters in the present document, my experiences as part of the FSU guitar cohort inform both my research inquiry and the conclusions I derive from my research. Thus I would like to delineate some of my own musical experiences before proceeding.

I was born in 1982 in Lima, Peru, to a *criollo* family—that is, I have Spanish roots, although my ancestors immigrated to Peru during the nineteenth century, and I maintain no personal ties with Spain. I received my elementary and high school education in a British school in Lima, where English was a compulsory subject since kindergarten. As part of my early music training in school, I played native instruments like the *zampoña* (Andean panpipe) and the *tarka* flute. At age nine, I started classical guitar lessons with Alonso Acosta Ojeda, who also introduced me to the *música criolla*



tradition, a coastal-Peruvian musical genre influenced by both European and Afro-Peruvian elements. (Manuel, my former teacher's brother, is one of the country's most performed and recorded *música criolla* modern composers.)

Between the ages of sixteen and eighteen, I studied privately with Édgar Valcárcel (1932-2010), one of the country's most prominent art music composers of the twentieth century. With Maestro Valcárcel I studied harmony and counterpoint in the Western tradition (he was a student of Messiaen and Ginastera), and developed a renewed appreciation of Andean music after having been exposed to Valcárcel's *avant garde* art-music treatments of traditional musical materials.

After high school, I began my college studies at the Manhattan School of Music, where I studied guitar with David Starobin. I transferred as a junior to Cornell University, where I studied music and liberal arts, and took lessons with Argentinean guitarist Pablo Cohen. In 2005 I came to FSU as a graduate student to pursue a master's in ethnomusicology. During that time, I got involved with the FSU guitar program, initially as a non-major student of Bruce Holzman; I enrolled as a master's student in my second semester. Like other guitarists in the program, I met Bruce without initially realizing the high standards that he places on his students. Over time, I had to reexamine different aspects of my technique, my musicality, and my identity as a musician. As part of my experience, Bruce guided me to search for solutions to musical and technical issues. Although he did not set any specific requirements in regards to technique or repertory, he always emphasized the need for me to develop clarity of tone and ideas, and an effective, well-reasoned technical approach.

As an international student, I came to the U.S. with an F-1 student visa. In March of 2011 I married Yessenia, a Cuban-American pianist and music educator. Since then, I have begun an adjustment of status to permanent residence, and I am presently awaiting the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to process my application so that I can both work in the U.S. and travel back to Peru.

I will insert additional details of my musical and personal experience within the narrative, especially in regards to memories I have shared with each chapter's informant over the years. Considering that such inclusions are not strictly a part of the main text, I am separating them with asterisks and indicating (with subheadings in italics) any

specific time period to which the instance alludes. In the context of the present discussion, such vignettes may be regarded as short exercises in autoethnography (defined by Deborah Reed-Danahay as “a form of self-narrative that places the self within a social context”).<sup>40</sup>

As the reader may have already gathered, the present document does not only constitute a musicological exploration pertinent to a group of instrumentalists or to those researching the insider/outsider dichotomy in a Western institution. It is also an attempt to gain a better insight into my own experience as an international student in the U.S., and as a guitarist at FSU during the course of six years.

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*Florida State University, Kuersteiner Building, one afternoon in late August, 2005*

The black-and-white picture of Andrés Segovia (regally leaning back on a carved wooden chair, holding a cane, with his much-younger wife standing next to him); the diplomas that read “First Place,” “Second Place,” “Third Place”; the coffee pot; the wooden music stand; the picture with Oscar Ghiglia; the desk covered with papers; the pictures with the Assads, with Pepe Romero; the 1981 Toronto Festival poster; the piano that doesn’t get played; the different objects on the piano (two little plastic dinosaurs, some past recital programs, a mug with pencils, and a picture of him next to a road sign that says “Bruce”): Professor Holzman is looking at me. He is not saying anything. His expression has been fixed for what seems like twenty, thirty seconds. Should I let him know that the piece is over? Perhaps smiling will let him know that the G-chord I strummed last marked the concerto’s ending.

Motion: with his eyes still fixed on me, he squints and takes a deep breath.

“You played a lot of wrong notes,” he says.

This is my FSU guitar audition. A week earlier I had called my friend Álvaro to let him know I was starting a master’s in ethnomusicology. When he heard I was in Tallahassee, he said, “You have to look up Bruce Holzman! He’s one of the best teachers in the country.” I had met two FSU guitarists at the Schadt Guitar Competition semifinals, in Allentown, Pennsylvania—one from Brazil, the other from Argentina.

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<sup>40</sup> Deborah E. Reed-Danahay (ed.), *Auto/Ethnography: Rewriting the Self and the Social* (New York: Berg, 1997), 9. See also Heewon Chang, *Autoethnography as Method* (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, Inc., 2008) and Giampietro Gobo, *Doing Ethnography* (Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2008), 61-3.

They were the only two players there who currently studied with the same teacher. I had also heard briefly about Bruce Holzman from Oren (a faculty member at the Manhattan School of Music) when I was a freshman.

“Some parts were amazing. Others. . . .” Still serious, he elaborates on my audition as he throws his hands in the air and huffs. “Do you think it is acceptable for a guitarist to play so many wrong notes?” I meekly nod “No.” Distressing as it is, I find myself disliking the criticism much less than the silent treatment.

The Sunday before, I played the same concerto as a soloist with the Peruvian National Symphony. I thought at the time that the performance was a success; it was a full house, I heard *bravos*, and many people came backstage afterwards to congratulate me. I had also been a semifinalist in the same competition as his students—I even found out that some current students who competed had not made it into the semifinals. “I am *somebody*, after all,” I had thought earlier on my audition day. “It can’t go bad.” Maybe less self-confidence and more practicing throughout the week would have allowed me to make a better first impression.

“In your email, you said you met some of my guys at the Schadt?” he asks. (There was something very sympathetic about the way he said “my guys.” As if “his guys” were also recipients of his respect and an almost paternal, protective admiration.)

I explain, among other things, that yes, I had met his students, and that I had played the concerto with the orchestra the previous weekend and normally played it better. I tell him that I came to FSU to study ethnomusicology, and that I would very much like to study with him as well, and perhaps enroll to get a second master’s in performance, if he allows it.

“You can take lessons for credit,” he says. He is not making an effort to hide his doubts about my capability. “Let’s see how it goes, and we can decide next semester about whether you may join the program.”

This is how I met Bruce. I didn’t think, at this point, that I would take more than one semester of lessons with him. There was no way I could have known that I would become one of his doctoral graduates—and, somewhere along the way, one of the “guitar guys.”

## CHAPTER 2

### ANDREW

*Interstate 10, between Jacksonville and Tallahassee, night of March 3, 2008*

“I can’t see anything,” said Andrew. “We’re going to crash!”

Javier and I didn’t seem to care about the tears blinding Andrew, who drove during the trip back to Tallahassee from the Schadt Competition. All three of us, mumbling regionalisms from our countries as we gasped for air, were laughing the hardest we had during the entire trip. My impromptu rendition of famous passages from guitar concerti, which I whistled while beatboxing, was funny to the extent of jeopardizing our lives on the highway.

That weekend we were “the FSU guys” at the Schadt semifinals in Allentown, Pennsylvania. No other school had three students there. We were a force to be reckoned with, said someone in the studio. Our Facebook accounts all contained some flavor of “Go Noles!” that our friends had written. Andrew got third place: he played the *Concierto del sur* by Manuel Ponce. I was with him when we received a call announcing the finalists, and we both had a beer with Dave, our host, to celebrate that “Florida State” had a shot at the first prize.

After the Sunday afternoon finals, I called Bruce to tell him the results. “I love you guys,” he said, and he reminded me that all that mattered was that we played our best.

That night I rode with Dave’s son to New York City, where I saw my brother and met my newborn niece. I met Andrew and Javier the next morning at the Allentown airport, guitar cases in hand, ready to return to our homes away from home. Each of us was to tell our version of that weekend during our lessons with Bruce the next week: who was there, what they played, what we learned....

We arrived back in Tallahassee late at night. After hours of traveling together (after months of practice, and tense hours of waiting for phone calls announcing the results; after laughing while crying tears of camaraderie, not caring one bit about dying to the tune of our concerti) we shook hands farewell. With a few more words, we agreed to see each other in Friday’s studio class.

This is how I first bonded with Andrew.

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Andrew Stroud was born in Bath, England, in 1981. He started studying music in primary school, at age six—his father, a pharmaceutical scientist, had owned a nylon-string guitar since college. Through the British public school system, Andrew took general music courses and private guitar lessons. He learned chords and standard common practice repertoire using The Royal Conservatory’s pedagogical texts and testing materials. In 1991, Andrew’s father was offered a job in a U.S. pharmaceutical company, and soon after, the family moved to Saint Petersburg, Florida. Even at that age, Andrew was aware that the relocation caused some tension between his immediate and extended families.

The transition to the U.S. had an impact on Andrew’s musical studies, as guitar lessons were not an option through the public school system. A year went by before Andrew continued his guitar studies with Frederick Hellwitz, his first American teacher. The lessons took place an hour’s drive from Saint Petersburg. The whole family piled in the car and went on a “four-hour expedition” every weekend.

Andrew sensed his teacher’s frustration, as he was initially rebellious toward Hellwitz’s proposed repertoire and pedagogy. Andrew’s lack of interest in practicing changed when Hellwitz agreed to teach him a transcription of Isaac Albéniz’s “Asturias” (from the piano suite *Cantos de España*). The work’s higher technical demands steered Andrew towards a new guitaristic direction, with a focus on practicing and technique. During our interview, Andrew comments: “It was the first time I was learning how to learn music.” Andrew’s studies ended abruptly, however, when Hellwitz moved away, and stopped giving music lessons.

Andrew continued his studies with Thomas Coffey, whose studio was located in Tampa. A former student of John Parris and Adam Holzman, Coffey was a patient teacher yet much more demanding than any of Andrew’s former instructors.<sup>1</sup> “He would never say that something was ‘good’; he only said things were ‘less bad’.”

Andrew smiles and recalls that this was his first contact with the “brutal honesty” pedagogical approach, characteristic of Bruce Holzman: informative at its core and

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<sup>1</sup> Adam Holzman (b. 1960) is Bruce Holzman’s brother and former student.

unambiguous in its delivery. With Coffey, Andrew learned to be methodical in his practice; he spent much of his time with the guitar studying both the technical and theoretical aspects of music. It was through Coffey that Andrew had his first contact with a community of guitarists. He began playing in studio class and started attending guitar concerts and masterclasses (like those taught by Adam Holzman in Tampa).

Andrew's contact with the Tampa guitar community facilitated his participation in the 1996 Stetson Guitar Workshop, directed by Stetson University's guitar professor, FSU alumnus Stephen Robinson. "That's where the floodgates opened," reminisces Andrew. He played in Robinson's masterclass, participated in workshops, and heard multiple concerts. During that time, Penn State University offered Andrew a fencing scholarship (he had been fencing since age eleven and had won multiple fencing tournaments). Although he was seriously considering the offer (and contemplating a major in Science), Andrew's non-U.S. citizenship halted his impulse. He would have had to wait until after college to participate in international competitions on a national team, where he would have represented the U.S. One unexpected day during his senior year in high school, Andrew received a call from Stephen Robinson, who encouraged him to join the guitar program at Stetson University (DeLand, Florida) and offered him a scholarship. Andrew accepted the offer and thus began his collegiate music studies.

Initially, Robinson steered Andrew towards Music Education. After some thought, Andrew requested that his emphasis be in performance. Although hesitant, Robinson finally agreed, but not without advising Andrew of all the work he would have to put in as a performance major. Andrew interpreted his teacher's words to mean that his playing and musicianship were deficient. "I had the belief that I knew less than everyone else in the program," he says.

To compensate for this perceived disadvantage, Andrew became what he describes as a "music monk." He practiced as many hours as he was physically able and studied theory two hours every night, opting solitary practice or forsaking socializing with friends. Part of the practice dynamic he developed entailed scheduling his classes in as few days, and with as few hours in between as possible, in order to maximize the amount of continuous hours he could devote to practicing.

During Andrew's second semester at Stetson, Stephen Robinson left on sabbatical. As a substitute, the school brought in French pedagogue Judicaël Perroy. Still in his twenties, Judicaël had recently won the Guitar Foundation of America Competition (one of the most prestigious in the classical guitar world). Andrew characterizes Judicaël as an inheritor of the "French school" of guitar tradition—itsself enriched by international guitarists such as Spaniard Alberto Ponce and Argentinean Roberto Aussel. Judicaël infused the Stetson guitar program with a renewed vitality and Andrew's studies with an unprecedented level of musical and guitaristic understandings. "It was like getting hit with a sledgehammer," says Andrew, his eyes gleaming.

Because of his own European background, Andrew bonded with Judicaël to a greater extent, both musically and personally, than other students in the program did. Andrew's sensitivity to the differences between life in Europe and life in a small Florida town granted him a high level of rapport with Judicaël, and they soon became friends. Andrew helped Judicaël adjust to life in DeLand, Florida; they attended music events together, and they sometimes spoke French together.

Studying the guitar became part of an intense teacher-student exchange. "We would be having a lesson," says Andrew, "and he'd tell me to go practice a passage for three hours, then come back to play it again."

As Andrew elaborates on his interactions with Judicaël, he highlights how, at the time, his own perspective was still one "from the outside." In his daily life, Andrew was aware of his foreign roots, particularly through linguistic differences between British and American English. He negotiated this aspect of his identity over time, and trained himself to minimize his British pronunciation. He also began to use Americanisms to avoid being treated as an outsider in daily interactions. "I was derided as a kid because of this," explains Andrew. Also to avoid being taunted, Andrew developed what he refers to as "a cynical sense of humor" to handle potentially inconsiderate comments. When he perceived that someone was poking fun at his accent, he accentuated his British diction: to "steal the joke, and take away the ammunition."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> See Didier Eribon, *Insult* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 15-7. Eribon has discussed (in the context of queer studies) how derisive utterances reflect power relations, and how they shape individuals' personalities and subjectivities.

Following Judicaël's advice, Andrew visited Paris in the summer of 2000 to meet Olivier Chassain (guitar professor at the Paris Conservatory), get acquainted with the guitaristic environment, and decide whether he wanted to study there. Andrew's decision not to pursue studies at the Paris Conservatory was influenced by his wife's immigration status in the U.S. She had begun an adjustment of status to permanent residency, and leaving the U.S. before the process was completed would have nullified her application. Faced with leaving Linda in the U.S. until her application was processed or traveling with her (thus voiding the lengthy and costly immigration application), Andrew decided to look for a graduate school in the U.S.

Despite being tempted, once again, with an assistant fencing coach position (this time from the University of South Carolina at Columbia), Andrew followed Stephen Robinson's advice and applied to The Florida State University. Andrew met Bruce Holzman in a masterclass at Stetson during his junior year, and he was immediately impressed by the clarity and accessibility of Bruce's musical ideas. After formally auditioning, Andrew joined the FSU guitar program in 2005. Upon starting in the program, his reaction was one of surprise—Andrew was caught off guard with Bruce's "brutal honesty" approach.

"Don't try to impress him," says Andrew, with a sigh and a smirk on his face. "I go in there and see his office walls completely covered with pictures and competition diplomas [of his now-famous former students]. I thought 'I have nothing to offer'."

Adjusting to his studies with Bruce involved renegotiating his identity as a guitarist. Andrew initially doubted whether he could be a prize-winning guitarist, whose name would appear in the posters of international festivals and competitions. He even questioned his worth as a player, and his career choice. Such hesitation made him even unrecognizable to the self image he had built during his undergraduate studies: "I thought, 'I am even *this* guy?'"

Andrew comments on how Bruce's teaching emphasizes musicality through sung nonverbal orality—what I refer to as *implicit oral pedagogy*. Instead of explicitly defining specific musical ideas for Andrew to implement into his playing, Bruce hummed different elements from the music during lessons. "Just by humming," explains Andrew, "he communicated tempo, articulation, dynamics, musical gestures... his entire *musical*



*vision.*” After a few lessons, Andrew discovered the nexus between Bruce’s implicit instruction and technical development: it took Andrew multiple hours of daily practice to implement Bruce’s musical ideas into his playing.<sup>3</sup>

I find this feature of Bruce’s teaching—favoring nonverbal musical communication over detailed theoretical or stylistic explanations—akin to the concept of *implicit instruction* in the linguistics subfield of second language acquisition. Under such a conceptual framework, the process of acquiring a language is primarily categorized into the areas of *input* (the communication learners perceive as linguistically meaningful) and *output* (the linguistically meaningful communication learners produce).<sup>4</sup> Much debate has focused on whether explicit grammar instruction has an overall positive effect in learners proficiently acquiring a *developing system*, which allows them to efficiently assimilate and reproduce the target language.<sup>5</sup> Multiple linguists have questioned the usefulness of learning a second language’s grammatical features outside of communicative settings (e.g. classes conducted entirely in the target language).<sup>6</sup> Moreover, some studies suggest that explicit instruction does not inherently contribute to learners’ understanding and processing all the linguistic features present in the context of second language instruction.<sup>7</sup>

I believe the notion of explicit versus implicit instruction in second language acquisition may inform our understanding of musical-pedagogical practices that underscore a nonverbal exposition of ideas over conceptual explanations. Those of us who have studied with Bruce Holzman understand that he achieves a pedagogical communicative intent without having to rely on explicit, extended theoretical verbalizations. The more effective students are able to understand his aurally-conveyed ideas and carry them out on the guitar, thus producing a musical output, analogous to the one in the above linguistic model. Furthermore, the concept of implicit/explicit

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<sup>3</sup> Guitarists like David Russell and Manuel Barrueco have underscored in their masterclasses the importance of singing as a way to developing a better understanding of the music one studies on the guitar.

<sup>4</sup> Bill VanPatten and Teresa Cadierno, “Explicit Instruction and Input Processing,” *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 15 (1993): 227.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> James F. Lee, “On the Generalizability, Limits, and Potential Future Directions of Processing Instruction Research,” in *Processing Instruction: Theory, Research, and Commentary*, ed. Bill VanPatten (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2004), 311.

<sup>7</sup> Claudia Fernández, “Reexamining the Role of Explicit Information in Processing Instruction,” *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 30 (2008): 299.

instruction may illuminate a variety of musical communicative processes around the world, especially those that underscore communal participation and learning through mimesis.<sup>8</sup>

To implement Bruce's implicit musical suggestions, Andrew devised a time-management/practice system. He began by typing up Bruce's comments and ideas, then put them into spreadsheets. He organized warm-ups and technical drills that would facilitate implementing Bruce's ideas into specific musical passages. Andrew's former "monastic" undergraduate tendencies resurfaced, and he organized his daily life around his practice regime. "Bruce has permeated my world," says Andrew. "I try to start and end every day the same way: practicing."

Andrew highlights how, since studying with Bruce, he has developed the practice of studying his own habits, "the good ones and the bad ones." By noticing specific aspects of his technique (such as right-hand finger alternation, arpeggios, and scales), Andrew finds the structure necessary to set and accomplish musical goals. After initially becoming frustrated with his own playing earlier in his studies, Andrew made use of Bruce's guidance to become a dynamic problem solver. "It's the path to becoming hyper-observant," he says.

In his guitaristic routine, Andrew implements slow, deliberate practice. He works in ninety-minute sessions to progressively integrate technical and musical elements, such as separate hand work, short passages, larger sections, entire pieces, etc. This dynamic allows him to measure his progress and keep his motivation high while establishing tiny goals that can be closely monitored and achieved. Andrew's efforts and consistency are reflected in his high placement in national and international guitar competitions. In addition to motivating himself to improve his playing, competitions have provided a way to interact with players from diverse nationalities. By competing, explains Andrew, he can relate to others both through the common goal of participating in the event and through national and individual differences.

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<sup>8</sup> See Michael B. Bakan, *Music of Death and New Creation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 283-91; Thomas Turino, "Structure, Context, and Strategy in Musical Ethnography," *Ethnomusicology* 34, no. 3 (1990): 403-11. Michael Bakan has discussed mimetic imitation versus explicit instruction in the context of Balinese music learning—where Sukarata, his teacher, taught implicitly by example rather than explicitly with words. Thomas Turino has emphasized the role of communal participation and rote memorization in the context of Andean panpipe music in the Peruvian village of Conima. Moreover, Suzuki pedagogues have used mimetic instruction to teach Western classical music for decades.

At one point, Andrew regarded competitions as a means to justify his deservedness of an assistantship in the FSU Guitar Program. “Javier and I talked about it,” says Andrew. “We felt that we had to *produce* for Bruce, and bringing home competition prizes was a way of *delivering the goods*.” Although this was never an institutional requirement, Andrew felt that were he not to do well in competitions, he was at risk of losing his assistantship to someone else in the program.

To Andrew, the guitar functions as a metaphoric space of introspection, a “sanctuary of solace, contemplation and reflection.” Since studying with Thomas Coffey during high school, Andrew developed what he himself characterizes as a “music-centric identity”—one in which in-depth study and performance of the guitar are the core. Playing a well-studied program for an attentive audience represents his ideal musical-personal communicational exchange. To Andrew, participating in competitions for vanity, or playing the guitar without focusing one’s awareness in the musical act, are roads to “superficiality,” which he tries to avoid.

Since he began studying with Bruce, Andrew’s self image has been centered around his musical and personal goals. Through his interactions with others, Andrew explains, he notices “daily reminders” of his non-U.S. background. His musical drive, however, overrides any linguistic and social differences he may have noticed earlier in life. As part of his own teaching, Andrew instructs students in the classical guitar tradition. To Andrew, the “classical guitar” represents a path to achieving dexterity and producing good tone in a non-amplified instrument. One goal of his teaching is to prepare state-college students to audition for the FSU guitar program and to study with Bruce.

Andrew’s future plans are connected with those of his wife Linda, who is working on a doctoral degree in biology at FSU. To Andrew, his guitar degree is more flexible than his wife’s scientific one. He expects that where he goes after FSU will be determined mainly by Linda’s work, and that he will be able to teach guitar in that area. Until then, Andrew’s foci are in his home life, work, and studies. “I’m here for Bruce,” says Andrew. I pause for a moment, and smile—realizing suddenly how many times I have heard others say that phrase before.

## CHAPTER 3

### SAM

*Florida State University, Strozier Library, afternoon of Sunday, March 11, 2012*

“But are they better?” asks Sam.

“They are, if you like vanilla,” I reply.

“I do,” he says as he deposits seventy-five cents into the vending machine.

We are on a break. Sam has been telling me about his musical experiences in Belgium, and what constitutes absolute happiness; about playing for Leo Brouwer, and being accused of tearing his family apart by studying the guitar. He presses D-4 and the machine dispenses a package of cookies. We walk around the library’s basement for a moment as Sam tells me about his *demons*.

“Sometimes I worry,” he says. “I’ve been through a lot.”

Bent awkwardly over the low water fountain, listening to Sam tell me about the things that keep him awake at night, I find myself thinking of Phineas, King of Thrace: the blind man sitting in front of a long table, plentiful meats and fruits in front of him, hopelessly reaching for food as the harpies torment him. As we walk back, I look at the bookshelves around us, still pondering. All of this information, this banquet of knowledge, what good is it if doubt and fear hover above us, tormenting us and stealing our focus? Is there a solution that will allow us to live in peace with our ideas and projects—that will rescue us from our own thoughts, the way the Argonauts aided the Thracian king?

“There’s this Peruvian author I like, Vargas Llosa,” I tell Sam as we enter the study room. “He once said writing was how he got rid of the images and feelings that haunted him. He said it’s a way to ‘get rid of the demons’.”<sup>1</sup> Sam smirks and nods in agreement. He knows what I’m talking about.

Suddenly a thought comes to me: that recent night, as I laid in bed worried and unable to sleep, perhaps the same demons that haunted me were also tormenting Sam— aerial harpies of thought, stealing our dream time, poking us awake.

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<sup>1</sup> See Mario Vargas Llosa, *García Márquez: historia de un deicidio* (Barcelona: Barral Editores, 1971), 87. Vargas Llosa elaborates on how a writer’s “demons” are “facts, people, dreams, myths,” imprinted in his or her memory, and which are to be simultaneously acknowledged and exorcised through the act of writing.

I turn the recorder back on and think that, maybe, we are about to exorcise them.

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Sam Desmet was born in the municipality of Waregem, in the Belgian province of West Flanders, in 1981. At age six, he was first exposed to musical study through the Belgian public music school system—a widespread network, accessible and affordable to most Belgians.

Sam was first drawn to the guitar one afternoon when he was fifteen. His brother's friend, who studied music at the time, visited the Desmets and brought along his instrument. When he and Sam's brother stepped out of the house, Sam opened the case and started playing around with the guitar. Within days, Sam gathered his teenage savings and registered to take guitar lessons. He began his lessons studying mostly chords and popular tunes.

As Sam prepared to finish high school, he felt his family's pressure to select and pursue a career path after graduation. Because he needed money for college regardless of what he studied, Sam worked for a year in computer networking. During this time, he contemplated a career as an IT specialist (his brother was already a successful computer animator).

One experience that motivated Sam to pursue professional musical studies was his first classical guitar masterclass with Yves Storms, guitar professor at the Royal Conservatory of Music (Ghent, Belgium). The workshop lasted an entire day and included both individual and ensemble work. The fact that he lost track of time, as he enjoyed the thirteen-hour event, indicated to Sam that he needed to redirect his future towards the classical guitar.<sup>2</sup> Thus, in 2002, he joined the Ghent Royal Conservatory.

Sam's musical impetus soon became a source of family conflict. His parents insisted he was too old to start a "serious" musical career, and his brother and sister urged him to switch to a non-musical course of study. Sam tells me about his perseverance and

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<sup>2</sup> See Thomas Turino, *Music as Social Life* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2008), 4-5; Federico García Lorca, "Juego y teoría del duende," in *Obras*, Vol. 6, ed. Miguel García-Posada (Madrid: Ediciones Akal, 1994), 328-39. Following the ideas of Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, Turino describes how enjoyable activities propitiate *flow* states, where one's sense of time is altered and one's concentration is heightened. In the flamenco tradition, a similar mental state is achieved upon intense concentration in music and dance, referred to as *duende* ("spirit").

his desire not to alter his decision. “It was really hard, emotionally. I was all by myself,” he says.

His family’s advice to switch careers was partly due to Sam’s failing, twice, on one of the Conservatory’s entry-level solfege classes. His family insisted that he lacked the early training necessary to become a successful professional musician. Sam was determined, however, and gave up a family summer vacation trip to study and retake the solfege exam in August—a decision that caused some friction with his family. “My brother accused me of tearing the family apart,” says Sam.

After finally passing the exam, Sam enrolled full time at the Conservatory. Even though family tensions settled somewhat, Sam rented a room in the municipality of Ghent to focus on his studies and avoid any potential conflicts at home. He saw his family on the weekends.

Sam’s familial situation took a positive turn about six years into his conservatory studies, when he played for Cuban guitarist-composer Leo Brouwer. Sam had auditioned for Brouwer and had been selected to play in his masterclass at the Conservatory. Unaware of this, Sam’s mother had contacted Sam’s teacher, Yves Storms, to inquire about Sam’s progress. Storms informed Mrs. Desmet of his musical development, stressing the importance of Brouwer in the classical guitar world, and encouraging her and Sam’s father to attend the masterclass. With emotion, Sam tells me not how he played, or what advice Brouwer gave him. Instead he looks at me and says, “That was the first time my father saw me perform on the guitar.” Sam’s parents eventually came to terms with his career choice, even though they were not prone to outwardly manifesting their approval.

Sam’s studies with Storms were centered on musicality and theoretical concepts, understating technical work. To supplement his technical study, Sam attended music festivals and symposiums, where he participated in workshops and masterclasses with international guitarists. Upon completing his undergraduate studies, he took part in the International Guitar Symposium at Iserlohn, Germany. There he met Florida State University alumni like the members of the Tantalus Guitar Quartet, who encouraged Sam to consult Bruce Holzman about his technique and to consider studying with him at FSU.

During the next year's Iserlohn Symposium, Sam looked forward to meeting Bruce and playing in his masterclass. "He even agreed to give me a pre-audition," says Sam, during which Bruce would gauge his level and determine whether he should formally apply to study at FSU. Sam was left somewhat confused after auditioning: "Bruce said 'Okay,' got up and left." Not knowing whether to interpret the comment (or lack thereof) as positive or negative, Sam carried on with the festival's activities. Later that night, he ran into Bruce at the hotel's bar. There, Bruce gave Sam a handwritten list of pieces to learn and practice, highlighting how each would help him improve different aspects of his technique. "*That's* the moment," says Sam, when he realized Bruce's commitment to pedagogy, and when he decided he wanted to study with him at FSU. "The fact he had been thinking about my playing in his own time, and that he had written that list, told me a lot about his character as a teacher," says Sam.

The following year at Iserlohn, Sam saw Bruce again. "I followed him around, asking questions, trying to learn as much as possible from him," says Sam. Bruce encouraged him to audition at FSU, but a recent breakup with his girlfriend and inadequate finances halted Sam's momentum. To save money for his studies abroad, Sam worked for a year in the Belgian public music school system, and taught guitar to children and novices.

In February of 2010, Sam auditioned at The Florida State University and got accepted into the doctoral guitar program. For his second semester he received a tuition waiver, which alleviated his out-of-state educational costs. Following my suggestion, Sam applied to teach French through the FSU Modern Languages Department; he obtained the position and taught undergraduate French during his third semester.

Since joining the FSU guitar program, Sam has enjoyed the campus-wide student resources and collegiate atmosphere, as well as the camaraderie he has found in Bruce's studio. Such experiences came to Sam with some initial surprise—students in his previous school were less gregarious. Shared experiences and camaraderie, explains Sam, allow him to feel a strong bond with his peers. Besides pursuing a guitar degree, students face similar challenges and day-to-day situations, such as lacking financial freedom and searching for practice time. Sam recounts, for example, how Silviu helped him adjust to life in Tallahassee. He showed him where to shop for food and clothes, taught him how to

go about getting a driver's license, and advised him on local customs from the perspective of an international student. Guitaristically, playing in Bruce's weekly studio class was the first time Sam had the opportunity to play for and hear his peers on a regular basis—an experience Sam regards as positive for his musical growth.

In his musical practice, Sam has always emphasized analysis. He regards this act as one of “self-awareness.” Analyzing one's music, he explains, is intended not just to understand a work's notes and rhythm, but also as an artistic *journey* towards an emotional understanding of music. To Sam, such an exercise goes beyond the immediate act of analyzing a piece of music. By analyzing his musical and non-musical practices (including his own behaviors and interpersonal interactions), he strives to better himself as a coherent, organic whole. Sam relates the *freedom* he experiences when applying rationality to his musical-personal world to his first encounter with the guitar. “Studying the guitar was the first decision I made in my life that was not influenced by anyone else,” he says. Furthermore, Sam regards his quest for adult independence as an integral part of his musical self. Learning music despite his “late start,” paying for his studies from his own savings, researching for the best teachers, etc., were all exercises in analysis and personal choice. Such a mode of thought, he explains, overrode any options that may have initially seemed more convenient or more agreeable to those around him. “My early musical decisions were also my first adult decisions,” he reflects.

Since he began studying with Bruce, Sam has intensified his analytical practice in order to integrate each new thing he learns into his playing. The most challenging task, he says, is to incorporate Bruce's ideas into the framework he developed during his previous studies, especially in regards to balancing technical work and musicality. Sam describes how Bruce has helped him assimilate such technical-musical elements into his playing, primarily through the development of an accurate technique. Following Bruce's suggestions, Sam exercises this aspect of his playing via slow and deliberate practice. “This is the time to be critical of oneself,” explains Sam.

To enhance his guitaristic self-control, Sam implemented an anecdote that Bruce told him about Oscar Ghiglia's practices, reminiscent of a Zen exercise in patience. He played entire pieces, plucking each note and letting the sound die out completely before plucking the next one. This example is representative of the *slow* and deliberate practice



that Sam has been employing, reflecting also his renewed understanding of guitar study as an act of awareness and self-criticism.

To aid his progress while at FSU, Sam developed the habit of writing out a schedule. The purpose, Sam explains, is to help himself set and achieve realistic long- and short-term goals, and to remain flexible in his technical work. Following a diary entry format, Sam also lists his non-musical habits and routines to help analyze how different aspects of his day-to-day life affect his instrumental progress. As is the case with other FSU guitar students, Sam structures his entire day for the purpose of enhancing his musical growth.

“Bruce’s teaching sends you on a journey to find your own answers,” says Sam. I cannot help but think of a Taoist master (who teaches by allowing the student to uncover wisdom for him or herself) when Sam reminds me of a particular feature of Bruce’s teaching. “He will answer your questions by asking you more questions.”

That is not to say that Sam hasn’t been exposed to (and surprised by) some of Bruce’s more direct pedagogies. Sam relates how, during a lesson, as he was buzzing in one passage, Bruce said abruptly, “Stop the buzzing!” The abruptness of the remark promoted his internalization of the reminder, and Sam corrected his playing of the passage.<sup>3</sup> “Bruce gets to the point,” says Sam. “Some people don’t like it, but it works.”

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When Sam came to study in the U.S., his intention was to improve his playing and use his studies abroad as an asset when looking for a European job in higher education. Some time into his college studies, however, Sam became less motivated to return to Belgium to pursue a teaching career. He is aware that he could, once again, become a teacher in the Belgian public music school system, but he doesn’t want to teach novices and non-professionals. Sam remembers that experience as one that was often pedagogically frustrating. “We would spend a few lessons studying arpeggios, *p-i-m-a*,” he says. “Then, three months later, it was still *p-i-m-a*.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> See Frank Farrelly and Jeffrey Brandsma, *Provocative Therapy* (Cupertino, CA: Meta Publications, 1974). Psychotherapists Farrelly and Brandsma have posited that radically challenging or verbally catching clients off-balance is one way to achieve rapid success in therapeutic contexts.

<sup>4</sup> *P-i-m-a* refer to the right-hand fingers used in classical guitar playing (traditionally in Spanish): *pulgar* (thumb), *indice* (index), *medio* (middle finger), and *anular* (ring finger).

As a student at FSU, Sam met and began a relationship with Elizabeth, a Taiwanese pianist. They initially related partly through a shared condition as international students. “We’re both in the same boat,” Sam tells me, “away from home.” As he contemplates a future together, Sam is aware that Elizabeth’s non-European citizenship would grant her limited professional options should they establish themselves in Belgium. They have been considering two other viable alternatives: to pursue careers either in Taiwan or in the U.S. (Elizabeth has lived in the U.S. since the age of fifteen, and is a U.S. permanent resident). “Ideally,” says Sam, “we would both teach in the same university.” He is aware, however, and somewhat concerned because the probability of finding such a situation is low, given the unpredictable nature of the higher education job market.

Sam explains how, although Elizabeth was born in Taiwan, moving to the U.S. in her mid-teens and living here for fifteen years allow her to feel Americanized. Regardless of her assimilation into the American culture and her status as a permanent resident, however, Elizabeth is close friends with other Taiwanese students. Sam is often surprised when he notices Elizabeth and her Taiwanese friends expressing a shared identity and showing pride based on their place of birth. “It’s interesting to me when I see such patriotism because, to me, Belgium is just a place where I was born and grew up,” Sam tells me with a smile.

For some time, Sam has been concerned by issues pertaining to his status as an international student, the American job market, and the American economic situation. Were he to settle with Elizabeth in the U.S. and become a permanent resident, he is worried about losing the capacity to work in the Belgian public school system—and thus lose the financial and personal security involved with such a stable job. The likelihood of obtaining a job in Belgium, he adds, is much greater than getting a university teaching position in the U.S. Sam reveals that, sometimes, he becomes overwhelmed with these thoughts, and his feelings tend to lean toward pessimism. “These thoughts keep me awake at night.”

These are some of Sam’s *demons*.

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As I turn the recorder back on, Sam elaborates on his worries as an international student and as an artist. He uses the metaphor of “feeling chased” to explain the emotion he experiences upon contemplating his future professional possibilities, and how these relate to his past and present. Sam views his “late start” in music as a disadvantage—something he still needs to “catch up” with. At the same time, he feels socially pressured to do well and become professionally established, considering that his Belgian friends have already left behind their college lives and are now having children, buying homes, and working stable jobs. To Sam, the feeling of instability is related to both the amount of competition present in the musical field, and the fact that, as he explains, “We are selling a product that people don’t need in order to survive.”<sup>5</sup>

To Sam, the “chasing feeling” is one that “may never be gone.” It symbolizes to him the *struggle* he experiences as an artist with both inner (intellectual, emotional) and outer (societal, interpersonal) components. Although at times the pressure overwhelms him, making him feel “cornered” in his own path, he acknowledges that finding a way out of the pressure motivates him to study more and be on the lookout for new artistic-professional directions. When his emotions take such a turn, he tells me, the pressure turns into feelings of exhilaration, and the passionate, artistic work he then produces becomes “addictive.”

Uncertain of how his emotions will come into play and manifest themselves in the future, Sam explains that, as he finds solutions to his musical and guitaristic questions, he is competing against himself to become his best self, to fight doubt and uncertainty, and to explore the vastness of what he describes as the “virgin territory” of classical guitar in much of today’s musical world.

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Throughout the interview, Sam communicated to me the difficulties he experiences when verbalizing different aspects of his past and of his emotional world. His journey to become a professional musician has been one of artistic and emotional turmoil. Reflecting on our conversation as I write this document, I wonder about my role as an

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<sup>5</sup> This has been a subject of previous conversations I have had with Sam. Arguably, “classical guitar” musical production is no less necessary to survival than a new electronic gimmick or an mp3 player. Part of our challenge as artists consists of making our output, as performers and educators, one that is culturally relevant and desirable to individuals and institutions.

ethnographer and as a friend. Is the act of talking through one's rough patches a way to come to terms with one's history, thus moving forward emotionally?<sup>6</sup> Is it even necessary to talk about one's past in order to come to terms with it and leave aside memories of emotional distress?<sup>7</sup> Perhaps the real exorcism of the "demons" from one's past doesn't consist in dwelling upon them, but rather acknowledging their insignificance compared to the future's immense, unwritten possibilities.

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<sup>6</sup> See Dominick LaCapra, *Writing History, Writing Trauma* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 21-2. Historian Dominick LaCapra has emphasized how psychoanalytic theory may be used to explain traumatic events at a personal or historical level. *Working through* trauma, he explains, is an "articulatory practice," used to "distinguish between past and present and to recall in memory that something happened to one (or one's people) back then while realizing that one is living here and now with openings to the future."

<sup>7</sup> See Richard Bandler and John Grinder, *Frogs Into Princes* (Moab, UT: Real People Press, 1979), especially chapter 3, "Finding New Ways: Reframing," 137-93. Some psychotherapy schools of thought embrace the notion of "secret therapy," in which the client doesn't need to reminisce about details from his or her personal history in order to achieve progress with past personal problems.

## CHAPTER 4

### SILVIU

*The sky, near Pennsylvania, late afternoon of March 7, 2011*

As the small turboprop plane goes through an air pocket during turbulence, the surprised members of a gasping chorus jump back in their seats. (Did I also hear the young woman behind me muffle a scream?) Seated next to me, though, Silviu laughs and claps and points at me.

“Gonzalo, man,” he says. “If the plane were to fall, holding on to the seat in front of you won’t make much of a difference.”

“It wouldn’t accelerate the fall, either,” I say, trying to camouflage my nerves. “Besides, it gives me comfort.”

As I avoid looking out the window during the bumpy flight, I tell Silviu of an idea I had earlier that day: a shock-proof guitar case. “One that will keep the guitar safe during a fall, even if they drop it from the plane’s conveyer belt,” I explain. After, Silviu muses aloud about whether to put the money he made in the competition into a savings account, or to just hold on to it.

We are on our way back to Tallahassee. Silviu, Johnny and I had made it into the Schadt Competition semifinals. “Three of *us* from FSU again this year,” I said to myself on the way there. Silviu received third prize by playing Mauro Giuliani’s Concerto in A, Op. 30. Johnny played *Aranjuez*. I also performed the Giuliani concerto, though I used my own piano reduction and played Leo Brower’s cadenzas.

Despite missing Yessi, my fiancée, I feel somewhat effervescent: Dave and Monica, my hosts, treated me like a celebrity all weekend. The different Allentown families who hosted the competitors—mostly couples whose children live out of town—took it upon themselves to make us feel special. I even sensed that the host families playfully competed with one another to see who was accommodating the player with the most musical and professional achievements.

As Silviu and I talk about yesterday’s finals, I remember when he and I first met, six years earlier, also at the Schadt Competition in Allentown. He came with his host to pick me up from the hotel where I was staying, and they gave me a ride to a dinner party

where we met the other competitors and some members of the Allentown Symphony Association. On the way there, he told me that it was his second semester in college abroad and mentioned that he had studied flamenco with gypsies in Spain. “Six years. Ages ago,” I think as we approach the Washington Dulles Airport to change planes.

It does seem like ages since meeting Silviu that night in the hotel lobby during our first Schadt Competition. “We were both so much skinnier!” I remember with a smile.

Silviu came to FSU almost two years ago, and, during that time, we became friends. This was not the first competition to which we traveled together. There was the Texas Guitarfest in San Antonio to which Silviu, Alex, and I rode together, and during which we all roomed together at a Super 8 Hotel. I remember my metronome clicking at 80 the night before the semifinals (we had all made it past the first round). I sat at the edge of the bathtub practicing Tansman’s *Cavatina* while Alex sat on one of the beds practicing Moreno-Torroba’s “Nocturno” with the metronome at a different speed. Silviu knocked on the door and asked me to pause for a second, because he needed to use the restroom real quick. “We were on a mission,” I think. “And we still are.”

A voice commands us to fasten our seat belts. I look at Silviu and Johnny and remember the nights we played for each other—the frank solemnity of our sessions, and the banter and laughter at the small brewery after the finals.

Realizing that the turbulence is over (and my nerves at ease), I look out the window and gaze upon an illuminated District of Columbia.

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Silviu Ciulei was born in 1985 in the port city of Constanța, Romania. Growing up in one of the country’s largest cities, Silviu’s childhood transpired around people of different nationalities and ethnicities. His own parents reflected the city’s diverse cultural makeup: Silviu’s father was Bulgarian and his mother was Italian. At age six Silviu began his guitar studies in Sorin Cucu’s class at the Constanța Community Artistic Activities Center. Even at that age, Silviu was already exposed to demanding musical pedagogies. “I was kicked out of class once for not knowing what the notes were on the stave,” he says.

When he turned seven Silviu’s parents enrolled him in the Queen Mary National College of Art in Constanța—a vocational school for performing and visual arts that

spanned grades 1-12—on Sorin’s suggestion. There Silviu studied guitar with Valentin Cucu (no relation to Sorin) from the first to the fourth grades, and with Constantin Acsinte from the fifth grade on. In addition to studying music theory, counterpoint, orchestration, and piano, Silviu had three weekly guitar lessons. As Silviu progressed with his studies, his parents paid for two additional sessions so that he could meet with Acsinte daily throughout the school week.

Silviu describes his studies at Queen Mary as an energetic time of his life. School days started at six in the morning and ended at six in the evening (guitar lessons took place at six-fifteen in the morning). His parents had to sign daily assessment reports, attesting that Silviu had practiced a set number of hours and had done all of his homework. In addition to Romanian, students had to study English plus a second foreign language (Silviu took French). One component of Silviu’s vocational school experience was the eventual assimilation of musical practice as a fundamental component of his identity. Early in life he developed the belief that music was to be his sole career path. “Music was the only thing I could do,” he says.

At age twelve, Silviu’s commitment to music took an unexpected turn. To celebrate the family business’s recent success (Silviu’s father had a restaurant), Silviu and his parents went on a two-week bus trip to Spain. Two days into the trip, Silviu caught a glimpse of flamenco guitarists.<sup>1</sup> “They were playing techniques I had not seen before,” says Silviu. “Like using the back of their nails, doing fast *rasgueados*, and playing really fast scales.”<sup>2</sup>

Soon after, Silviu explains, he felt a kind of “shame.” He understood how much there was to learn about the guitar, and what a small fraction of that knowledge he had grasped. “I was so blown away that I started crying,” he says.

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<sup>1</sup> See Peter Manuel, “Andalusian, Gypsy, and Class Identity in the Contemporary Flamenco Complex,” *Ethnomusicology* 33:1 (1989): 47-65. Manuel’s article is intended as an introduction to both the long-established and newer flamenco traditions (what he calls the *flamenco complex*), from the late fifteenth century to modern times. He considers flamenco’s evolution “as a product of the Andalusian urban lower classes and, in particular, the settled gypsies of Seville and Cádiz provinces.” Moreover, he stresses how recent revitalizations of the tradition foreshadow the Andalusian region’s retreat away from a long “heritage of prolonged poverty and oppression.”

<sup>2</sup> *Rasgueado* is the guitar technique of continuous, fast strumming. The word is the participle of the Spanish *rasgear* (“to strum”; from the Latin *resecāre*, “to scratch”).

Silviu explained to his parents that there was no way he could learn those techniques in Romania, and he pleaded for them to let him study flamenco. “My parents wanted to enjoy the trip, but I didn’t stop crying. I told them, ‘I’m not going to stop crying until I get what I want’. And I did,” says Silviu as he laughs, reminiscing how he cried for days until his parents gave in to his musical tantrum.

Though Silviu’s parents didn’t initially realize the sincerity of his request, they were eventually persuaded. Soon after, they inquired of their friend (also their tour guide and owner of the tourism company) about the possibility of Silviu studying guitar with a local teacher. Their friend suggested Ricardo Núñez, a Gypsy flamenco guitar teacher from Cádiz who, for a financial compensation, would be willing to both teach and host Silviu in his own home.<sup>3</sup> At the end of their vacation, Silviu’s parents returned to Romania; Silviu moved into Núñez’s home and began his flamenco studies.

Silviu’s parents obtained permission from the Queen Mary school to allow him to study in Cádiz as an exchange student. As part of the agreement, Silviu’s parents would send him books and study materials, which he would master while away. At the end of every school term (trimesters the first year, semesters thereafter) Silviu would travel back to Romania for testing and juries at school. Including such end-of-term trips and other visits back home, Silviu studied and lived with Núñez for about three years.

Núñez and Silviu communicated in English. He was a demanding teacher. Such high expectations were not a surprise to Silviu, however, whose earlier experiences in Romania included instructors who resorted to physical punishment (like hand slapping) to correct musical mistakes. “Ricardo was a really, really severe teacher,” says Silviu. “He had a stick made out of peanut tree, which he would wave at my face [to emphasize specific ideas] without hitting me.” Silviu stares into space with a serious face, “Oh my God, I can still remember the sound of that thing today... *Khshhht! Khshhht! Khshhht!*”<sup>4</sup>

During his time in Cádiz, Silviu also studied informally with other teachers. Like his peers, Silviu relied on word of mouth to find out when good teachers or players from

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<sup>3</sup> The city of Cádiz (capital of the homonymous province) is located in the autonomous community of Andalusia—a region known for both its gypsy and flamenco traditions. Notable flamenco musicians from the province include singer Camarón de la Isla (1950-1992) and guitarist Paco de Lucía (b. 1947).

<sup>4</sup> The reader is advised that the present account of the Romani people of Spain is not meant to comprehensively represent their culture. It is rather a description of some events which Silviu found to be a meaningful part of his own experience in Spain.



whom youngsters could obtain valuable technical or musical lessons were in the area. To Silviu, such a communal experience (learning from different teachers, and jamming with peers and players from different neighborhoods) was a cardinal component of his flamenco studies. Furthermore, he mentions that his status as an outsider (as a non-gypsy and a foreigner) was not an issue when studying with Núñez who, instead, welcomed the financial compensation that Silviu's studies generated.

Outside of Núñez home, locals knew Silviu as *El Rumano* ("the Romanian guy"). The area of Cádiz where he stayed was an impecunious gypsy neighborhood. During his stay, Silviu was a witness to street fights, stabbings, and rowdiness on most nights. He knew of people who lived marginally as Spanish gypsies without birth certificates or any form of adult identification. He mentions that, although people were not impolite to him, he felt he had to be pleasant and respectful in order to fit in as an outsider in the rough neighborhood. "If not," says Silviu, "I probably would have a bunch of scars on my face right now." Although unscathed, Silviu remembers getting into little brawls with other teenage boys, particularly those who didn't appreciate the fact that Silviu, as the exotic foreigner, stole the girls' attention.

Silviu explains that the experience of living away from home during his early teens precipitated many life lessons associated with his first "taste of freedom." These experiences were similar, he says, to those that young people usually encounter when they move away from home to go to college. "I developed my first crush," he says. Living in his teacher's home, Silviu became fond of Núñez's daughter. "She was a dancer, I was a guitarist, we were there in the same house," he adds. Upon noticing the feelings between Silviu and his daughter, Núñez pulled Silviu aside and gave him a talk, warning him to stay away from her.

With time, Silviu came to realize that his teacher was not just being a protective or jealous father. "There is a gypsy saying. 'If you have a daughter, you are the richest person in the world'." He understood how, like other gypsy fathers, Núñez anticipated arranging his daughter's marriage and collecting a bride price. Silviu describes how, while in Cádiz, he learned about gypsy marriage customs. Fathers expected young men to bid for their daughter's hand. To these young men, achieving financial stability and asking for someone's hand was a rite of passage to manhood. "Women sometimes would

marry as young as eleven or twelve,” says Silviu. It became implicit for Silviu that, as a non-gypsy and not-yet-established guitarist, he was not to be a candidate for Núñez’s daughter’s hand.<sup>5</sup>

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Towards the end of high school, and back in Romania, Silviu’s teacher Constantin Accinte encouraged him to pursue studies in a European conservatory upon graduating (the Bremen Conservatory was an envisioned alternative). During those days, FSU alumnus Bill Yelverton traveled to Constanța to play a concerto by Roger Hudson at the city’s Lyrical Theater. Silviu attended the rehearsals and was captivated by Yelverton’s playing. The night of the concert, Silviu and other guitar students went backstage to meet and congratulate him. Soon after, students were looking at and trying out Bill’s instrument—a concert guitar made by acclaimed American luthier Robert Ruck. The guitar came to Silviu and Yelverton said “Just play something,” and Silviu obliged with J. S. Bach’s Chaconne from the Second Violin Partita (BWV 1004).

Students improvised a reception dinner at the Ciulei’s restaurant. While socializing, Yelverton praised Silviu’s technical dexterity and encouraged him to come to the U.S. and study with him at Middle Tennessee State University (Murfreesboro, Tennessee). Thus, Silviu applied and was accepted at MTSU with a full scholarship, funds pending. Three days before classes started, Yelverton phoned Silviu (who was still in Romania) with news that the scholarship had materialized. Silviu’s parents found a local sponsor for their son’s plane ticket and gave Silviu the family’s savings for his trip (a sum equivalent to fifty-seven American dollars).

Once at MTSU, Silviu had to officially prove to the school’s officials his deservedness of a full scholarship (the largest MTSU had ever awarded a music student).<sup>6</sup> Yelverton suggested that Silviu participate in the American String Teachers Association (ASTA) competition where Adam Holzman was to be a judge. That year’s competition

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<sup>5</sup> See Kalwant Phopal and Martin Myers, *Insiders, Outsiders and Others: Gypsies and Identity*, (Hertfordshire: University of Hertfordshire Press, 2008), 32-36. Phopal and Myers discuss gender roles and insider/outsider dynamics in Gypsy weddings, as part of their study of identity formation in Gypsy communities in Britain. The authors mention that weddings are “occasions at which the importance of family and community within Gypsy culture is most clearly stated.” Moreover, they note that Gypsy families exert “strong pressures to marry within the community rather than outside of it.”

<sup>6</sup> The award’s extent is noted on MTSU’s guitar alumni website, <http://frank.mtsu.edu/~yelverto/student.html>, accessed April 10, 2012.

excluded a Guitar Division prize. Instead, Yelverton asked Holzman to write a letter supporting Silviu's scholarship award; in the letter, Holzman recognized Silviu's technical proficiency and recommended him for the award. The scholarship was officially made permanent soon after.

Silviu's transition to the U.S. came with a cultural shock more pronounced than he had experienced in Spain. He felt like he didn't fit in at the school's honors dormitory, and he was surprised by the sweet tinge he tasted in most of the American cafeteria food. Despite the fact that he had studied English in Romania, he had trouble adapting both to the colloquial and academic varieties. The school's liberal arts requirements soon took up most of Silviu's time. He had to take remedial math, and had difficulty with his first college English class. "I was stressed out," says Silviu. "I had no time to practice, and the number of credits I was taking didn't reflect the amount of work I was putting in. I wanted to leave the country."

Part of the pressure Silviu experienced was due to the fact that he had to maintain a 3.5 grade point average and get A's in his music classes to maintain his scholarship. He initially resorted to practicing guitar late at night—an issue that caused some friction with other students at the dormitory. Before he became better at managing his time, he worried that he was gearing his performance in school towards satisfying degree requirements rather than towards becoming a better instrumentalist.

During his studies at MTSU, Silviu was also asked to perform at multiple school-sponsored events. He explains how the school made use of the fact that he was a Romanian student to present a multicultural image to the public (Silviu was even featured in promotional pamphlets and posters that highlighted his Romanian nationality). Additionally, through his positive participation in national and international competitions, Silviu contributed to establishing the MTSU Guitar Program's reputation as one that produces solid, international-level performers.

Towards the end of Silviu's undergraduate studies, Yelverton recommended that he study for his master's with Bruce Holzman, Yelverton's former teacher. Silviu had met Bruce at the Guitar Symposium at Columbus State University (Columbus, Georgia). Silviu played at a masterclass for FSU alumnus Mary Akerman. At the end of the class,

Bruce—who had been in the audience—approached Silviu, introduced himself, and encouraged him to audition at FSU.

Silviu applied and got accepted into the FSU guitar program though scholarship funding options were limited. Yelverton was resolute regarding Silviu studying at FSU; he called Bruce, told him of the different scholarships Silviu had been offered elsewhere, and encouraged him to increase Silviu’s funding to the highest extent possible. Soon after, Bruce called Silviu and offered him a half-time assistantship in addition to the Graduate Dean’s fellowship. Thus, in the Fall of 2009, Silviu began his studies at The Florida State University.

Although Silviu was aware of Bruce’s reputation as a pedagogue, and he had met several current and former FSU guitarists, he was initially surprised by the high expectations in the program. “I thought I was going to switch schools,” says Silviu as he remembers those first lessons when Bruce demanded that he play more accurately than he was used to at the time. “Bruce is a perfectionist. He was always saying ‘Make it sound better’.”

After initially questioning the teacher-student match that Yelverton had proposed, Silviu increased his practice time and worked harder to improve his technical and musical dexterity. “I wanted to make sure I could improve myself,” he explains, before dismissing Bruce’s expectations as unrealistic. After winning top prizes at national and international competitions since starting his studies at FSU, and after experiencing a higher level of performance than he knew before, Silviu reflects on how his tenacity and “obedience” towards his teacher dramatically improved his progress.

Some of the adjustments Silviu implemented into his practice had to do with the speed and the amount of music he studied daily. Silviu uses the metronome at lower speeds to engrain the music subconsciously and to smooth out any technical difficulties. Such slow work allows him to become more aware of his technique and to listen more carefully to his music-making during practice—facilitating, in turn, faster progress. “Things just *click* faster now,” he says. “It’s more about the *mind* you put in when you practice; when you repeat things in practice.”

Silviu explains how, while at FSU, he has developed such a practicing mindset, which he enters to become more musically alert. “It’s all about attention to detail,” he

says. He practices specific passages until he has mastered any challenging musical and technical sections. To achieve this, he plays passages at different tempos, alters rhythmic figures (e.g. dotting rhythmic figures), and repeats passages for extended periods of time.<sup>7</sup> Besides cultivating listening awareness, he also develops heightened perception of the physicality involved in playing, such as how much force he uses to press down on the neck with the fingers of his left hand.

Silviu explains how, earlier in his studies, he used to feel unproductive if he didn't rehearse his entire concert repertoire, and he strived to play all of it daily (which meant he wouldn't devote many hours to individual challenging sections). Instead, he now concentrates on perfecting his playing regardless of whether he can play through his entire program every day. "I learned this recently," he says. "It has contributed to making me a much better player."

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Silviu is currently a doctoral guitar candidate at FSU. He regards his experience teaching undergraduates as a gratifying one—especially upon noticing his students' technical and musical progress. In the future, he wants to perform and teach at an American university or music school. He regards the opportunities present in the U.S. as more plentiful than those he could find in Romania or in Europe. "It would be a shame to have a doctorate and have to teach kids," he says. To Silviu, a doctoral degree in guitar is a qualification that prepares him to teach professionals how to perfect themselves rather than one with which to teach novices.

These days, Silviu is contemplating the possibility of obtaining a U.S. work permit or a work visa. Among the options he has considered are either to go back home or find a U.S. job that would sponsor his immigration application. He is also aware that marriage to a U.S. citizen would facilitate his adjustment of immigration status to permanent residency. Silviu is also considering finding a lawyer and applying for a work

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<sup>7</sup> See Elliot Fisk, preface to *24 Caprices, Op. 1*, by Niccolò Paganini, Vol. 1 (San Francisco: Guitar Solo Publications, 1994), 2-4. Guitar virtuoso Elliot Fisk suggests similar rhythmic alterations to achieve technical mastery of his arrangements of Paganini's caprices.

permit based on extraordinary artistic ability. He expects that the top prizes he has won in competitions, and a letter of recommendation from Bruce, will enhance his application.<sup>8</sup>

Since he began looking at his options to pursue a career in the U.S., Silviu has become somewhat disillusioned with the bureaucratic costs of obtaining a U.S. work permit (in addition to any legal fees should he require the help of an immigration attorney). Silviu regards such requirements as a type of *natural selection* that favors those who can navigate (and afford the fees of) the U.S.'s immigration policies. "Being good is not enough anymore," he says. He is hopeful, though, that his identity as a musician and a performer will be left intact after maneuvering through the immigration policies that lead to working in the U.S.

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Drawing on his flamenco experience, Silviu has formed and led flamenco ensembles since before coming to the U.S. While in Tennessee, he started the Tequila Flamenco group with BJ Golden, Taylor Lonardo and Tony Hartman. Together they released the album *Del mundo nuevo* ("Of the New World"). Besides playing the guitar, Silviu also wrote the album's songs in Spanish and Romanian, which he sings himself in a *cante* flamenco vocal style. The album notes highlight the ensemble's multicultural musical outlook, which escapes the confines of a single musical tradition.<sup>9</sup>

When the different ensemble members moved away from Tennessee, the ensemble split. Since then, Silviu has formed the Tallahassee-based Maharajah Flamenco Trio, along with bassist David Cobb and percussionist and didgeridoo player Ramin Yazdanpanah. As noted on the band's Facebook page, they draw on both traditional ("pure") and *nuevo* ("new") flamenco styles, which they fuse with other musical genres such as jazz, Argentine tango, and samba.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, I have seen the Trio make use of the *cajón* and the *doumbek* in their performances around Tallahassee.

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<sup>8</sup> According to the United States Citizen and Immigration Services (USCIS) website, an employment-based immigration EB-1 visa may be granted to individuals who "demonstrate extraordinary ability" in fields like science, art, education or sports, and who have acquired well-documented achievements that may include prizes, authored publications, and commercial success in the performing arts, [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov), accessed April 10, 2012.

<sup>9</sup> Moreover, the album notes emphasize each member's hometown origin (Romania, Texas, Tennessee, and Iowa) and proficiency in traditions ranging from flamenco to funk and samba. <http://www.cdbaby.com/cd/tequilaband/from/greatindiemusic>, accessed April 10, 2012.

<sup>10</sup> Maharajah Flamenco Trio, Facebook page, <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Maharajah-Flamenco-Trio/124094597665892>, accessed April 10, 2012.

Perhaps even more than Silviu's virtuosity and knowledge of the flamenco guitar and vocal styles—and more than the catchy songs with Spanish lyrics that talk about life-long fraternity and love having the taste of Spring—is his jovial onstage persona, which I find most captivating. Never taking himself too seriously, he jokes with the audience between pieces and dedicates songs to friends present in the crowd. And every now and then, as David and Ramin take a momentary break, he will play a short solo version of Julius Fučík's "Entrance of the Gladiators" with a big smile on his face.

## CHAPTER 5

### ADAM

For me (Gonzalo) it was on that day in 1991, when I was in the third grade. Even before I sat at my desk that morning, my friend Gabriela waved her agenda at me as she smiled satirically. She was showing me the note her mom had written.

“You’re in for it this time,” said Gabriela. “I told on you!”

When Édgar Valcárcel became chair of the Music Department at the Sir Isaac Newton School in Lima, he assured the British directors that he would include Andean instruments as an option in the elementary curriculum, and that he would bring in experts to teach them. Gabriela and I attended Mr. Villegas’s *zampoña* (Andean panpipe) class. As one of our childish games, we would often race to music class, and whoever got there first would lock the door and tease the other students through the window. The one time I beat her in our weekly dash, Gabriela got upset and told her mother—who then wrote a note to Mr. Villegas, asking him to “Please make sure Gabriela’s friend doesn’t lock her out of class.”

When he read the note, Mr. Villegas became very serious. He looked at me, sighed, and stood up.

“Gallardo,” he said. “Come with me.”

As I followed Mr. Villegas outside of class, my friends started laughing and chanting that I was in trouble. Mr. Villegas told me that I shouldn’t play around during music class, and that I was to stand still for the entire period in some other teacher’s class while reflecting on how I shouldn’t tease my classmates. He knocked on Mr. Ballena’s door and asked him to host me for the period. He explained that I was just going to stand against the wall and do some thinking. Mr. Ballena agreed and went back to his paperwork.

Moments later, Mr. Ballena’s students came in with their big cases. They sat down and raised their feet to support their instruments. Shortly after, they started playing scales and arpeggios (at some point one of the teenage students strummed loudly, filling the room with a sound like melodious, cracking wood). I remember feeling a kind of



nervous yearning as I silently stood there hearing all those sounds, which were new to me.

That's the day I fell in love with the classical guitar.

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*Florida State University, Strozier Library, afternoon of Wednesday, March 21, 2012*

For Adam, it wasn't during Christmas, when he was a child; on those occasions the family would sing carols, accompanied by the chords that his grandmother played on the electric organ. "My first exposure to musical sound," says Adam, smiling. "It even had the electronic percussion accompaniment."

It wasn't during those childhood afternoons, when he rode his bicycle after school. Adam's neighbors, a couple who taught at the Victoria Conservatory, played the violin and piano. Young Adam would hear them practice as he rode past their house, not yet realizing that it was his first exposure to classical Western chamber music—a repertoire he would come to love and study years later.

Nor was it when he joined Mr. Jones's music class in the fifth grade. At the time, he was studying the violin and playing in the school's orchestra. He hoped that by doing so he would get to spend time with (and be in close proximity to) his early-adolescence crush—a girl who studied violin with Mr. Jones.

Instead, Adam discovered his calling in life years later, when he saw renowned Spanish guitarist Pepe Romero perform the third movement from Federico Moreno-Torroba's *Suite Castellana*. It was the Saturday after Adam's first guitar lesson.

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Adam Foster was born in 1978 in Victoria (British Columbia), Canada. He received his first musical instruction through the Canadian public school system. He was exposed to the Kodály Method and played the recorder and the ukulele during elementary school. In seventh grade, a year after taking up the violin, he switched to the alto saxophone and joined the school's band program. Thus, Adam spent much of his high school years improvising on the saxophone and playing rhythm and blues.

By the time he was seventeen, Adam experienced problems related to his saxophone playing. He was practicing multiple hours a week and performing with the school band without amplification. The act of blowing hard for extended periods of time

started giving him acid reflux. The doctor exhorted Adam to stop playing the saxophone and suggested he play a non-wind instrument instead. To continue playing music, Adam took up the acoustic guitar. He learned how to strum chords to play folk music, Beatles songs, and popular tunes. “This was the time of Eric Clapton’s *Unplugged* album,” says Adam, when many youngsters developed an interest in the acoustic guitar. Adam also taught himself some jazz and learned a few basic right-hand arpeggios.

To expedite his progress, Adam asked his mother (an elementary school teacher) to inquire whether anyone in her school would be willing and able to give him guitar lessons. Soon after, Adam had his first lesson with Ian de Hoog, a composition student at the University of Victoria. At the end of their first lesson, de Hoog encouraged Adam to attend a very special event that weekend: Celedonio Romero, patriarch of the famous Spanish family of classical guitarists, was going to receive an honorary doctorate from the University of Victoria.<sup>1</sup> Pepe Romero, his son, would offer a recital as part of the ceremony.

It was then, as Pepe Romero played Moreno-Torroba’s “Danza,” that Adam fell in love with the classical guitar. “It blew my socks off,” he explains. “I felt an extreme emotional connection,” different from any he had experienced in his previous musical studies. During their following lesson, Adam told de Hoog that he wanted to learn how to play the classical guitar. During the summer, Adam worked for his father and used his earnings to buy his first nylon-string classical guitar.

Towards the end of high school, Adam was considering a career in environmentalism or ethnobotany.<sup>2</sup> Those days he taught himself sight reading to enhance his study of the Toronto Royal Conservatory of Music’s educational texts. Five months into his lessons, Adam auditioned to study with guitarist Alex Dunn at the University of Victoria. He was wait-listed for admission, but he was allowed to take classes that were part of the music major. Although he contemplated the possibility of studying with Dunn at the Victoria Conservatory of Music, Adam held steadfast in his decision to attend the university, partly to satisfy what he perceived to be his parents’

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<sup>1</sup> Celedonio Romero (1913-1996) was also a composer and a poet. Between 1960 and 1990 he performed with The Romero Guitar Quartet, which he founded with his sons Celín, Pepe, and Ángel.

<sup>2</sup> The field of ethnobotany focuses on the cross-cultural study of plants and their uses (for food, medicine, ritual, etc.).

expectation of him—obtaining a university degree. Adam took lessons with Dunn every four months in addition to studying with de Hoog and preparing for the following year’s University of Victoria audition.

Once officially admitted into the program, Adam strived to combine the conservatory-style performance studies with those of music history. In addition to his weekly lessons and music history courses, he highlights the school’s *integrated masterclasses*, wherein performance majors met weekly in groups with a different instrumental professor, as a fundamental element of his undergraduate studies. In such a manner, Adam explains, he was exposed to different pedagogies, and his undergraduate studies were informed by non-guitarist instrumental sensitivities. Adam also took part in regional competitions and won top prizes in the Greater Victoria Performing Arts Festival. During the Festival, when Adam was in his senior year, he was judged by and made the acquaintance of FSU alumnus Ricardo Cobo, who would decisively shape Adam’s educational future.

The summer before his senior year, Adam attended the Domaine Forget Music Festival in Quebec. The festival, which featured dance and jazz in addition to classical music, was designed as a two-week intensive training by prominent performers and pedagogues. Adam was fascinated by what he describes as his first “large scale” introduction to classical music, which was different from the “Arts microcosm” he had known in British Columbia. “Everyone [at Domaine Forget] practiced a lot. Everyone was serious about what they did,” he says. It was there that he realized he needed to pursue graduate studies in order to improve his playing level and “make an impact” on the international guitar scene.

Also at Domaine Forget, Adam had masterclasses with Ricardo Cobo. “It was my first exposure to Aaron Shearer’s school of thought,” says Adam as he recalls how Ricardo introduced him to guitar-based visualization, solfege, and musical-technical analysis during those two weeks.<sup>3</sup> Adam soon realized some of his musical and technical deficiencies. “Ricardo broke me down,” he explains. “During one masterclass, he didn’t

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<sup>3</sup> See Aaron Shearer, *Learning the Classic Guitar* (Pacific, MO: Mel Bay, 1990). In addition to writing pedagogical treatises on technique and musicianship, Shearer (1919-2008) founded one of the first American guitar programs at the Peabody Conservatory, where he promoted his pedagogy. Now-famous players who studied with him include Manuel Barrueco, David Starobin, and Ricardo Cobo.

let me play past the first two measures of a piece.” Adam comments that the impact of those masterclasses had a decisive effect on his playing. “I still feel their impact when I practice nowadays,” he adds.

Towards the end of his senior year, Adam prepared to pursue a master’s in guitar performance. He auditioned at the University of Toronto (to study with Norbert Kraft) and at the University of Nevada in Las Vegas (to study with Ricardo Cobo). At his Toronto audition, the jurors asked Adam to deviate from his audition program. “They asked me, ‘Do you play any Canadian guitar music?’” says Adam. “I told them I didn’t.” Adam felt that his answer negatively influenced the panel’s perception of his playing and musicianship.

Although he wasn’t admitted to the UT Guitar Program, Adam assimilated a valuable lesson regarding being a Canadian musician and wanting to make a name for himself. After the audition, Guitar faculty member Steven Thachuk inquired about what other programs Adam was auditioning for. “I told him I was applying to University of Nevada in Las Vegas,” he says. Thachuk in turn urged Adam to pursue his master’s in Nevada. “[Thachuk] said that every Canadian guitarist who wants to *make it* has to study in the U.S. or in Europe,” comments Adam.

In the Fall of 2001, Adam began his graduate studies in Las Vegas with Ricardo Cobo. Marking Adam’s new beginning in the U.S., UPS (the United Parcel Service) lost Adam’s entire music library, which was en route from Canada during the September 11 attacks. Although initially displeased, Adam accepted the loss as part of his transition to life in the U.S. as an international student.

As a master’s student, Adam devoted increasingly more time to participating in chamber ensembles and doing outreach performances around town. “We would sometimes end up playing George Crumb’s music in bars in Las Vegas,” he says. Perhaps even a bigger transition than moving to the U.S. and beginning graduate school was how Ricardo Cobo’s teaching style became a landmark in Adam’s experience at UNLV. “He was a night owl,” says Adam. “He practiced daily from 9:00 PM to 6:00 AM. He still does.” Adam found it initially difficult to adjust to his teacher’s schedule, which included afternoon lessons (sometimes for multiple hours) and a malleable lesson calendar based on Cobo’s concert itinerary.

Cobo underscored technique to an extent larger than Adam had previously known. Instead of focusing on learning a concert repertoire, Cobo directed Adam to study Aaron Shearer's pedagogical works, and to play etudes by Francisco Tárrega and Heitor Villa-Lobos. "I became dissociated from my previous repertoire," says Adam.

Adam regarded his studies with Cobo as an apprenticeship that extended beyond the confines of weekly meetings. "I jibed with him," says Adam as he explains how other students in the program were not happy with Cobo's pedagogy. "I believed in him, and set my ego aside," he adds. Adam and Cobo's student-teacher relationship eventually developed into a close friendship: when Cobo married, Adam was his best man, and Cobo was a groomsman at Adam's wedding.

Upon completing his master's, Alex Dunn offered Adam a teaching position at the Victoria Conservatory. Adam turned the offer down, in part because he was considering pursuing doctoral studies in musicology. During that time, Cobo left his teaching position at UNLV. Administrators offered the vacancy to Adam, who welcomed the prospect of teaching at a U.S. university. Adam thus applied for a TN visa, which grants Canadian nonimmigrants temporary permission to work in the U.S.<sup>4</sup> Soon after, Adam began teaching undergraduates and master's students at UNLV. After his first year in the faculty, Adam approached the Music Department chairperson and requested sponsorship for an H-1B visa—a nonimmigrant category for workers in "specialty occupations" like university teaching.<sup>5</sup> Adam taught at UNLV between 2003 and 2007.

In 2006 Adam married Stacey, an American citizen. The following year, he adjusted his immigration status to that of a permanent resident alien (i.e. he obtained a "green card"). When he began his doctoral guitar studies at FSU in the Fall of 2007, he registered as an international student. By next semester he could register as an in-state student, which significantly reduced his tuition costs.

Adam's adjustment of status abated previous uncertainties related to immigration (such as his ability to stay and work in the U.S.). He is discontented, nonetheless, by what he feels was the need to study and achieve professional success (to *make it*) abroad as a

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<sup>4</sup> According to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, the TN nonimmigrant classification is supported by the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). It grants qualified professionals the option to work in full or part time jobs in the U.S., [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov), accessed April 18, 2012.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

condition to receiving professional recognition in Canada. “We’re exiles forced out of our own country,” says Adam explaining the situation, similar to that of other Canadian guitarists. With time he has become appreciative of how his international study has enabled him to gain insights into the collegiate system and its relation to the guitar world, in addition to exposing him to the dynamics of international festivals and allowing him to network across multiple regions of North America.

Adam observes that the Canadian education system has drastically reduced (“slashed”) funding for music programs in public elementary and high schools. In that regard he is comfortable with having the opportunity to permanently work in the U.S. He describes that there are numerous “pockets of guitar activity” in the U.S.—guitaristic spheres loosely centered around institutions that sponsor regular concert seasons and promote local guitaristic activity. (Among such spheres, Adam mentions cities like Austin, Tucson, and Los Angeles.) In addition to participating in international festivals, Adam considers guitarists’ involvement in interregional guitaristic life a key component of professional networking (and thus increasing one’s musical and professional opportunities).

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Towards 2007, Adam prepared to pursue his doctoral guitar studies. Adam applied to programs at the University of Southern California, Indiana University Bloomington, the University of Texas at Austin, and The Florida State University (Cobo had especially recommended that Adam study with Bruce Holzman, one of his former teachers).

After Adam auditioned at the first three schools, he learned that Cobo had been calling program chairs the day before his audition, advising them not to take Adam as a doctoral guitar student and to steer him, instead, towards musicology. “Ricardo was being selfish,” explains Adam as he comments on how he perceived that Cobo wanted him to stay in Las Vegas and, thus, continue a professional relationship through Adam’s teaching at UNLV. When Adam realized that Cobo had been inquiring about his audition dates so that he could call the schools ahead of time, he stated a later date for his FSU audition. Thus, without anyone influencing his judgment of Adam’s playing, Bruce accepted him as a doctoral student.

Adam had previously met and taken lessons from Bruce at the Domaine Forget Festival. “They were amazing lessons,” says Adam. “He asked systematic, pointed questions.” Such guidance enhanced Adam’s understandings of detailed mechanics and technical work, like the practice of scales and the consistent use of a metronome. Adam’s undergraduate studies had lacked such technical rigor. Instead, “big picture” musical and theoretical ideas prevailed in his instrumental learning. Perhaps most importantly, Bruce’s uncompromisingly honest approach made the biggest impact on Adam’s work. “Bruce *shocked* me into practicing and working on technique,” he says.

After that initial contact, Adam was afraid that he wasn’t ready for Bruce’s intense musical and technical expectations—a fear which dissipated by the time of his doctoral studies, when Adam was committed to perfecting his technique under Bruce’s coaching. “The thing I love about Bruce is that he cuts through all the nonsense,” says Adam, and comments on how, to Bruce, one’s playing has to be effective and accurate regardless of one’s guitaristic conceptual framework.

Initially at FSU, Adam found it challenging to integrate his previous learning experiences (and his previous teachers’ distinct pedagogies) into a coherent unity that would allow him to convey his own musical personality. “I had all this information in my hands and in my head,” he says. “And they weren’t jibing.” Adam explains how Bruce guided him to uncovering solutions to his musical-technical challenges, without requesting any compulsory repertoire or technical practice. “With Bruce, you have to find your own answers,” he says.

Moreover, Adam’s search for answers involved a thorough self-assessment of his musical and aesthetic values. “Bruce’s students develop their own version of *perfection*,” he says. “They all develop their own idea of technique—of what constitutes an ideal sound, and of what repertoire suits their personalities.” Such a pedagogical approach was a refreshing change of pace for Adam, whose previous teachers didn’t offer him many possibilities to develop his own guitaristic vision, either with technique or through the freedom to select his own repertoire.

In the pedagogical spectrum of Adam’s previous studies, he explains, one extreme favored a historically informed approach to performance, while the other highlighted virtuosity and entertaining live audiences onstage. Alternatively, says Adam, “Bruce is a

guide to *sound*—to what sounds good” (given one’s technique, instrument, personality, choice of repertoire, etc.). Adam explains that his present challenge is developing a historically informed solo program that will suit his musical taste and personality. “Something that will be new and refreshing to audiences,” he says and mentions keyboard works by Mozart as one of his current projects.

Adam graduated from FSU in May of 2011. Since completing his degree, he has maintained several elements from the routine he developed while studying with Bruce, like practicing slowly and deliberately, and carefully learning all the notes of the score to analyze their musical and technical challenges. After taking on different students (most of whom don’t study classical guitar) and searching for a full-time college teaching position, Adam’s guitaristic practices have taken different turns. “I’ve been sharpening a few other tools,” he explains, that will make him more marketable to potential employers. Adam has thus been devoting increasingly more time to the study of non-canonic guitar music, as well as practicing jazz and improvisation. He comments that such study is proving beneficial to his technique while also informing his understanding of art music (such as voice leading in Baroque music).

Adam’s exploration beyond the classical canon is related to his job search. He explains how only recently he realized the *fallacy* he used to believe in. “That if you win competitions and play concerts you will get a job,” he says. Adam explains how, in his experience searching for an academic job, he has encountered a waning market for classical guitar. He believes such a situation is related to Segovia’s introduction of the guitar into conservatories and universities in the U.S. “Segovia initially placed some of his students to teach at schools—so did Shearer, as did Bruce,” he says. Our generation, explains Adam, is still “waiting for their big break.” He perceives that many guitarists perform for a niche of other guitarists and connoisseurs; meanwhile, young graduates are waiting for vacancies at colleges and universities currently filled by still-young guitarists of the previous generations.

Adam regards much of the music performed in recitals and competitions as a “perpetual recycling of the same fifteen works,” and hopes to develop a non-canonic repertoire as an alternative to reach out to new audiences—and as a way to differentiate himself from other graduates competing for teaching jobs. Drawing inspiration from past



masters, like Francisco Tárrega and Segovia, Adam is currently assembling a solo program based on arrangements of music by major non-guitar composers. With such an approach, he aspires to both elevate his technical and musical standards, and to promote the guitar among audiences who want to experience its music outside of the present canon.

While he searches for a university position, Adam is a teacher at the South Georgia Academy of Arts in the agrarian community of Pelham, Georgia. Adam has a private studio where he teaches students between ages six and seventy-one. He bases his teaching on students' musical and personal preferences. Although his pedagogy is informed by the classical guitar tradition, he draws on different styles and genres to teach mostly acoustic guitar, in addition to electric guitar and banjo. Additionally, Adam organizes periodic studio recitals, which he regards as opportunities for his students to gain performance experience (and for him to do community outreach).

Adam views the outreach and musician-audience interaction as elements that are largely absent from many guitar programs, and which hinder many guitarists' professional and entrepreneurial possibilities. He wishes that his previous teachers would have networked and lobbied for more funds to enhance their university programs. "We live in a new time," he explains. "We have to reach out to the 1%," who will become donors and potentially finance concert series and guitaristic entrepreneurial ventures. "We have to do it all," he adds: teach, play concerts, publish, innovate, and reach out to those who are not yet aware of what we do as guitarists. Such a skill set, says Adam, is "necessary in order to exist nowadays." Adam conceives of creating a guitar program that will let students engage in diverse musical and entrepreneurial opportunities beyond the act of studying how to play the guitar.

Some of Adam's present activities include research on the guitar music of Hans Haug, and his membership in the Tantalus Guitar Quartet (along with FSU alumni Matthew Cochran, Kristian Anderson, and Stephen Mattingly). Since he joined the ensemble in April 2011, Adam has played chamber recitals in concert series and guitar festivals in the U.S. and abroad.

As I contemplate some of Adam's challenges as a recent graduate who wants to implement novel ideas in the guitaristic community, I think back on the advice he was

given—to leave his country if he wanted to become a successful musician. (Like Adam, I also heard similar echoes from the New Testament while growing up in Peru).<sup>6</sup> Who knows? Maybe Adam will run into the teacher who urged him to study abroad at one of the Tantalus Quartet’s upcoming performances in Panama, Germany, or Poland.<sup>7</sup> Adam’s studies in the U.S. were initially intended to enhance his chances of *making it*, and thus be able to achieve professional recognition in his country of origin. Without necessarily intending so at the outset, he has already achieved more than any list of performances and publications could possibly reflect, like discovering his own musical personality, developing ideas for a brighter future in the guitar world, and starting a family.

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<sup>6</sup> Luke 4:24. (“No prophet is accepted in his own country.”)

<sup>7</sup> Tantalus Quartet Tour dates, [www.tantalusquartet.com/tour](http://www.tantalusquartet.com/tour), accessed April 19, 2012.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSION

According to Thomas Turino, *habitus* plays a central role in Bourdieu's model of social life. It is produced by people's relations to the world around them; it guides people's thoughts and practices, which in turn affect the environment, etc. Turino argues that, although some consider such a model to be too unconscious or mechanical, it nonetheless contains "room for dynamism and individual agency."<sup>1</sup> As we have seen in the preceding chapters, far from being a mechanical component of musical experience, *habitus* is influenced by a musician's personal experiences. It is not simply their academic environments that steered Andrew, Sam, Silviu, and Adam to develop specific practices and dispositions, but also their individual sensitivities and responses to their previous musical-personal experiences.

My informants already possessed a set of habits and dispositions before their arrival to FSU, many of them common to the "classical guitar" cultural formation. These included general practices like studying the guitar art music canonic repertoire, participating in masterclasses, using Western stave notation, studying nylon-string guitar technique, etc. Perhaps even more interesting are "commonsense" practices like constantly changing strings and searching for an effective means to hold the guitar in position.<sup>2</sup>

The use of one's nails on the plucking hand is of central importance to classical guitar tradition. It grants players the possibility of playing faster than with the fingertips, while retaining the possibility of contrapuntal playing not afforded by a plectrum. Thus classical guitarists develop a constant awareness of their nails. I trained myself to become ambidextrous after breaking nails through simple activities like reaching for a door or using a zipper. Some guitarists prefer to glue acrylics as a more durable alternative to

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<sup>1</sup> Thomas Turino, *Music as Social Life: The Politics of Participation* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2008), 120-1.

<sup>2</sup> Strings sound their best usually for a week (only a few hours under heavy use); nylon generally takes about a day or two to stretch under tension, during which time strings need constant tuning. Emulating Andrés Segovia's personal playing style, many guitarists use a footstool to raise a leg and hold the guitar in position, though in the last twenty years different support systems have appeared on the market, among them a renewed interest in using a strap to hold the guitar in art music settings.

natural nails. A last-minute resort to fix unexpected chippings is to glue a piece of ping-pong ball to a broken nail.<sup>3</sup>

Besides the plucking hand, the fretting hand's fingers are also the focus of attention for most players. Despite the fact that many avoid cuts or scratches during non-musical activities, playing the guitar itself can cut one's skin. Guitarists generally develop calluses on their fingertips, but the skin in parts of the index finger used to bar across the strings is not as easy to toughen up, and thus may tear open under excessive barring. This has been a problem that both Sam and I have experienced in the past, and it was aggravated by our tendency to have sweaty palms (moist skin cuts more easily). I have found myself altering my diet and increasing my water intake to avoid sweat-related cuts.

Although nails and calluses are items of daily care for most guitarists, they are easily controlled issues compared to muscular problems like tendonitis or focal dystonia, which have affected both students and well-known guitarists in the past. An effective instrumental technique that allows players to practice for multiple hours a day is as much of an asset as strong nails and reliable calluses. Considering how these elements are central concerns for guitarists, I find them akin to "bodily capital."<sup>4</sup> In his discussion of Chicago-area boxers' *habitus*, Loïc Wacquant drew on Bourdieu's ideas to examine the notion of "pugilistic capital"—the combined set of physical and mental resources that enhance a boxer's peak performance.<sup>5</sup> In a similar manner, strong nails, strong calluses, effective technique, the absence of muscular problems, etc., may be regarded as *guitaristic capital* for professional players.

Among my goals for this study was to show ways in which the *habitus* unique to the FSU guitar program grants musicians insidership status. It is important to distinguish insidership within this cohort from mere enrollment or admittance into the program. Although most students I met over years in the program developed an insider sensitivity, that wasn't the case for everyone. There were occasional students who did not implement study and performance habits like those of the initiated students and graduates, and who eventually left the program. In my own experience, I don't think I was perceived either

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<sup>3</sup> Other well-known solutions to avoid rapid wear under heavy practice include covering one's nails with a piece of scotch tape.

<sup>4</sup> Loïc J.D Wacquant, "Pugs at Work: Bodily Capital and Bodily Labour Among Professional Boxers," *Body & Society* 1:1 (1995), 66.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

by my peers or by our teacher as someone who was “in” the program until I developed study habits that allowed me to perform more accurately (and which improved my participation in studio class and in competitions).

It is thus the *habitus* of students that contributes to students being considered insiders in the cohort. The *habitus* is particularly elusive in the present case, however, since students are allowed to experiment with their technique; in addition, there is no compulsory repertoire. The *habitus* is, instead, shaped by and composed of a series of meta-principles that guide most students’ individual study.

One such principle underscores the importance of slow, deliberate practice: students are expected to use a metronome in as slow a setting as may be necessary to clearly articulate every note. Sam applied this principle to the extreme by letting every note die out completely before plucking the next one. Many students arrive with a desire to display virtuosity through speed, and they are initially perplexed when guided to practice more slowly to develop accuracy. I was surprised, myself, during my second lesson with Bruce. I had memorized every note of a concerto and attempted to play it close to performance speed. In my callous pretension, I thought I would be commended for having committed the entire piece to memory. Instead, when I finished playing, Bruce pointed out the fact I had played with many mistakes and demanded that I work on my accuracy. He said to me (in what I recall as his most severe tone), “I don’t know how you used to play for your previous teachers. But when you play for me, you play perfect.”

Students implement the discipline of slow and deliberate practice in different ways. Silviu and Andrew, for example, dispensed with the idea of playing through their entire program every day until they had addressed technical challenges. After solving any issues, they moved on to larger sections of the work, and they only played through their entire program when they could do so with technical precision. Andrew and Sam have developed the habit of creating outlines to monitor their progress and implement the ideas they learned during lessons. They both structure their days knowing that they have to practice for a set number of hours. I have done the same in the past, and realized that I needed careful planning to fulfill academic and personal commitments while practicing at least five hours each day. My need for an hour between fifty-minute practice sessions

usually meant that I required ten-hour periods in the day, during which I couldn't be away from the guitar for longer than an hour if I was to be disciplined with my schedule.

As part of his practice schedule, Sam considers how his non-musical activities impact his guitaristic improvement. Such is an example of how students, to different extents, live their daily lives in relation to practicing and improving as instrumentalists—musical-technical progress is a core element of their identity. Silviu developed his musical belief system as a child in an artistic vocational school; he thus regards music not only as a key component of who he is, but also as the primary activity to which he must dedicate himself professionally. Andrew, on the other hand, regards the musical component of his identity as one which confers upon him the ability to escape from the constraint of daily life and into an intimately personal domain of tranquility.

Perhaps the central component of the cohort's slow-accurate work ethos is the progressive development of dexterity and speed. There are known practice methods that help guitarists develop technical facility, such as the analysis of technical elements that can be isolated and rehearsed individually.<sup>6</sup> Other approaches include the idea of "pumping nylon," where, like an athlete doing endurance training, guitarists aim to work on multiple technical elements every day.<sup>7</sup> Silviu mentioned some of his own methods to enhance his technical precision, such as altering a piece's rhythm and monitoring the amount of pressure that he uses with the left hand. To maximize his practice time without exhausting his muscles, Andrew divides techniques that demand more of each hand into different practice sessions (e.g. right-hand arpeggios versus left-hand slurs). In his discussion of "flow states," where people's enjoyment of an activity contributes to increased awareness and a decreased sense of time, Turino highlights "the proper balance between inherent challenges and the skill level of the actor" as an element that contributes to the formation of habits.<sup>8</sup> Perhaps the gradual mastery that students experience encourages a flow-like state, which simultaneously reinforces the habit of slow practice.

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<sup>6</sup> Eduardo Fernandez, *Technique, Mechanism, Learning* (Pacific, MO: Mel Bay, 2002).

<sup>7</sup> Scott Tennant, *Pumping Nylon* (Van Nuys, CA: Alfred Publishing, 2002). Tennant's book is one of the most popular modern books on guitar technique. As its title suggests, part of the philosophy it promotes is to become proficient in technique, and thoroughly practice its different components on a daily basis.

<sup>8</sup> Turino, *Music as Social Life*, 4-5.

A second meta-principle is the idea that students determine what technical approach and repertoire suits them best, which allows them to uncover solutions to musical-technical challenges for themselves. During our lessons, Bruce suggested fingerings and asked me how I was going about deciding on technical-musical aspects. He helped me decide which of two or more alternatives was better suited to the music. Since we have different sized hands, we agreed many times that, although we each preferred different fingerings for a passage, an alternative was also appropriate.

Part of why music-related arguments don't arise in the studio is because Bruce inculcates in his students the notion of what constitutes "sounding good" and guides students on how to decide which musical-technical alternatives are more appropriate. A much sought-after competition adjudicator over the years, Bruce has a highly attuned sense of what musical solutions are conducive to clarity of ideas and technical accuracy. His pedagogy underscores students developing such a sense as well. Thus students have to analyze different fingerings and phrasing alternatives until they find one that best suits the music. Interpretation during lessons is informed, in part, by recordings. Bruce brings different recordings of a piece to listen to with the student, and he guides him or her to listen to different aspects that they may later incorporate or adapt. Students are expected to troubleshoot their own challenges until they encounter an answer that they are satisfied with. In that regard, they are expected to become competent problem solvers.

A third major component of the particular *habitus* is participation in competitions. Even though it is not an official requirement, students are encouraged to compete in both solo and concerto competitions, at the national and international levels. Such events inform the insider/outsider dynamic on multiple levels. Andrew used to regard successful participation in competitions as a gauge of his insidership in the program, and worried that not winning top prizes could jeopardize his graduate teaching assistantship.<sup>9</sup> Competitions also increase a sense of insidership and camaraderie within the studio by creating an us (FSU guitarists) versus them frame of reference. This is particularly true when students travel together to compete, especially if they have already passed a recordings-based preliminary round. I consider such experiences some of the times in

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<sup>9</sup> To my knowledge, such a fear was unwarranted. During my experience I have known of many students who received guitar teaching assistantships, and who were not prize winners at competitions.

which I bonded most strongly with my colleagues. Perhaps most importantly, I feel that traveling with my peers as a semifinalist made me one of the “FSU guys.” Such was the informal categorization that Bruce used when I first met him, which separated me from those students who were already insiders in the program.<sup>10</sup>

Silviu regards his competition successes as an element that can enhance his application for a U.S. work visa based on extraordinary achievement—thus granting him not only insidership to the program, but also to the U.S. as a legal alien worker. Sam also aspires to practice his career in the U.S.; he believes that going back to his country would limit his career opportunities as an elite player and teacher. I envision such a quest for assimilation into the U.S. (to different extents similar to Adam’s and my own) as a kind of guitaristic pursuit of the “American dream.” Post-9/11 U.S. visa and immigration policies, however, can largely hinder the prospect of international musicians acquiring work visas, regardless of their talent and professional accomplishments: the annual number of U.S. visas granted has fallen from eight to five million in the years after the September 11 attacks.<sup>11</sup> Although both American and international guitar students at FSU develop a similar *habitus* during their training, international students who consider working in the U.S. additionally need to learn how to maneuver through the bureaucracy necessary to gain insidership into the U.S. as legal resident aliens.

Andrew’s and Adam’s experiences illustrate the different levels of adaptation involved in becoming a U.S. resident, and their effects on their professional lives. Having been a U.S. permanent resident for a number of years, Andrew no longer considers that aspect of his immigration status, although his study options were in part affected by his wife’s adjustment of status near the time of his studies with Judicaël Perroy. Additionally, Adam shared with me how his own level of tranquility increased dramatically when he adjusted his status from an international student to that of a

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<sup>10</sup> Like all graduate guitar students during the years 2005-2012, the four subjects of my study are male. Though not the subject of this thesis, future studies on the studio’s “gender” may shine light upon aspects such as intra-studio camaraderie, peer support and travel to and from competitions, and their effects on the FSU guitar studio’s make-up and performance level.

<sup>11</sup> Daniel Brown, “‘Fortress America’ Denies Access to Musicians,” last modified May 15, 2006, <http://www.freemuse.org/sw13754.asp>. See also “Visa Issues: Two Orchestras Forced to Cancel Their Concerts,” last modified September 26, 2011, <http://www.freemuse.org/sw44284.asp>. Different articles on the Freedom of Musical Expression website underscore the post-9/11 increased travel restrictions in the U.S., and their impact on travel for musicians.



permanent resident. His job stability had been jeopardized a year into his appointment at UNLV because of the temporary nature of his nonimmigrant visa.

The uncertainty related to wanting to work in the U.S. is a current cause of concern for Sam and Silviu. They envision that going back to their countries upon graduating would limit their opportunities for professional and musical growth. Rather than teach novices (as they believe they would if they returned to their nations of origin), they would prefer to teach at the conservatory or university level in the U.S. Gaining such legal insidership in the country, however, can be involved and time consuming. Obtaining a visa through work-related sponsorship or through extraordinary ability entails engaging with a level of bureaucracy and legal fees that students like Sam and Silviu don't normally encounter. They both have considered marriage to a U.S. citizen or permanent resident as an alternative, thus intertwining their personal lives with pursuing a career in the U.S.<sup>12</sup>

The insider/outsider dynamic has also been present in other facets of my informants' lives. Linguistic differences in speech (between British and American English) caused Andrew to feel as an outsider in the U.S. To avoid being singled out as an outsider in daily life, he masked his British accent and avoided British colloquialisms. For Sam, the dispute he endured with his family over his choice of music as a profession resulted in him moving out of his family's house, thus, to an extent, creating an insider/outsider division between them. Adam's experience was such that he felt he had to study and gain professional recognition abroad before he could be regarded as an insider in the Canadian collegiate musical world.

Before coming to FSU, Silviu experienced the insider/outsider dichotomy when he studied flamenco in Cádiz. Though he was an insider in his teacher's studio by virtue of sharing similar habits and practices with his peers, he was an outsider in a community that emphasized Gypsy traditions. He was known as "the Romanian guy," and he had to be careful not to appear impolite to roughnecks, nor to pursue a romantic relation with his

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<sup>12</sup> See Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1984), especially chapter 3, "'Making Do': Uses and Tactics." Such strategies for negotiating institutional and federal requirements by non-resident aliens could be regarded as instances of *tactics*—ways in which individuals "make do" and seize opportunities in the face of institutional requirements over which they hold no power. *Tactics* thus constitute "victories of the 'weak' over the 'strong' (whether the strength be that of powerful people or the violence of things or of an imposed order, etc.)" (xix).

teacher's daughter. On the other hand, Silviu's experience as a flamenco player grants him a level of insidership in the Spanish art music tradition unusual for non-Hispanics.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, during his undergraduate studies, school officials regarded his foreignness as a marketing asset, and in promotional materials they highlighted the fact that he was an international student.<sup>14</sup>

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In his cross-cultural study of rites of passage, Victor Turner considers the transitions between "culturally recognized" social ranks, and the liminal space between them.<sup>15</sup> He highlights the novices' in-between, ambiguous condition as one belonging to a realm of possibility and transformative growth.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, he examines the "complete authority and complete submission" between neophytes and their instructors, versus the "complete equality" and camaraderie present among neophytes during the liminal stage.<sup>17</sup> I find most striking the idea that, during the liminal phase, "neophytes are withdrawn from their structural positions and consequently from their values, norms, sentiments, and techniques associated with those positions. They are also divested of their previous habits of thought, feeling, and action."<sup>18</sup>

For FSU guitarists, the experience of obtaining a doctoral degree may similarly be understood as a transitional period where candidates are neither novices nor terminal degree holders.<sup>19</sup> They are many times regarded, within the liminal state, as young "promises" of great players, teachers, and scholars. They are also under the complete authority of their teacher, yet comrades among their peers. Moreover, they are to transition from the *habitus* of their previous training environment to that of the new

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<sup>13</sup> See Bruno Nettl, *The Study of Ethnomusicology: Thirty-One Issues and Concepts* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2005), 151. Nettl includes an example of how a bi-musical student from Ghana had insights on Native American percussion that were not as easily accessible to American students.

<sup>14</sup> See Bruno Nettl, *Heartland Excursions: Ethnomusicological Reflections on Schools of Music* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 35; Henry Kingsbury, *Music, Talent, and Performance: A Conservatory Cultural System* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988), especially chapter 3, "Cream Rises." Nettl considers the emphasis that musical institutions tend to place on the exotic outsidership of people like orchestral conductors. Silviu's cross-cultural example is also reminiscent of Kingsbury's discussion of talent as a culturally recognizable element in American music schools.

<sup>15</sup> Victor Turner, *The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1967), 94

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 97-9

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 99-101.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 105.

<sup>19</sup> A similar case could be made for students pursuing non-guitar advanced degrees.

cultural cohort, thus becoming insiders in the liminal stage that precedes graduation as doctors of music.

My colleagues and I went through similar experiences during our assimilation into the FSU classical guitar program, such as meeting Bruce and becoming acquainted with his pedagogical style, questioning our own worth as players, participating in competitions, etc. It is our shared practices and dispositions that unite us as insiders in the cultural cohort, even in the face of different levels of insidership in the U.S. as immigrants or international students. The *habitus* we developed over years of guitar study at FSU is not necessarily one that will be retained permanently. Less than a year after graduation, Adam's practices vary considerably from what they were during his doctoral candidacy—reflecting in turn his assimilation into different areas of life as a professional musician. Rather than denying his insidership into the FSU guitar cohort, however, this deviation from the *habitus* ratifies it: Adam has manifested that playing non-classical genres makes him further internalize the different modes of thought he acquired while studying with Bruce.

Adam's experiences outside of the classical guitar *habitus* also illuminate a condition of the present time. It is likely the case that many future FSU guitar graduates will teach courses beyond their original specialization (a majority of recent university vacancies seek guitarists who may also teach class guitar, theory, ensemble and musicianship courses).<sup>20</sup> The present generation may be one of the last that will experience having a university teacher whose job is to teach guitar exclusively. In that regard, we may be on the verge of a new development in the tradition, in which players need to have additional musical and academic qualifications in addition to being proficient instrumentalists.<sup>21</sup> Such a development should not be surprising if we consider,

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<sup>20</sup> See Jeff Packman, "Musicians' Performances and Performances of 'Musician' in Salvador da Bahia, Brazil," *Ethnomusicology* 55:3 (2011): 415-8, 432-7. Packman discusses the different musical-social competences that musicians in Bahia cultivate to find work (what he refers to as "working to work"). To be successful in finding labor, Bahian musicians often play gigs in genres other than those they value the most. Many classically-trained guitarists are similarly "working to work" in higher education by seeking competences beyond their original specialization in performance.

<sup>21</sup> See James Kippen, *The Tabla of Lucknow: A Cultural Analysis of a Musical Tradition* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 135. Master tabla players of the Indian *gharānā* tradition emphasize solo performance in their teaching. Many of them additionally train their disciples as accompanists, to prepare them for the likely scenario of having to play accompanist gigs in order to make a living as performing musicians.

for example, the relatively fast assimilation of the guitar into collegiate life during the twentieth century. An abundance of talented artists may result in extreme competitiveness, thus promoting creative technical and musical advancements, which will inevitably impact future guitarists' habits and dispositions.<sup>22</sup> "Classical" guitarists aspiring to teach at the university level may be heading towards a renegotiation of their present *habitus* in order to adapt to the varied needs of a changing market (e.g. teaching in studios that don't specialize in nylon-string playing or in the art music canon). It is thus not difficult to envision a future "pan-guitaristic" university guitar life—where varying string materials and modes of plucking, rather than excluding non-classical players as outsiders, would reinforce their shared insidership as *guitarists*. These challenges and opportunities are bound to enrich the guitar tradition together with the international sensitivities that will be gradually assimilated into guitarists' *habitus*. Only the future will reveal the full extent of such an exchange at the higher education level, both within the U.S. and around the world.

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<sup>22</sup> See James Clifton, "Vasari on Competition," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 27:1 (1996), 28-9. Renaissance artist and historian Giorgio Vasari regarded intense competition between artists as a factor that stimulated many of the artistic leaps that took place during the Renaissance.

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## **BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH**

Gonzalo Gallardo was born in 1982 in Lima, Peru. He began his musical studies with Alonso Acosta and Édgar Valcárcel. After completing high school in Lima he continued his musical studies at the Manhattan School of Music; he completed his undergraduate studies at Cornell University's School of Arts and Sciences, where he obtained a B.A., cum laude in Music, in 2005. Gonzalo has conducted his graduate studies at The Florida State University: he holds a D.M. and a M.M. in String Performance (Guitar), a M.A. in Spanish, and a Certificate in World Music. Gonzalo has performed with the Peruvian National Symphony, and has played chamber and solo recitals in the United States and Peru. He has published two chamber editions of Mauro Giuliani's Concerto in A major, Op. 30 (Québec: Les Productions d'Oz, 2011).