

# LETTER FROM NEW YORK

By JULIA CROWE

THE LAGO performed in New York at the 92nd Street Y to a full house for a concert featuring works from their new CD, *Spin* (Telarc). Their programme featured *Llanura* by Alfonso Montes; a spritely *Four Dances from The First Booke of Consort Lessons* by Thomas Morley (arr. by Scott Tennant); York's percussive *Quiccan* followed by Kanengiser's Celtic-flavoured *Turn to the Sea* (both featured on the new album); *Two Mexican Pieces* by Aaron Copland (arr. by Kanengiser); Three 'Guitar Heroes' pieces: Ralph Towner's *Icarus*, Pat Metheny's *Letter from Home* and Chet Atkins' *Blue Echo/Country Gentleman*; Vince Mendoza *Solstice Poem* (also on the *Spin* CD) and lastly, their show-stopping *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2* by Franz Liszt.

The quartet performed in their usual top, wise-cracking and fleet-fingered form. For some reason, the quartet was subjected to close examination by a young man seated in the first row center and by another seated in the second row, stage right, each peering through binoculars. This seems to be the new trend here at concerts in New York: a knuckle-headed degree of knuckle-gazing. Hopefully the quartet had managed to use enough wet wipes to clear away any remaining traces of dinner.

Bill Kanengiser held a masterclass at the Manhattan School of Music a month earlier and advised students to approach sheet music in a reassured, relaxed manner that allowed time to get inside the shape of a melody and deconstruct it. 'It's like having a glass of red wine—first you sniff it, turn the glass and see the legs of it. Examine the melody without hurrying.



MSM student Colin Hotz with Bill Kanengiser.

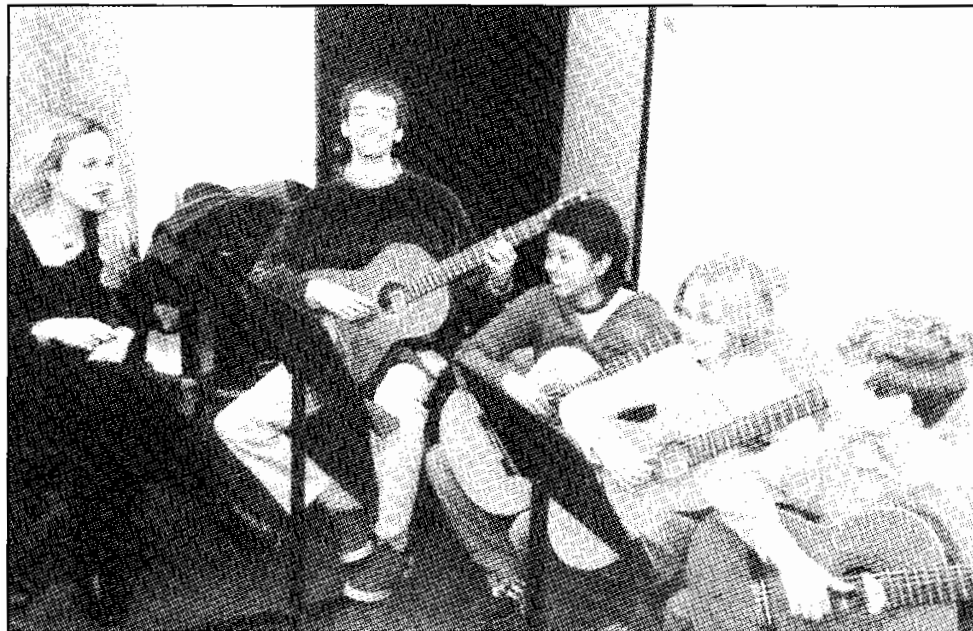
'And if you should find yourself tripping during a fast passage,' Kanengiser says, 'Maybe you don't know the part well enough. Remember the systems: fingers, auditory, visual, memory. Confusion during a passage indicates this is a spot that requires slow, comfortable work and transitions in order to anticipate what is coming next. Don't worry, this is a good thing!'

Other New York news: Juilliard will be celebrating its 100-year anniversary on October 7th and 8th with concerts featuring Antigoni Goni, Tali Roth and a masterclass with Sharon Isbin for its Pre-College students. Both the concerts and masterclass will be free and open to the public.

'I'm proud that 2006-7 marks the seventeenth year of The Juilliard School's Guitar Department which I created in 1989 and have chaired since its inception,' Isbin says. Guitarists from 15 different countries have received graduate degrees under my tutelage.

In September 2007, Juilliard will initiate its first undergraduate programme for guitar, also under my direction. Information will be posted this fall at <http://www.juilliard.edu>. Completed applications are due December 1, 2006. Because class size is limited, graduate and undergraduate auditions will be highly selective.'

Goni, who instructed Juilliard's Pre-College Division guitar students for several years before accepting a professorship at the Guitar Department at the Royal Conservatory of Brussels, will be performing



Tali Roth with Juilliard Pre College Division guitar students.

a solo programme. Tali Roth has recently filled this post and will be performing Rodrigo's *Concierto de Aranjuez* with a small orchestra conducted by Dr. Andrew Thomas, Director of the Pre-College Division at Juilliard. Ms. Isbin presides over masterclasses and performances this month at the Aspen Music Festival and will be performing a solo recital at Harris Hall at the Grand Teton Music Festival, 10 August.


Jazz/classical guitarist Ken Hatfield, profiled recently in this column, has been added to ASCAP's Jazz Wall of Fame with the ASAP Foundation's Vanguard Award. Hatfield received the honour for his wide range of compositional styles and instrumentations, including jazz works written for his own ensembles, chamber pieces, choral works and ballet scores, including commissioned works for Judith Jamison, The Washington Ballet Company, and the Maurice Béjart Ballet Company. He has also written scores for television and film, including Eugene Richards' award-winning documentary *but, the day came*.

Mel Bay recently published his excellent book *Jazz and the Classical Guitar: Theory and Application*. (See Chris Dumigan's review in the June 2006 issue of *Classical Guitar Magazine*.) His latest CD, *String Theory* (Arthur Circle) features his classical and dobro playing skills in an Appalachian-inspired homage to his father, along with original pieces inspired by the writings of Jorge Luis Borges.

Hatfield has performed as a solo artist and with his various ensembles at The JVC Jazz Festival, The Knitting Factory, The Cathedral of St. John the Divine, the Whitney Sculpture Court here in New York and at the North Wales International Jazz Guitar Festival.

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