

The Denver **MUSICIAN**



Denver Musicians Association
Local 20-623, AFM, AFL - CIO

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Welcome Visit to Denver by ICSOM Chair Bruce Ridge

Bruce Ridge, Chair of the International Conference of Symphony & Opera Musicians (ICSOM), was a welcome guest in March. Through a series of meetings with CSO musicians and management, Bruce shared a wealth of experience and resources in preparation for upcoming contract negotiations. The current one-year CSA-DMA contract expires August 31, 2010.



Bruce Ridge, 2007 AFM Convention

Double bassist Bruce Ridge has been a member of the North Carolina Symphony since 1987. He began his professional career when he joined the Virginia Symphony at the age of 15. Ridge later studied at the Curtis Institute of Music and the New England Conservatory of Music, where he graduated with Distinction in Performance honors. He has performed at Tanglewood, Interlochen, the Grand Teton Festival, and with the orchestras of Charleston (SC), Jacksonville, and Honolulu.

Ridge has been an international leader on issues affecting arts organizations and has met with countless orchestras across America, literally from San Juan to Honolulu. In 2008, Ridge was invited by the Federation International des Musiciens to address the first International Orchestra Conference in Berlin, Germany. In March of 2009, he was invited to testify before Congress during a hearing on the Economic and Employment Impact of the Arts and Music Industry (testimony viewable on YouTube). Ridge's speeches and articles have been published in numerous countries, and he has been quoted in newspapers across the United States, as well as in the American Foreign Press.



Bruce Ridge meeting with members of the CSO Finance, Orchestra and Contract Negotiation Committees

Internet Music Lessons and the Touring Musician

By Steve Eulberg

Like many musicians, I have found teaching to be the butter for the bread of performance. Truthfully, the balance between performing and teaching helps me survive as a working musician. I simply love sharing the music with public and private audiences, and equipping them to participate in the creative process.

When I began my private studio I was teaching unusual instruments (mountain and hammered dulcimers, mandolin, bowed psaltery, Irish Bodhran and African hand percussion) as well as guitar. This has turned out to be a good niche for my interests, skills and experience and led to my establishment of the annual Colorado Dulcimer Festival in Fort Collins, which just completed its 7th year. I am also on the road teaching at festivals across the US about once a month, which I link with performances to, from or near the festival region; in short, the life of a touring (and teaching) solo musician.



Steve Eulberg

HOW I FOUND MY WAY ONTO THE WEB

I've been drawn to acoustic folk instruments, and because I am a part-Luddite (resisting new technologies), these proclivities may make my story a bit surprising. The development of my private music studio was concurrent with my development of an internet presence for my music and music lessons.

It began when a computer programmer who heard me play at a local open mike scanned my postcard-schedule and posted it to the internet and then sent me an email to let me know he'd done that (back in 1998.) Because I was busily making these postcards and spending money to mail them out, I immediately saw the potential of having my performance and teaching schedule available on the world-wide-web. So, I developed my first webpage. Over the years I would post photos of my students' recitals and make my recordings and published books and lesson materials available for sale, had my products included at Amazon.com and cdbaby.com (and then iTunes) and various other avenues for disseminating music.

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Internet Music Lessons and the Touring Musician

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To further develop my understanding and teaching skills, I earned a Master of Music Education degree from Boston University, where I was in the second graduating class of their on-line program. It was amazing to me that I could study at this level and interact with my professors, facilitators and peers through this internet medium, do it from home, and from such disparate places on the road as urban Berlin, Germany and rural Evart and Oscoda, Michigan. I was better equipped to teach my private students, and this education helped equip me to work at the junior high level in our local school district for three years.

HOW I GOT FOUND ON THE WEB

What I didn't know is that I was being prepared for the opportunities that were not yet present, and which now occupy a good deal of my time as a music educator. Through an email, I was approached in 2005 by Jeff Booth, a young northern Colorado man with computer programming and internet experience who wanted to offer guitar lessons on the internet. Together with his partners he had formed www.JamPlay.com and they were looking for teachers. After meeting to explore the idea of offering video lessons that would be posted on the internet via their website, I filmed an audition tape and became the first teacher they hired.

We proceeded to film Beginning Guitar lessons in high definition video, first from two camera angles, then three and now four. The finished product is captured, edited (with multiple views), rendered and delivered in Flash technology on the website. An affordable monthly subscription fee opens the door to all the lessons and features available. Other teachers were hired, and I added the following lessons series: Fingerstyle, Celtic, Bluegrass, Kids and Guitar, Singing with Guitar and several songs in the Phase 3 section of the website. In addition, students would write in to ask clarifying questions about lessons, guitars, repair, gear and styles and we would film video answers to those questions.

This work rhythm continued until last year when the site, which had included a chat room for subscribers to write posts to each other in real-time, was expanded to include a real-time audio/video feed from teachers. At first we were recruited to be available with a webcam for special events, but then the partners decided to offer a regular schedule of on-line chats with the instructors.

Now I am on-line with my webcam, a microphone and guitar 11-15 hours a week as part of the 18-hour-a-day schedule to offer live answers to questions and teach specific techniques or styles and songs. Because these lessons are offered via the world-wide web, I am often on-line with students from Beijing (China) Adelaide and Brisbane (Australia), Sao Paulo, Brazil, Mexico City, across the US and Canada, Ireland, England, Norway, Sweden, France, Denmark, Poland, Russia, Afghanistan and Iraq, all at the same time! I'll post a set of lyrics and chords, or a leadsheet and then host a world-wide jam. (This works because the instructor is like the hub of the wheel, with all of the students as spokes. They can see and hear me and themselves as they play along, without the disruption of latency or echoes of other students' live signals.) I'm currently preparing everyone for a St. Patrick's Day Ceiligh since I'm scheduled to be on-line that night.

HOW STUDENTS FIND ME ON THE WEB: LONG-DISTANCE PRIVATE LESSONS

This daily on-line presence has also opened up another avenue of on-line instruction which utilizes Skype software. Skype (www.skype.com) is free downloadable software which allows the user to contact other users and talk with them, using their computer as a telephone, for free! (I am a dual-AFM member, also serving on the Local 1000 Executive Board and we've been making good use of Skype conference calls as a way to help us to our work more efficiently and save on our bottom line.)

With the addition of the webcam and microphone (sometimes one or both of these are built into one's computer) I have been able to offer private, long-distance lessons for students on guitar and my other instruments. Students contact me, we schedule a mutually-agreeable time to do a Skype call to test connections, agree on payment and method (most use Paypal), and then schedule a lesson. I use my normal private lesson rhythms with lesson times, cancellation (24-hour notice), re-scheduling, etc. Because people are in other time zones, I can usually schedule these lessons in slots that I am unable to fill locally. What I haven't yet figured out is how to have these long-distance students participate in one of my two semi-annual recitals, but I'm haven't given up on that idea! What this has meant for me is that I can afford to work from home or on the road, providing quality music education which is tailored to the students' abilities, needs, instruments and musical genre choices. I can do this with a flexibility that a fixed school schedule does not allow, with pay that is comparable or better than in school and I can continue to tour and perform on the road. I get good bread and good butter!

The New South Metro Area Performing Arts Center

The Citizens of Lone Tree have authorized up to \$18.5 million for construction of a new Lone Tree Arts Center in the Lincoln Commons area of Ridge Gate, just south of Lincoln Avenue, and one-half mile west of I-25. Coventry Development Corporation has donated a multi-million dollar parcel of land for the construction of the cultural arts facility. Westlake Reed and Leskosky has been retained to design the center. A groundbreaking ceremony was held on March 18, 2010 and the Center is scheduled to open August, 2011.



The 43,000 square foot venue will include:

- 500 seat multi-use theater with a 50 foot stage house
- Multi-purpose room
- Break out rooms
- Backstage and support spaces
- Outdoor amphitheater
- Warming kitchen
- Administrative offices

Lisa Rigsby Peterson has been named as the Center's first Executive Director. Rigsby Peterson has worked with and led many local organizations, including Curious Theater Company, the Denver Center Theatre Company, PHAMALY, and Opera Colorado.