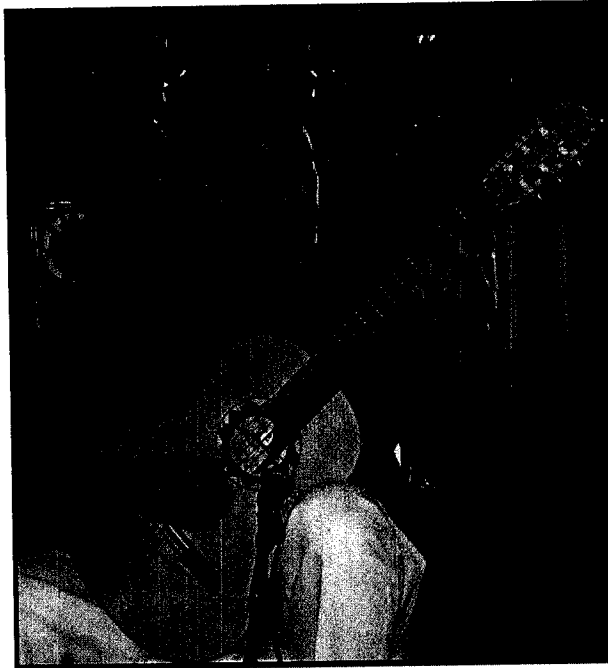


For those of you who have been long fans of 20th Century Guitars' *Classical Corner*, You may remember Rich Jacobowski as its founding columnist. I first met Richard Jacobowski back in 1986. At that time while I was still undecided as to my path of guitar study and performance, Rich was already well committed to his. I remember hearing him at his girlfriend's home (who is now his wife) and thinking to myself "wow, this guy is fantastic. He is living proof that you can work as a classical guitarist, if you dedicate to it." I'm not sure if Rich knows how much seeing him at that time meant to me. Here was a guy the same age as me, who loved and trusted the classical guitar. After

Richard Jacobowski

A Gentleman of the classical guitar



seeing him in that parlor setting followed by a concert at Nassau Community College, the classical guitar became more than just the instrument I studied and loved; it then became the instrument I also trusted. Growing up on Long Island surrounded by an endless sea of rock & jazz players, I cannot describe to you how many times I heard "classical guitar is cool, but you can't get any work with it" Rich stood out as a gentleman way back then when we were all just kids, and he is every bit that same honest and sincere person today. Oh and by the way.... He is an amazing player!

I spoke with Rich in mid April at Five Towns College in Dix Hills, NY. Here are some of his thoughts.

GS: Rich it's great to see you.

RJ: Yes, it's been too long.

GS: So what's new?

RJ: Well I have a few things upcoming. I'm very excited about returning this summer to Orvieto, Italy for a weeklong workshop. This is a really fun time for all involved. The week long event will include several concerts, workshops & student recitals. The dates are July 24th to July 31st. I'll be back in the states for a concert on August 7th, 3pm at the Vail-Leavitt Music Hall sponsored in part by the Vail-Leavitt Music Hall & Aranjuez strings. After that, I'll be gearing up for a full semester at Columbia University. I'll be doing the graduate guitar instruction, as well as some faculty concerts with them.

GS: When did you start working at Columbia?

RJ: I started this past year, 2004. The graduate Teachers College is making great efforts to develop its music program, with an emphasis on performance, and I'm glad to be a part of it.

GS: What can we look forward to you playing at Columbia?

RJ: Well depending on the availability of the other music faculty, the programs may include the song cycle by M. Sieber, Songs by B. Britten, as well as some Guitar & Violin music of N. Pagannini & M. Giuliani.

GS: That sounds great. Please keep us posted as to the dates.

RJ: For anyone interested in Columbia University and the Graduate Teachers College as well as the music events that will be presented

this season, the music department can be reached at 1-212-678-3283, or e-mail me directly at rj2124@columbia.edu.

GS: So, tell us about how you got started with the classical guitar.

RJ: Well I grew up in Wantagh, Long Island. I started lessons at 9 years old. I remember I probably didn't practice nearly as much as I should have. Then at about 14 I really began playing a lot, being very attracted to the classical guitar. I already had the records in my house from my family, and I then began studying with Howard Greenblat. At 16 or so I began studies with Fredric Hand & Carlos Barbosa-Lima. I also studied with Manuel Barrueco, and Nick Goluses. I was happy to be in close proximity to NYC, & I did all my studies at the Manhattan School of Music, Undergraduate, Masters, and concluded my DMA in 1993.

GS: Can you tell us about the guitars you play?

RJ: I'd be happy to. My main guitar is a cedar top Mikial Robert. It was built in 1991. He is originally from Moldavia, and has settled in Canada. I also have some beautiful guitars from the Long Island builder Rich DiCarlo. I also have a guitar from Giuseppie Guagliardo from Sicily. I have a spruce top from 2003 that I really like. He is building me a spruce/maple guitar that I will pick up in Orvieto this summer.

GS: And strings?

RJ: I've been playing D'Adarrio Pro-Arte high tension for a long time and I'm a sponsored artist with them.

GS: Getting back to the Festival in Orvieto, Italy, fill us in a bit.

RJ: Well, it is an open invitation to develop your skills & musicianship on the classical guitar for players of all levels in a beautiful part of the world. There will be builders, concerts, masterclasses and workshops featuring guitar ensemble and guitar in chamber music settings. The weeklong festival will feature me and the Italian guitarist Rocco Perugini, as well as some guest guitarists from both Italy and France. Please feel free to e-mail me directly at rj2124@columbia.edu and I'll get right back to anyone interested with complete detailed information.

GS: I remember you having three recordings with the independent label Gateway classics. They include your debut album, a Miguel Llobet album, and a collection of Elizabethan songs with a mezzo soprano. Do you have any new recordings in the works?

RJ: Recently my recording has been focused on demo packages. I'm trying to balance playing and teaching.

GS: With the classical guitar, playing and teaching work hand in hand.

RJ: I agree. You really need one to compliment the other. Teaching and playing are closely linked. It is one of the reasons I'm so excited about teaching at Columbia Teachers College. I'm thrilled to be a part of a fine Ivy League graduate learning center.

GS: Columbia University's location is the upper