

Music 25h Classical Guitar Workshop

Instructions for Practice and Journals and self critiques (revised 9/07)

Practice Journals can be done using the Practice Log form, or similar format. Practice journals will be turned in on week three or four, reflecting one week of practice. **Four entries per week, minimum, are required.**

Practice and Practice Journals. Use the journal outline/routine required; If you have a different routine, discuss this with the instructor. Use a loose-leaf journal to include details that don't fit the Practice Journal form. Include questions you might have on your journals.

- **Budget your practice time.** Determine how much time you have for practice *before you begin*, then parcel out your time for each type of activity.
 - *Vary your routine:* Some days you may want to spend more time on technical exercises, than repertoire or sight-reading, but make this decision, and **write it down**, beforehand, then stay within the time allotted.
- You will be assigned several arpeggios each quarter to learn, as well as several scales and left hand exercises. These will be the object of mid-term assessments; **write these in the space provided, and work on several of these first.** You may choose to work on others as well in any given practice period, but generally, choose no more than four or so until you have learned them all, at which time you might choose to go through many of them, depending on the amount of time that you have.
- **Sight Reading: guitarists universally proclaim the joy of being able to read music at sight, and the increased ease of learning pieces with strong reading abilities**—spend a few minutes every day sight reading.
 - When sight-reading, vary your material; choose music from different periods, composers, even instruments (how about bass and moveable clefs?). Buy a few anthologies of graded material; Ron has examples and can make suggestions to help you.
 - You should spend most of your time reading *below* your playing ability—music that you can maintain a constant tempo (this is far more important than the speed at which you play), without needing to stop. Sight reading is defined by non-stop action—you can go back at the end and work out problem areas, but keep counting and playing during the piece! Playing multi-part music with a partner can really help in this regard.
 - Try to **count out loud** so that you know the exact place in each measure you are—if you get lost, you will be able to jump in appropriately.
 - Occasionally, you should play music beyond your playing ability, to help you to stretch and grow; at these times, don't worry about the beat, just work on finding the notes.
 - For a more complete explanation and suggestions for sight reading, see *The Natural Classical Guitar, The Art and Technique of Practice*, or purchase a method for sight reading on the guitar.
- **Use your metronome** every day, even while sight reading
- **Repertoire:** Spend at least half of your practice working on repertoire, at **least 2/3 of that time working on your assigned piece(s). Progress will be fastest when you work on, individual phrases and very slow, painstakingly careful practice.** That means that approximately five minutes of a two-hour practice time will be devoted to at-tempo, or near-tempo practice of your current performance piece(s)—you can begin work on a piece with an at- or near-tempo performance to determine its current level. You should spend a part of each practice period reviewing already-learned material, and this too should be practiced slowly and carefully, paying attention to phrasing, dynamics, technique, sound quality. Commit solo pieces to memory as soon as possible, but continue to refer to the music to check accuracy.