

Editor's Closing Remarks

It could perhaps be said that we are not only learning how to play the guitar but are truly "studying the possibilities" of what the guitar is capable of performing. To complete the learning process, you must of course add your own efforts and talents because no book written will do the actual work for you. The books are only there to guide the way and you must teach yourself, maybe with the help of a surrogate teacher.

Tony Bradan did not map out this course believing that it is for everybody. There is no doubt in my mind that many students may have abandoned the learning process far before reaching this point. The consequence of this is that those players will most likely never read this commentary.

Learning to play, for most of us, involves dedication and a supreme effort. Players relying on divine intervention may often be dismayed at the fact that that is not happening. Inspiration comes to players, arrangers and composers from all kinds of aspects in their lives but the physical and mental part of playing is controlled by intellect.

Prior to moving on to Book 5, you should once again make a personal assessment of your strengths and weaknesses. A concentrated review is always in order. If your daily practice still consists of about a half hour per day, it is unlikely that you are making too much progress. It is a bit like having a dog for a pet. You should not have a dog as a companion unless you are willing to give him about an hour of your time every day. Guitarists have to give their chosen craft a good portion of their time. At this level, players should have realized that they are no longer dealing with grade school or high school topics. Yes, this material could certainly be considered as being at least college level.

Book 5 concentrates on the study of four part harmony as it is applied to the guitar. If you guessed that it has more chords and arpeggios, you are quite correct. If you also guessed that it is rather intense, you are also correct.

Will those with the strength and perseverance to "stay the course" be rewarded with a medal, certificate or maybe a knighthood? I'm sorry to say that the answer is "no". As mentioned at the top of this page, the reward will be that you will have gained a good understanding of some of the possibilities of this great instrument. Your technical skill development will be proportional to how much and how you practice and also to some degree dependent on your natural talents.

If you have not yet joined forces with a "band of merry men" or "knights of the round table" or maybe just a "garage band", it may be time to look into that possibility. Sharing your music with others is very rewarding and generally a lot of fun.

George Arvola (editor)