

INFO Nr. 262

Juni - Juli 2026

June - July 2026

Focal dystonia - A few words, after some time

I have not written about focal dystonia for quite some time in this Info. The only and obvious reason is that last year and this year I have not learned about important or interesting things which happened regarding it. Also, the lack of ability to travel (due to the reasons you know) prevents me from writing about some other news, as I have already explained when I reduced the frequency of this Info from monthly to bi-monthly last year. ...Hence, I have more time to write a bit about FD.

An Italian retired professional gtr. teacher is a friend of mine, who suffered from FD for many, many years and has been able to rehabilitate himself through self-therapy. I called him after some time and he told me that recently he offered a lecture directly to many conservatories (music universities) in Italy and only *one* showed interest and has *actually* invited him, out of ten (yes). If he had asked me before launching his “campaign” I would have warned him just about that. For me this massive lack of interest is no surprise at all. I am now able to offer two distinct, but related lectures; 1) *Focal dystonia (i.e.*

musicians' FD in general) and 2) *The reasons why music universities and event organizers do not want to deal with focal dystonia.* Yes, it took some time to realize it, I admit, but I have very clearly realized all this, some years ago. And of course now I know all the reasons. I am not saying that before I had a very, very deep admiration for the above institutions, but I *did* have some of it in the past and for a long time. It is now long gone, because, again, I know the reasons for rejecting all my (and others') offers, which basically was some substantial help for free. The matter is quite depressing, to say the least, however I am no longer surprised. I would really be if some university called me and asked me to talk about FD to its students and faculty members and answer their questions.

If you suffer from FD and it is your wish to “get rid” of it, no opinion is going to help you in any way or do you any good (therapy-wise). Period. We live in a world though where what people *think* and/or *say* is way more important than what people *know* and *do* (and we all can see the consequences of that, if we open our eyes). *Doing* the *right* things requires knowledge, and lots, lots of it. Then more.

While I am typing this, and while you are reading this, one or more classical guitarists are just realizing in shock they have developed focal dystonia, without knowing, without any clue at all about exactly why, and without having *any* idea about how to deal with it and where to obtain actual help. Some of them will never *play* again, some will, maybe, depending on the individual circumstances. Well, the smart readers know a major part of the circumstances which eventually and ineluctably cause - and keep causing - focal dystonia.

Since I started researching FD myself in 2003 (and especially in 2006/07 - 20 years ago), apart from my own research activities the general situation regarding prevention as well as therapy has not improved even a bit, judging by the numbers of new and old cases, anyway. Yes, on the internet you can find more opinions than 20 years ago. But: which ones are reliable, useful for a specific individual? Which ones are the result of *actual*, thorough research, based on a method? Does the internet tell you this? Are posts labeled by (real) experts? And is the internet able to distinguish and separate serious, real information from some ignorants' fantasies and “invented” junk, opi-

nions, in the first place? Too often I have the impression that the internet exists mainly for them. And, by the way, do you really think or hope that “AI” is going to do all that, every single time?? Does AI know *you*, and *your* specific form of FD? Is AI able to find and select the right information for each single case (if it exists)? Come on. “Artificial” for sure, “intelligence” – ... what “Intelligence”? Can AI build Saint Peter’s? Or the pyramids? Or create Michelangelo’s Pietà? Or parmesan cheese? All the music we love so much??? And... “some” other things, wonders created by man?

Maybe, just maybe, among educational institutions there are rare exceptions somewhere regarding including FD in the instruction and program, but I do not know of them. I consider myself lucky knowing a person very well who is very knowledgeable. Readers of the *Info* know who I am talking about (it’s not me!). He is an actual, independent researcher who could not care less about some opinions by some chairholder or full professor, and he sees them as what they are (see the second lecture title above; The reasons why...). He knows so much that in some way he seems to be kind of “overburdened” himself by all his own findings and knowledge, and has a hard time managing or communicating it in a way that may make it accessible and “graspable” to “normal” players. Anyway, his (private) pupils are very

lucky. And, like for me, his main profession has nothing to do with guitar and music. He decides what he does and what he does not for the guitar and for the players he knows.

I can reaffirm, based on my own, personal experience, that no matter which huge guitar project you may be thinking of tackling or carrying out (like e.g. performing and/or recording all important seven or eight guitar concertos), it is easy and no big deal compared to achieving your full, 100 % rehabilitation (i.e. full instrumental skills) from a serious or the most serious form of FD. When the above expert and scholar started to tell me some important things it was very late after I had developed the disorder. And for many years I just did not know yet about some things (details) that he knew, or I did not realize that they applied to my case. (This was many years ago.)

If you don’t care about FD pray that whatever you do, it is not digging your own deep trap. The digging happens constantly, silently, day by day, every single time you practice, and without any symptoms whatsoever, and above all without you noticing, perceiving *anything at all* if you have not undergone a professional prevention program or counseling in time. The digging takes time. During this time you don’t know it is taking place, until the day your path ends and takes you right into it, the day it’s over. FD cannot be treated with any medication. Botox injections, if

the patient is quite lucky and if they “work” in the first place, stop the symptom locally, but not the cause itself, which is not in your hand. And just for a period of time.

Nature, or the human brain for that matter, has “punishments” in store big time for those who recklessly and/or in denial just prefer to ignore how the brain works and the causes of FD (and of *many* other things happening in their life). Faculty members do not care. FD is not part of their teaching assignment or lectureship, anyway, so what. Yes, there are exceptions. Now take a wild guess on what type of (future) teachers they educate.

This I know: the more I know, the less I know; what I *do* know is almost nothing. Nevertheless, if you want to be more informed about FD and become aware of its risk, *please* contact me. Now.

To any guitarist who wants to know more about FD I suggest to attend the master class given by **Italo Tamburro** and **Carlo Ambrosio** in **Castel d’Elia** (Viterbo province, central Italy) **July 29 through August 2**, which they say will not be the “typical” master class, since many subjects dealt with will be of general interest, and far beyond interpretation details of single pieces. FFI send me an e-mail.

Michele Bajo
April/May 2026

Isaias Savio, Tamburello

Il ricercatore e insegnante romano **Italo Tamburello**, mentre continua a studiare (naturalmente anche sullo strumento, giornalmente) meticolosamente i sei volumi delle *Lezioni* di Sagreras, ha recentemente esteso lo studio approfondito alle importanti pubblicazioni didattiche di Isaias Savio (1902-1977), aventi come oggetto soprattutto la mano sinistra.

Il sommo didatta e compositore nacque a Montevideo. Nel 1931 si stabilì in Brasile, a Rio de Janeiro e più tardi a São Paulo*, dove visse per il resto della sua vita. Studiò con M. Llobet. Non fu allievo di Tarrega, come Sagreras (1879-1942). Iniziò ad imparare la chitarra a nove anni, circa due anni dopo la morte del genio spagnolo. Come Barrios egli fu spesso ispirato dalla musica popolare suonata in villaggi della campagna del Brasile per numerose sue composizioni (circa 100 in totale). Particolarmente gettonata è *Batucada*, un'antica esuberante danza afrobrasileana ricca di percussione. Il brano fu inciso da Eduardo Fernandez (uruguayano anche lui), Graham Devine ed altri. Il 12 gennaio ricorrerà il 50° anniversario della sua scomparsa.

*) È una pura coincidenza che questa edizione dell'*Info* tratta due chitarristi di diverse epoche trasferitisi entrambi in queste due città.

Farra Chitarrensemble in Gradisca, May 9

Gradisca is a small town in north-eastern Italy, Friuli region, close to Gorizia. Farra is a large village right next to (just north of) it which boasts an important music school, where Mauro Pestel has been teaching for many years and where he was able to establish his guitar ensemble 16 years ago. Gorizia is well-known to guitarists because of the big yearly Mercatali guitar festival and competition which started just a few days later.

I don't know how often ensemble concerts with Paradiso-only music take place, this was my first and it was the first time I saw composer/guitarist Vito Nicola Paradiso in "full action".

Part of the program (in which V.N.P. played solo) was conducted by Mauro Pestel, the rest by the composer himself. His compositions are pleasant, upbeat, somehow relaxing. Maybe a few pieces would have deserved just a little bit more "drive" and accents, but this is certainly subjective.

The mid-size hall located in the very center of the town seats 150, it was packed (or nearly). V.N.P. introduced every piece with a few sentences. The entire program were pieces inspired by travels in the United States; New York, Southern California, Las Vegas, Arizona and Hawaii were the states and cities depicted in music. V.N.P. has succeeded in

creating a bridge between the classical guitar and entertaining music, which could as well be movies music regarding most of the program. With the program largely featuring program music, a large portion of what the ensemble plays are not actual parts, but varied background noise imitations with plenty of sound effects (construction sites, train, sirens, shots etc.), about all sounds the guitar makes possible, which the composer managed to write in a highly effective way. While it is music that without doubt deadcenters its actual purpose, which explains Paradiso's success and makes the rehearsing somehow fun and enjoyable, I think it is not quite the type you would want to listen to over and over for decades and decades, it is ensemble music intended for both the audience *and* the players having a good time and spending an enjoyable evening – a challenge in itself, indeed. V.N.P. is also well-known as the author of a popular beginners' method.

The non-stop concert started at 8.50 PM, after three short speeches (by the Farra music school and local authority representatives) and ended at 10:10 PM, after two encores.

Hats off to Mauro Pestel and his ensemble which had prepared the all-new program in just three months. It gave another concert just the day after, in a church in downtown Gorizia. By the way, a concert of a gtr. duo Pestel is a member of, which was scheduled just a week later in Palmanova (city hall), had to be cancelled on a short notice.

Friuli – Farra Chitarrenensemble

Il *Farra Chitarrenensemble* recentemente ha dato due concerti, il primo a Gradisca (Sala Bergamas) il 9 maggio, il secondo a Gorizia (Chiesa di S. Ignazio) il 10 maggio, con un nuovo programma, interamente costituito da composizioni di **Vito Nicola Paradiso** ispirate dall'America, più precisamente da viaggi negli Stati Uniti. Solista era il compositore stesso, direttore per la maggior parte Mauro Pestel, per alcuni brani (quelli senza chitarra solista) Paradiso.

È interessante il fatto che mentre in Italia vi sono pochissimi stabili ensemble/orchestre di chitarre (credo che si possano contare su una mano), come quello in oggetto, ve ne sono due, entrambi alquanto dinamici, soltanto in Friuli, anzi, pure nella medesima provincia (Gorizia).

Un dettagliato articolo sulle varie, non poche istituzioni e regolari iniziative chitarristiche nella suddetta regione apparve su questo bollettino circa un paio di anni fa. Chi volesse può richiederlo, si prega per e-mail.

Biografia di M. Giuliani

La data del caricamento su questo sito della **quarta parte** della biografia di Mauro Giuliani ancora non può essere fissata, ma potrebbe essere nella seconda metà di luglio. Tratterà vari argomenti riguardanti il **periodo viennese**, non contenuti nella seconda (e terza) parte. Anche questa parte conterrà informazioni nuove per la grande maggior parte dei lettori. Il lavoro è quasi giornaliero.

Vor 25 Jahren...

2001 war sehr vieles ganz anders. Vieles war aber schon nicht mehr so wie noch bis 1994/1995. Es gab kein Smartphone, kein Facebook, Whatsapp & Co. Ich hatte wesentlich mehr Schüler (jeder Altersgruppe). Ab 2010/2011 war es dann innerhalb eines halben Jahres – endgültig - vorbei. Das Smartphone hat dem Musikunterricht bzw. der musikalischen Ausbildung und Bildung immensen Schaden verursacht, weil es die wertvolle Zeit (und natürlich nicht nur diese) der völlig ausgelieferten Kinder und Jugendlichen geraubt hat. Jene, die jetzt Mitte/Ende zwanzig oder jünger sind und das Üben ernst nehmen, unterscheiden sich in ihrer Persönlichkeit daher noch mehr als jene, die es bis zum bzw. vor dem obigen Zeitpunkt taten. In den 70er und 80er Jahren war es ganz normal, Gitarre oder Klavier zu lernen, das hat natürlich auch die Gitarre als solche, allgemein, stark gefördert.

Ich unterrichtete seit November 1999 in der Kraßniggstraße, im EG eines Wohnblocks (bis Oktober 2007). Wohnen und Arbeiten waren ab diesem Zeitpunkt örtlich getrennt. Davor war beides in der Maximilianstraße 4, EG. Mit Schülern war ich jedes Jahr entweder ausgebucht oder fast. Ich gab damals auch noch Nachhilfeunterricht. Als ich von 9/11 erfuhr (mein Vater rief mich an) hatte ich gerade eine NH-Stunde. Wenige Tage davor – 13 Tage vor ihrem 62. Geburtstag - war meine Tante verstorben, die in

Wien lebte und der ich zu verdanken habe, dass ich in Wien eine schöne, interessante und unbeschwerte Studienzeit erlebte (September 1981 bis April 1987, im Dezember desselben Jahres verließ ich Wien und zog nach Klagenfurt, damals nur temporär). Wien war damals eine österreichische Stadt, die ab 1989 rasch zu existieren aufhörte.

Von 1998 besonders bis zirka 2006/07 fuhr ich *sehr* oft zu Gitarre-Festivals, Meisterkursen und Konzerten; München, Ansbach, Koblenz, Brisighella, Cervia, Otranto (die letzten drei A. Diaz), Friaul (versch. Orte), Treviso, Sacile, Codroipo, Cividale (die letzten drei F. Zigante), 3-4 Male Nürtingen oder Iserlohn, Altheim, Arosa (2011 und 2012), Sylt (2010), Portogruaro (E. Segre), Pordenone, Augsburg, Landsberg/Lech, Adelboden (Segre), Aschaffenburg (Russell), Fermo, Erlbach (Fernandez), Rust, London, Southampton (Williams-Konzerte), Livorno (Dyens-Konzert), Atri (Battisti D'Amario), Fiuggi, Latina (die Reihenfolge ist rein zufällig) und viele andere - ich war so gut wie ständig unterwegs. Das Verhältnis zwischen Einkommen und Treibstoff- und Hotelkosten machte es ohne weiteres möglich. Danach, besonders ab 2008, reduzierte ich diese Reisen allmählich immer mehr, ich begann zu weniger Terminen zu fahren, bis vor ungefähr 10 Jahren. Costacciaro, Otterbrunn, Wertingen, Görz, Castell'Arquato, Murnau, Darmstadt, Triest, Nervi (Dosso), Carpi, Rom, Chanteuges... Die Liste ist nicht

komplett! 2009 besuchte ich auch das GFA-Festival, das in jenem Jahr in Ithaca, NY stattfand. Ich war 3-4 Tage dort. Es hat immer geregnet und wenn es nicht geregnet hat, hat es geregnet. Zirka die Hälfte der obigen Veranstaltungen bzw. Konzertreihen existieren garnicht mehr.

2001 fuhr ich zum ersten Mal nach Erlbach (Sachsen) zu dem jährlichen Meisterkurs von Abel Carlevaro. Der berühmte Pädagoge aus Uruguay war leider gerade wenige Tage davor gestorben. Ich habe in Erlbach 3-4 Jahre an dem Kurs teilgenommen, den sein Schüler Eduardo Fernandez gab.

Von 1987 (Jahr in welchem ich in Wien an meinem zweiten Eliot Fisk-Meisterkurs teilnahm) bis 1997 und z.T. noch 1998 betrieb ich semiprofessionell das Fallschirmspringen (500 Sprünge in knapp 6 Jahren, 7/92 bis 6/98) und widmete den Gitarre-Reisen nicht so viel Zeit, aber ich habe dann ordentlich aufgeholt.

Poster 2027...

The final decision about the subject of the next all-new poster will be taken by June 30. The poster is scheduled to be released approximately at the end of January 2027. A pre-decision has resulted in two subjects the selection will be based on. 2026 is an off-year.

Interne Infos - Sommer

Der **Unterricht** findet den ganzen Sommer statt, bis auf einmal 5 Tage und einmal zweieinhalb Wochen. Das ist die einzige längere Pause des Jahres. Im Sommer ist mindestens jede zweite Woche der Unterricht auch am Wochenende möglich.

KONZERT

STEPHAN STIENS

Mittwoch, 12. August, 20 Uhr

Sankt Wolfgang (SP)

(nahe Spittal, man fährt hinauf)

Der Münchner gibt jährlich in dieser für die Gitarre perfekten Kirche einen Gitarreabend.

Ohne Verstärkung.

MFG (bitte sich s.w.m. melden).

I wish you all a great start of summer, hopefully with some great master classes and meeting inspiring masters and nice players!*

Summer is not that short, use it, don't waste it.

*) A list will be sent to those who send me an e-mail.

Michele Bajo

31 maggio 2026

31. Mai 2026

May 31, 2026