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Pat Martino

www.patmartino.com

(Taken from Mike Brannon's article: "*Pat Martino: Legend Among Us*"): "Pat Martino. A name that strikes anything from fear to sheer awe and reverence in musicians who know who this is. And what he's done and been through. And continues to go through. The name resonates a bridge between the true Jazz swing era throughout the organ trio groove and into the modern era and its (digital and electronic) resources of today".

1) In your expertise, what are the main facets of jazz guitar playing that a student should focus on more than any other in his or her developing stages?

Students should always experience an endless fascination of their own development. The instrument must always remain as childishly playful as it was when they initially chose it as their favorite toy.

2) What is it that separates a good player from a truly great jazz guitarist? Is it a gift or can you learn it?

A question like this is difficult to answer, maybe because it's similar as follows: "What is it that separates a good human being from a truly great human being? Is it a gift or can you learn it?" True learning results from intention, and demands faith, hope, trust, endurance, commitment and most of all fulfillment of itself with the failure of outside distractions and their success as meaningful experiences. I think that these are what ultimately separate the musician and the artist.

3) How important do you think sight reading is in your area of the music profession?

Sight reading is a legitimate part of the craft and is extremely necessary in certain formats. Jazz has spread into different areas of conditions, some of which interact in formal classical settings while others in more avant-garde formats; as well as everything in between. I think it's eventually decided by the individual, solely based on his or her professional comfort.

4) How important is TAB in your opinion?

I think TAB is useful for certain teachers and students. Personally I've never used it.

5) As a professional player is there any one area of your playing that you concentrated on as a student that there is never any call for?

I've always enjoyed studying different kinds of music, and there are a number of areas that I've rarely had the opportunity to enjoy in public performance. A good example is the

recording project "Fire Dance". Its topic was based upon Indian ragas. The last time I enjoyed something similar to it was recorded 30 years prior on one of my earlier albums; "Baiyina". In both cases neither of these were performed publicly.

6) Is there a particular area of traditional jazz education that you have disagreed with and which you think should be avoided?

I don't think that anything in jazz education should be avoided, but I do feel that certain forms of instruction can be broadly expanded. Jazz has a unique psychology and quite a number of these elements should be included in its instruction. I disagree with jazz education seen as a marketable package solely designed to prepare its students to enter the "music business" alone. Jazz and music in a broader sense can also be used as a tool to better ones physical and spiritual perspectives in multiple ways and can move to a much great inner and outer success. Again, I think that depends on the individuals intentions.

7) Is there a facet of jazz guitar education that you might be personally known for? In other words if a student came to you for musical inspiration, what might he or she get from you that they might not get from another source?

The geometry of the guitar. A blueprint that immediately reveals the instruments profundity.

8) What musicians, books or educational material turned your musical world around as a developing artist?

As far as the musicians; Elliot Carter, John Coltrane, Wes Montgomery, Olivier Messiaen, Johnny Smith, Aaron Copland, Hank Garland, Miles, Wayne, Herbie, Ron and Tony..... etc., etc. This can go on and on! In books; "A Course In Miracles"; brought about by Helen Schucman and William Thetford, "Gödel, Escher, Bach" by Douglas R. Hofstadter are two of them but once again: etc., etc.; there are many others.

9) Is it dangerous to practice too much? If so what do you think happens?

For me the word practice suggests being separate from the event. It's like the anticipation of something that hasn't happened yet. I've come to be more relaxed about these things, and do the best I can under any circumstances.

10) What advice would you give to a jazz guitar student looking to enter the music profession?

My advice is to be persistent, to remain focused on the moment. To pay attention to all the beneficial things that come forth along the way. There's a good in everything.

11) Where in your opinion is jazz guitar headed? Is there any new vocabulary to be found?

I don't think I'm qualified to determine where it's headed. Too many great players are moving in different directions simultaneously. Quite some time ago I found a new vocabulary that helped me greatly; (the use of the augmented and diminished parental forms). I'm sure this will continue to happen with others in different ways again and again.

12) What ambitions and goals do you have right now in your musical world?

To remain focused on each precious moment, and to continuously plant the seeds. In time they shall flourish in their own special way.

13) Any other comments?

Music is much more than just a craft. It's the key to a doorway that leads toward betterment.



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