

## Preview

### Cleveland Classical Guitar Society — Dan Lippel at MOCA Cleveland December 12

by Mike Telin



Called a "modern guitar polymath" (*Guitar Review*), guitarist Daniel Lippel feels fortunate to have carved out such a diverse career for himself. "You need to do a lot of things in this business to make a living," Lippel told us by telephone from his home in Brooklyn, New York. "I've always been interested in a lot of different things and I feel pretty lucky that it's worked out for me to be able to have a lot of variety in my career. I'm definitely not getting bored."

On Thursday, December 12 beginning at 8:00 pm at the [Cleveland Museum of Contemporary Art](#) (MOCA), [Cleveland Classical Guitar Society](#) presents guitarist [Daniel Lippel](#) in a concert that features contemporary solo and chamber music. Lippel will be joined by percussionist Luke Rinderknecht, Cleveland Orchestra principal oboist Frank Rosenwein and the Cleveland Institute of Music Guitar Quartet.

In addition to an active career as a solo performer, Lippel has commissioned or premiered more than fifty new solo and chamber works, many of which he has recorded for New Focus Recordings, the independent label he co-founded and directs. Lippel also serves as guitarist for the acclaimed International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE), and the new music quartet Flexible Music. An active improviser and performer in non-classical styles, he has been a touring member of the eclectic indie group, Mice Parade, since 2004.

Looking back, Lippel credits his variety of musical interests to growing up in Montclair N.J. "There was a lot of great music happening – Orpheus Chamber Orchestra had a series there and there was a very good jazz club. Of course I didn't realize it at the time because I was a kid, but it was a good place to grow up for someone like me who has a variety of interests in music."

Thursday's concert also gives Lippel an opportunity to reconnect to Cleveland having lived here for five years while attending school at Oberlin and the Cleveland Institute of Music. "I stayed for a year after school and ran a small chamber music series and it's really great to be able to keep in touch with that community which was so important to me during my formative years."

For his program, Lippel has chosen works by composers with whom he has a special connection. “The solo works are all by composers with whom I have worked closely. Many of the pieces were written for me, or that I premiered or have recorded.” And the performance of Ronald Roseman’s *Come Chitarra* (1988) will reunite Lippel with his CIM classmate Frank Rosenwein. “Frank and I played this piece together when we were students, and I was first introduced to the work by a teacher at my high school. Roseman taught oboe at Yale for many years. It’s a fantastic piece but the combination of oboe and guitar is very rare. And Jared Tate (*Inchokkillissa* for guitar and percussion) also attended CIM. He’s of Native American heritage and a lot of his music is responding to that.”

Lippel will also pay tribute to his professors at the Manhattan School of Music where he earned his doctoral degree. “Ursula Mamlok (*Five Intermezzi*) taught there from 1974 until 2006. She has a compelling story. She was born in Berlin and came to the United States after fleeing Germany with her family. About five years ago she moved back to Berlin and is having somewhat of a renaissance of recognition for her music. Nils Vigeland (*Two Variations*) and Reiko Fütting (*Hine ma Tov*) also taught at Manhattan and they were some of my mentors during my doctoral work. And because of these connections I chose to focus the program on those three composers.”

Becoming the guitarist for the [International Contemporary Ensemble](#) also has a direct relationship to Lippel’s time at Manhattan. “I first played a concert with ICE in 2005. They were presenting a Portrait Concert of the music of Mario Davidovsky at Columbia College in Chicago, and I wrote my [dissertation](#) on his music. They needed one more piece for the program and Davidovsky told them that there’s this guitarist who’s into his music. I knew some but not all of the players from Oberlin, and since then we have done a lot of projects with guitar and it has grown over time. As an ensemble and individually they have released a lot of recordings on the New Focus label, so it’s been a great collaboration for eight years now.”

Joining the indie band [Mice Parade](#) is also a project that Lippel says that he more or less fell into. “I think I first toured with them in 2004 but they have been around since 1999. The guitarist they had couldn’t do it anymore and somehow they found their way to me and it’s been a great experience. It showed me a way into a window of a different part of the music scene that, at the time, I wasn’t aware of at all.”

Thursday’s program also includes Ethan Wickman’s *Joie Divisions*, Mikel Kuehn’s *Unfoldings* and Van Stiefel’s *Gesture* from *Shape of Hands* as well as Lippel’s own *Mango Sketches* and *Hine Ma Tov*.

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