

Classical Accord

Newton guitarist has had a longtime love affair with classical music

By MICHAEL SWANGER
Entertainment Editor

Like a lot of guitarists growing up in the '60s, Terry Bradley was first inspired to play a six-string by the likes of Eric Clapton and Jimmy Page. It was the heyday of rock and roll guitar and for a 12-year-old Bradley, a time that supported his ambition to play and teach guitar.

"There was a lot of good music at the time. The guitar was just becoming really popular. That's when you

Newton guitarist Terry Bradley will perform an in-store show at Mattingly's Music and Books from noon to 2 p.m. on Sunday. He will also sign copies of his CDs, *The Masters Voice* and *Come Dream With Me*.

Photo by Michael Swanger/Daily News

could make a living giving guitar lessons. It was crazy," said the Newton native. "From 1960 to 1971, the guitar was the king. Everybody played it, it was just something you did."

Bradley's small physical stature kept him off the sports fields and his shy personality kept him in his bedroom. It was there, in his comfort zone, that Bradley pursued his passion for the guitar.

"It fit my personality to sit in my room and play all day, sometimes most of the night," noted the 47-year-old axeman.

RAISED BY parents who encouraged him to play music, Bradley's natural ability, combined with a discipline to practice, allowed him to begin teaching at the tender age of 12.

By the time he was in high school he was playing in local bands, performing at

school dances and VFW halls.

"It was almost like second nature. By late junior high school I could copy almost any lick Clapton was playing. I can't now because I haven't done it for so long," said Bradley. "But rock and roll was easy."

So easy, it became boring. Bradley's enthusiasm for the guitar, however, would be radically heightened and forever changed when he stumbled across a recording by Christopher Parkening, one of the world's pre-eminent classical guitar virtuosos.

"It was like an epiphany," mused Bradley. "I had never heard anything like that before. I was so blown away by this guy I thought 'I've been wasting a lot of time, because that's real music.'"

THE FIRST THING Bradley did was buy one of Parkening's instruction books.

"I almost had to re-learn the guitar, but it was what I had to do," said Bradley who taught himself how to play fingerstyle, how to sit properly, and how to play a melody with accompaniment notes at the same time.

By 1973, Bradley had made a complete transition to classical guitar, he said. That year he also began running his own dry cleaning operation by day and continued teaching guitar to students by night.

Not much has changed over the years for Bradley. He still runs his own dry cleaning business in Pleasant Hill and currently teaches approximately eight students.

"Love teaching, hate performing," said



Michael Swanger/Daily News

Terry Bradley works on a classical song.

Bradley. "I don't like being looked at or having people say 'wow, you're awesome.' Those types of things really bug me and I've never been able to deal with that."

Bradley's performance anxiety as a solo artist kept him from playing on his own in the public eye, but it didn't stop him from playing.

From the mid '80s until 1992, Bradley was playing or rehearsing an average of 20 nights per month with the Des Moines, Waterloo and Fort Dodge symphonies, as well as those with Central, Grinnell and Simpson colleges.

"IT WAS A tremendous experience, I got to play with Doc Severinsen and Patti Page - everybody I admired, but physically I was ready to implode," said Bradley. "That was my one taste of burning up the road, but I needed a break."

During that time period, Bradley also re-visited his rock and roll roots when he helped create the local K-Rocks shows in 1989.

Bradley/ See Page 4B

Local classical guitarist releases new CD, Come Dream With Me

Bradley/ From Page 1B

...gations, he returned to ...
...ching at night. On occasion ...
...would play a wedding or ...
...orch reception while main- ...
...ing his chops through hours ...
...practice at home.

...teaching, however, became ...
...sustenance.

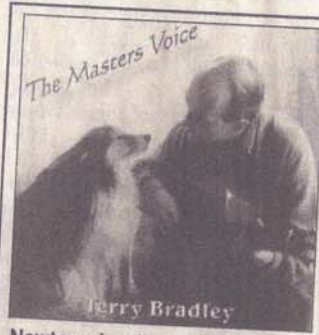
...That's a joy to me," he said. ...
...ve to see talent molded. I love ...
...ee people blossom and grow ...
...learn an instrument that ...
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...re my niche is at."

...last year Bradley got a "wild ...
...after being approached by ...
...one at his church to record ...
...bum of his own. The result ...
...the independent effort, *The ...
...Masters Voice*, a collection of ...
...tual recordings featuring ...
...Bradley's vocals and guitar work ...
...of rhythm tracks.

The Masters Voice introduced ...
Bradley to the recording process ...
which in turn whetted his ...
appetite to pursue his passion to ...
record an album of solo, instru- ...
mental, classical guitar numbers.

"RIGHT AFTER I was fin- ...
ished with the first one I wante ...
to make another one," said ...
Bradley of his latest CD, *Come ...
Dream With Me: Reflections for ...
Guitar*, another independent ...
effort that was just released. "My ...
heart is really with the guitar. I ...
guess I wanted to do a recording ...
of this guitar music.

"I wanted to create a ...
night, reflective atmosphere ...
this one," said Bradley. The ...
album's 11 tracks include cover- ...
of material by Carcassi, Bartok, ...
Tarrega, Bach, and an original ...
composition, the title track.



Newton classical guitarist Terry Bradley has released two albums, including *The Masters Voice* (2000) and *Come Dream With Me: Reflections for Guitar* (2001). Both independent efforts, which were recorded and produced in Newton, are available on CD and cassette at local stores. Bradley is currently working on a third album.

"There's no pyrotechnics on the disc," laughed Bradley. "It's pretty laid back."

Come Dream With Me is also a shining example of Bradley's tal-

ents. One listen to the album and it's easy to see why he doesn't need to recruit students - rightfully so, they seek him.

Noting his discomfort for per-

forming live as a solo artist, Bradley said he isn't concerned with taking the traditional route of playing gigs to promote an album. His approach is much more subtle.

"I like to make the disc, give it to you, let you play it and if you like it fine, and if you don't, well bless your heart, that's OK," said Bradley.

Bradley said he knows it's a daunting task to sell classical guitar music in a pop-influenced world, but he remains dedicated to the music he loves and vows to never stop playing it.

"It strikes a responsive chord with me. It's a more exalted form of music than rock," he noted.

"Now I sound like a snob," he quipped.

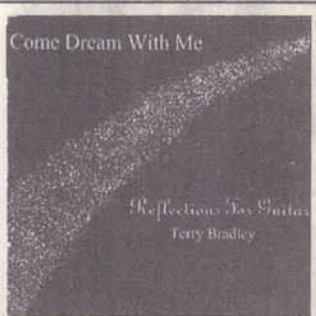
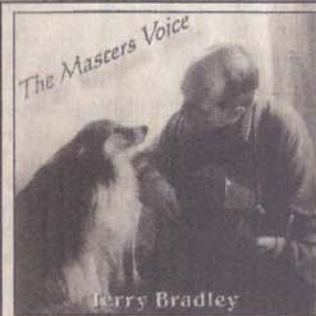
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Classical guitarist releases new CD, Come Dream With Me

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ton and Leo Brouwer or Lau-
...do de Almeida with the same ...
...level of interest and enthusiasm, ...
Bradley will find a way to get ...
...people hooked on classical ...
...music. For him, it's not just ear ...
...candy, it's a way of life.

"I've listened to all kinds of music, but my heart is with classical," said Bradley.

With his heart already sold on classical music, Bradley said he also pays attention to his ears, which remind him to practice everyday and to improve as a player.

"There's a multitude of pieces out there beyond me," he admitted. "I'm working on a piece now that's wicked hard, but everyday I sit down and I get another measure. I'm growing as a player, but I'm not trying to prove anything to anybody, except me."