

# HSGA QUARTERLY

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Whooping it up at our 2018 Fort Collins Festival, “Islanders” Jeff Au Hoy (left), Alexis Tolentino and Bobby Ingano. Our Virtual Festival includes performances by all three.

## HSGA’s Virtual Festival Is On!

By Roberto Alaniz

Just as your newsletter was about to go to press, the Hawaiian Steel Guitar Association hosted our first Virtual Festival on Friday and Saturday, January 23-24, 2021. The format was similar to our live festivals, including over 30 member performances, two workshops, clips from previous guest artists, and this year’s Guest Artist, master Hawaiian steel guitar player Geri Valdriz and The Kikā Kila Band.

Although the scheduled date for the Virtual Festival has already passed, you can still access the festival at any time on your device. Just visit our website ([www.hsga.org](http://www.hsga.org)), our Facebook page ([facebook.com/HawaiianSteelGuitarAssociation/](https://facebook.com/HawaiianSteelGuitarAssociation/)) or do a YouTube search on “HSGAFestival.” One of the

great features of a virtual event is that viewers can pause, or leave and return to the program at any time.

Unlike our “in-person” events, there is no advanced registration required for the virtual festival. And there is no fee for accessing the festival stream, although we are suggesting a donation of \$25. If you are not a member of HSGA, we encourage you to consider joining for the \$30 annual fee in place of a donation.

The virtual festival is open to the public, so please feel free to share this information with others.

Tune in, donate, and share with your families, friends, and fellow musicians. And let this be the beginning of a hopeful new year. We look forward to “seeing you” on January 23-24 and beyond! ■

## HSGA QUARTERLY

Volume 36, Issue 140



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### STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Hawaiian Steel Guitar Association is a tax-exempt, nonprofit educational corporation in the State of Hawai'i under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Our primary purpose is to develop a global network of players and lovers of traditional Hawaiian music and to encourage the study, teaching, and performance of the Hawaiian steel guitar. Our primary financial goal is to provide scholarship assistance through donations to steel guitar students who demonstrate the ability and intent to become accomplished performers.

### MEMBERSHIP

Membership is open to all steel guitar players and non-players around the world who support the perpetuation of the Hawaiian steel guitar. Annual dues are US\$30. The membership year begins July 1. Members receive the *HSGA Quarterly* and other group benefits. The *Quarterly* is mailed four times a year First Class to addresses in the United States and by Air Mail to foreign addresses. Members can obtain an Associate Membership for a spouse or family member at a cost of \$10, added to the annual dues; an Associate Member is entitled to discounts at certain HSGA functions and can vote in HSGA Board elections.

### SUBMIT ARTICLES & COMMENTS TO:

HSGA Quarterly, 2145 Tiffany Walk, Manteca, CA 95336-9555 USA; E-mail: [hsga@hsga.org](mailto:hsga@hsga.org). In addition, email submitted items directly to the editor at [johnely@hawaiiansteel.com](mailto:johnely@hawaiiansteel.com). Letters to the president and general club comments should be sent to: Frank Della-Penna, P.O. Box 18323, Washington, DC 20036.

## COCO WIRE

We received the following late-breaking updates from HSGA Japan representatives **Masakatsu Suzuki** and **Shinichi Kakiuchi**: Due to continued coronavirus concerns, the annual HSGA Japan convention, scheduled for March 26, 2021 has again been postponed. No tentative date has been set, so stay tuned.

Japan member **Kikuo Urushihara** has been appointed Deputy Representative and will help the Japan branch of our club coordinate activities in West Japan such as the Osaka Convention, which is held on odd years.

Big virtual festival mahalos from festival coordinator **Roberto Alaniz**: Writes Roberto, "When I suggested the idea of a virtual festival, I never thought about the amount of time, work and skills that would be required to make this happen. I want to take this opportunity to thank the following HSGA members who contributed their knowledge, skills and hours of time to put this festival together: **Frank Della-Penna, Teri Gorman, Christo Ruppenthal,**

**Jack Aldrich**, webmaster/graphic artist **Mike Wittmer** and video editor **John Mumford**.

"A special thank you to my friend and neighbor, Steel Guitar Hall-of-Famer **Bobby Black**, for allowing my brother Jorge and I to feature him in my own video contribution to the festival. Bobby loves Hawaiian music and has fond memories of his friendship with **Jerry Byrd**.

"And, of course, we thank the members and guest performers who contributed their videos and musical talents for this event. Mahalo, all!" ■

### Missed the Virtual Fest?

*Most of our members won't get this newsletter in time for the rollout of the Virtual Festival on January 23-24. But not to worry! The beauty of having an online festival is that it can be viewed over and over again at any time. Simply go to our website or the Facebook or YouTube locations listed on page 1, and you can replay the entire festival or any portion of it you wish. Convenient!*

*Playing at the "grand finale" kanikapila jam at the Kaua'i 2017 festival, (l. to r.) Ed Punua, an unidentified soundman, Bobby Ingano, Geri Valdriz, Alan Akaka, Eddie Palama and Greg Sardinha (standing). Geri is our 2021 Virtual Festival Guest Artist.*





*Virtual Festival “mover and shaker” Roberto Alaniz playing his Frypan at our last Fort Collins “in-person” festival in 2019.*

## Board News and Virtual Festival “Back Story”

*By Recording Secretary Teri Gorman*

What has our HSGA Board been up to these past several months during the Covid lockdown? *A lot!*

Let’s pull the curtain back on the nothing-short-of-amazing work of some key people in HSGA in launching our first-ever Virtual Festival on January 23-24.

This new festival idea was the vision of longtime member and new HSGA Secretary-Treasurer, Roberto Alaniz. Back when he took on the duties in June, he talked about putting on a “virtual” convention in response to a lockdown that would likely end in-person festivals for the upcoming year. This promised to be a huge endeavor, but he persevered. So a committee was launched and we went to work.

We invited all of our members to submit video performances for inclusion in our virtual festival program and received over 30 enthusiastic responses. The videos capture the genuine aloha spirit we have come to expect at our in-person gatherings. And the videos have come to us from all over the world, including several from our Japan membership, one from Switzerland, and several from Canada and Mexico, highlighting an obvious advantage to having a virtual get-together: we’ll get to enjoy performances from “far-flung” members who would likely not be able to travel great distances to attend an in-person festival.

Guest artists from previous HSGA festivals have graciously allowed us include videos of their performances in our virtual festival program. President Frank Della-Penna

*Continued on Page 4*

## HSGA Virtual Festival Schedule

*(Times given are in Eastern Standard Time)*

### Saturday, January 23

#### *First Set (1:00-3:00 PM)*

- Festival Opening and Welcome
- Jess Montgomery
- Shinichi and Kumiko Kakiuchi
- Hugo Fritz
- Benjamin Ruedy
- Yoshiko Seo (Anegogumi)
- Eric Rindal
- Jerry and Karen Wagner
- Jeff Au Hoy (2:20 PM)

#### *Second Set (4:00-6:00 PM)*

- Owana Ka’ōhelelani Salazar
- Chuck Christensen
- Vickie Van Fechtman
- Tony Fourcroy
- Ethan Goore
- Duke Kaleolani Ching (4:45 PM)
- Chris Ruppenthal’s Vintage Recordings Workshop (5:15 PM)

#### *Third Set (7:00-9:00 PM)*

- Kiyoshi “Lion” Kobayashi
- Roberto & Jorge Alaniz w/ Bobby Black
- Christo Ruppenthal
- China Dance Hula Studio Troupe
- Featured Festival Guest Geri Valdriz and the Kīkā Kila Band (8:00 PM)

### Sunday, January 24

#### *First Set (1:00-3:00 PM)*

- Opening – Welcome
- Dean Owen
- Rick Aiello
- Island Spice Dance Review
- Joe Stewart
- George Rothenberger
- Alan Akaka (1:45 PM)

#### *Second Set (4:00-6:00 PM)*

- Lion’s Ladies Ensemble
- Jack Aldrich
- Dave “DK” Kolars
- Ariel Lobos
- Ian Ufton
- Bobby Ingano (4:50 PM)
- Al Nip’s ‘Ukulele Workshop (5:30 PM)

#### *Third Set (7:00-9:00 PM)*

- Al Nip & Maui Jam
- Alexis Tolentino (7:20 PM)
- Lion’s Ohana
- Frank Della-Penna
- Chris Kennison
- Margie Mays
- Ed Punua (8:30 PM)

also managed to secure video of the fabulous Chinese hula dancers who were such a big hit at Fort Collins 2018.

Roberto lined up a very special featured guest artist in Geri Valdriz and his Kīkā Kila Band. Alan Akaka, Kumu and master steel guitar player, does several of the introductions and provides general information about HSGA and its overarching mission. He is a great ambassador for us and always steps up when we ask him.

Roberto also found time to record a performance for the show, as did board and committee members Frank Della-Penna, Jack Aldrich and Chris Ruppenthal. We have so many great performances, nearly six hours of entertainment each day. You will be able to go back and view the performances any time after the initial show—on our website, Facebook page, or YouTube.

In addition to Roberto's tireless work in all aspects of putting on this festival, we have our social media guru and longtime member, John Mumford, who manages our Facebook page. He was put in charge of collecting, editing and stringing together the performance videos for the festival live-stream—a huge job. Thank you, John!

HSGA webmaster Mike Wittmer does all of our graphic design and support materials to make this all look good, as well as technical support in developing the show.

Then there is longtime member and new board member Chris Ruppenthal. He is not only putting on his ever-popular workshop, Hawaiian Music in the Golden Age, but also did a performance for this show. He is helping with all aspects of the festival, including setup of the all-important links for donating to the festival. Like Chris, Maui member Al Nip is both performing and offering his fun 'Ukulele Workshop.

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*Our social media "mogul" John Mumford, acoustic steel guitar in hand at his Aloha Theater Tiki Bar. We're there, John!*



*Our sensational guest dancers and steel guitar professional from China at Fort Collins 2018, (l. to r.) Zhao Ying, Qi YingLi, steeler Wang NianZu, Li Linfei and troupe founder Cindy Yan. Wow!*

HSGA President Frank Della-Penna continues to be our international ambassador and keeps the ship on course. He has worked tirelessly on all aspects of the show and is a festival performer to boot.

We can't talk about the accomplishments of the festival team without giving a huge shoutout to Tony Fourcroy and Chris Kennison, who for so many years put on the fabulous festivals in Fort Collins. Transitioning our conventions from Joliet to Fort Collins was challenging and they did a remarkable job. On top of all that, you'll get to hear Tony and Chris perform at the virtual festival.

Our longtime editor, John Ely, is our steadfast rockstar in charge of putting this quarterly newsletter out, mostly single-handedly, as well as so much behind-the-scenes work that keeps this all going.

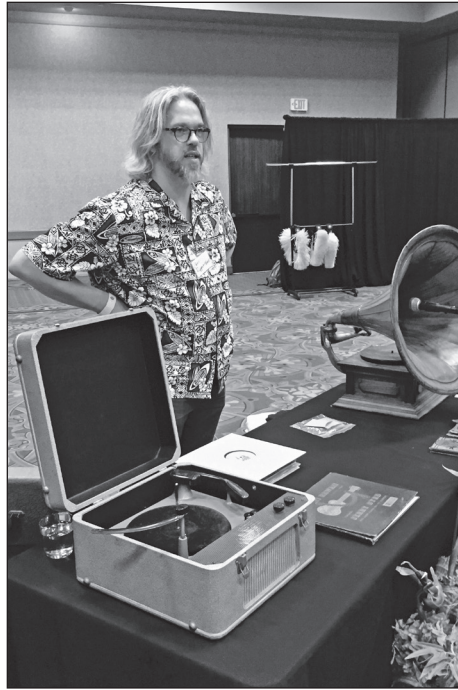
Please share this festival information with friends and family, and help spread the aloha and appreciation of Hawaiian steel guitar music. As always with our festivals, we strive to grow our membership and further our mission to support the next generation steel guitar students via our Scholarship Fund. HSGA is currently sponsoring five students with Kumu Alan Akaka. ■

### **It's Dues Time Again!**

*If you received a Renewal form with your newsletter then it's time to renew. Dues are \$35 for a hard copy newsletter and \$30 for the electronic version. Renewing via our website is a snap!*



*Al Nip at Fort Collins 2018. Al is also hosting the Virtual Festival 'Ukulele Workshop.*



*Chris Ruppenthal at Fort Collins 2016 with his vintage Hawaiian recordings workshop.*



*Ft. Collins 2016 Guest Artist, Owana Salazar, who is also appearing at the Virtual Festival.*

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# Jerry Byrd's Frypan Steel

By Teri Gorman

“We regret what we *don't* do.” That’s what famed steel guitar legend Jerry Byrd told Christopher Coats when Christopher finally called him to ask for steel guitar lessons. Christopher was lamenting how he had procrastinated for ten years about taking lessons. This was in 2001 in Honolulu, and Jerry was still taking students at Harry’s Music. Christopher became one of Jerry’s last students (Jerry passed away at age 85 in 2005). “I came to appreciate Jerry as a friend as well as a teacher. He was the warmest guy with an ‘edge’ I’ve ever met.”

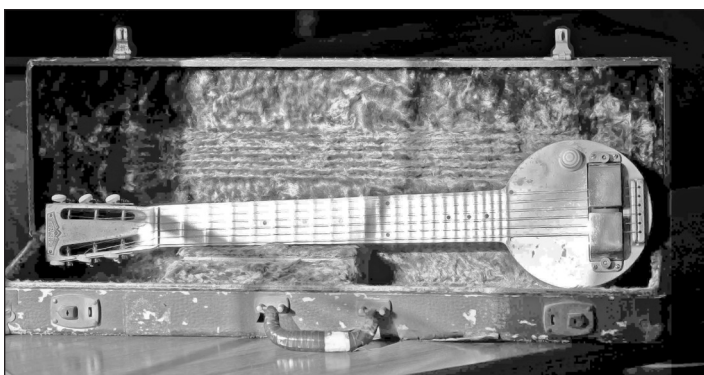
Christopher recently found HSGA while surfing online, and reading about us inspired him to share his story of Jerry’s old frypan. Jerry sold it to him during that time of two to three years when Christopher was studying with him. He has felt somewhat conflicted about telling folks he has it, but says more recently he has even been thinking of contacting the Bishop Museum about it, as he knows it’s special.

Christopher says his interest in Hawaiian steel guitar came from a Jerry Byrd moment many years earlier. On a stop-over in Honolulu en route to Guam in 1978, he strolled by the Royal Hawaiian Hotel, and there on a stage under the stars sat Jerry playing, spotlight upon him. Christopher thought the steel guitar was the most beautiful sounding instrument he had ever heard. It was an ethereal moment and it stayed with him.

Then came Christopher’s permanent move to Honolulu from Coronado, California in 1982. His father was assigned at Camp Smith, and Christopher thought he would go out there to surf and play the guitar. His dad had other plans for him and said “pay rent or go to school!” So he went to the University of Hawai‘i and earned a bachelor’s degree in music performance and a masters in music theory. He even taught at the university for a bit. He is an accomplished classical guitar player.

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*Jerry Byrd's famous Rickenbacher Frypan (#B-408), now owned by one of his last students, Christopher Coats.*



*Jerry Byrd with Kaleo and club founder Lorene Ruymar (center), taken when the Byrds visited the Ruymars in Vancouver in 1986.*

Fast-forward a couple of decades to 2001. Christopher had married a local girl and was teaching high school music in Honolulu. He had a friend who worked at Harry’s Music and he knew Jerry was teaching there. But as life goes, that intention to call Jerry and take lessons kept going to the back burner.

Then one day as Christopher and his wife were cleaning out a home they were moving to in Honolulu, he came across an old brass bar that he thought might be for the steel guitar. “I took that as a sign, and I called Jerry then,” said Christopher. When they got together and he showed Jerry the old bar, Jerry looked at it and said the best way to use that is as a “fishing weight.” He still has it.

But why did Jerry offer his guitar to Christopher? This was a well-loved 1930s-era frypan steel that Jerry had played for decades and on several well-known recordings. Christopher thinks Jerry’s friend, Al Stotler, had it originally and Jerry loved it, so maybe Al had loaned or sold it to him. Christopher also has handwritten notes from Jerry about the instrument, among them the following note to Al Stotler:

“Al, I played your ‘Rick’ Frypan (#B-408) on 4 albums that I did, and possibly a few others which I don’t recall:

- *Byrd in Hawaii* - Maple Records (Canada)
- *Mai Poina ‘Oe Ia’u* by Gary Aiko - GK Records (Hawai‘i)
- *Hawaii’s Yesterdays* by Charles K. L. Davis - Hana Hou Records (Hawai‘i)
- *Steel Guitar Hawaiian Style* - Lehua Records

“I used the Trotmore [ED: another unique steel guitar Jerry used, a model designed to compete with the Rickenbacher frypans] on radio shows on WSM with Chet Atkins, called ‘Two Guitars’ and a photo of myself with it appears in my autobiography *It Was a Trip* [on *Wings of Music*] on Centerstream, page 10.”

In a note Jerry wrote out for Christopher during a lesson when Christopher began using the guitar, Jerry added, “The instrument is [in] its original condition and no new parts have been used.”

Christopher writes, “I don’t know why he offered it to me, but I did consider him a friend and felt very close to him. During our lessons we would end up ‘talking story’ most of the time. He got into deep subjects such as aging and the price of fame among others. And Jerry was a brilliant teacher. His teaching skills were on par with his playing skills.”

Asked if there were any memorable moments as Jerry’s student, Christopher recalled “Well, I had trouble adapting to using the picks. I didn’t like them. As a classical guitar player you cultivate the use of your fingernails for picking, so between lessons I would mostly use my fingers, practice briefly with picks just before the lesson. Jerry could tell, and he called me on it. He basically said you’re going to have to

make a choice if you want to go further. He always spoke his mind.”

Since Christopher was interested in many genres of music and loved the feel of the strings on his fingers—which he acknowledges just doesn’t sound as good on the steel—he eventually let his steel playing go.

One of the main skills Christopher wanted to pick up from Jerry was his slant bar techniques. Jerry said slants were “a bit like driving a truck... you have to pull out into the intersection and then start turning the wheels and slide around the corner.”

In writing this story, Christopher paused to remember his teacher and friend. “He was one of the great people in my life.”

As Christopher is able to see retirement on the horizon now, his professional life has changed. He has moved from teaching music to doing video support for interactive classrooms at U.H. He says he is now able to just enjoy his music and composing in his spare time. He has an album he hopes

to release this year. Writes Christopher, “I call it my mid-life crisis album. I have studied jazz, classical, and grew up on rock ‘n’ roll. I originally intended to include some steel guitar on it, but haven’t worked that out yet. This steel guitar has a lot of *mana* (spiritual, healing energy).”

Still feeling it’s the most beautiful sounding instrument he’s ever heard, Christopher Coats plans to pursue it more in the future. ■

### On the Byrd Arrangement

Rick Aiello posted an amazing example of Jerry Byrd’s flawless technique at an informal jam session in 1978, likely recorded at a club convention or perhaps at a gathering for one of Jerry’s ho‘olaule‘as. Your editor took one of the tunes, “Paniau,” written by Helen Desha Beamer and transcribed two of the more playable choruses for this newsletter issue’s steel guitar arrangement.

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# Paniau

(Jerry Byrd Steel Solo at a 1978 Jam Session)

Transcription by John Ely

Swing  $\text{♩} = \text{♩}^3$

Intro C G7 C

Steel Gtr. (C6+A7)

4 A G7 C

8 G7 C

12 A<sup>b</sup>7 C G7 C

l.r.----- let ring----- let ring----- N.H.-----



For audio email John Ely at: johnely@hawaiiansteel.com

16 B G7 C

T 8 7 5 | 5 7 | 7 6 7 5 | 3 3

A 7 7 | 5 4 | 7 6 7 5 | 3 3

B 7 5 | 4 4 | 7 6 7 5 | 3 3

N.H.-----

20 G7 C

T 5 | 5 6 7 | 7 7 6 5 | 3 3

A 7 7 5 3 | 2 | 4 6 7 | 8

B 6 6 4 3 | 1 | 6 7 |

l.r.-----

24 Ab7 C G7 C

T 8 10 9 8 | 7 7 7 | 0 1 0 | 0

A 8 10 9 8 | 7 7 7 | 2 2 2 | 3 3

B 8 8 | | 0 1 0 | 3 3

let ring----- let ring----- let ring-----

Tag G7 C

T 5 | 0 0 | 12 7 5 4

A 5 | | 12 7 |

B 5 4 3 2 1 | 0 12 |

l.r.----- Natural Harmonics-----

# The Passing of André Duchossoir and a New Robert Stone Book on Sacred Steel

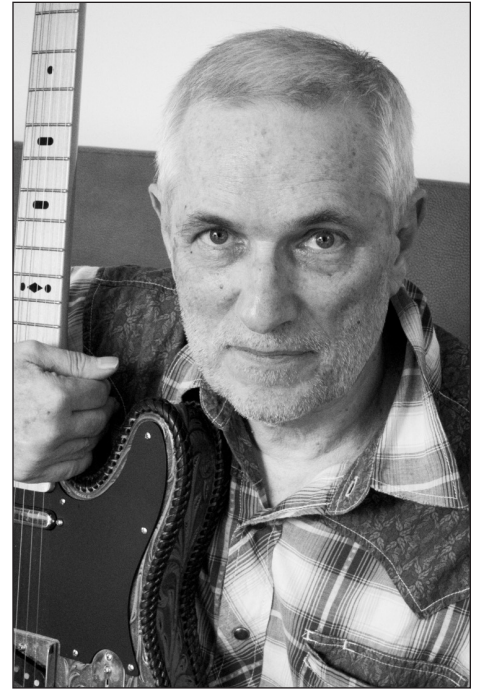
By Anthony Lis

Greetings, HSGA members. With my retirement from teaching theory and music appreciation at South Dakota State University effective back on December 21, I had some time free (once I turned in grades) to put together this article detailing the death of steel guitar-related author and researcher André R. (A.R.) Duchossoir and the release of Robert L. Stone's second book on the "Sacred Steel" style of electric steel guitar playing, which evolved in Pennsylvania the mid-1930s and currently flourishes in over twenty-five states.

Back on November 17, 2020, French steel guitar historian A. R. Duchossoir died at age seventy-one in Nogent-sur-Marne, a southeastern suburb of Paris. *Quarterly* readers may know Duchossoir as the author of *Gibson Electric Steel Guitars, 1935-1967* (2009) or *Gibson Electrics: The Classic Years* (1994). Duchossoir lived in Paris and was a banker by trade. Other facts about his life

have proved frustratingly elusive. An old black and white photograph from the late 1940s included in *Gibson Electrics* shows Duchossoir's father René playing a Gibson 1942 ES-150 standard guitar, with A.R.'s caption noting that "in [the late 1940s] ... Gibson electrics were hard to come by in Europe." Perhaps stories of his father's assumedly difficult quest to procure a Gibson ES-150 in post-World War II France helped spark a fascination with the company's instruments in young Duchossoir. Duchossoir does relate in his foreword to *Gibson Electrics* that "without [my father] ... I might never know [of] Gibson guitars." At some point, Duchossoir married artistic entrepreneur Susan Landau, who helped him with the rather quick assembly of *Gibson Electrics*.

As a non-steel guitarist attempting to write articles for publications like the *HSGA Quarterly* and now a book draft on steel guitar history, I have greatly benefitted from Duchossoir's books, particularly *Gibson Electric Steel Guitars*. In

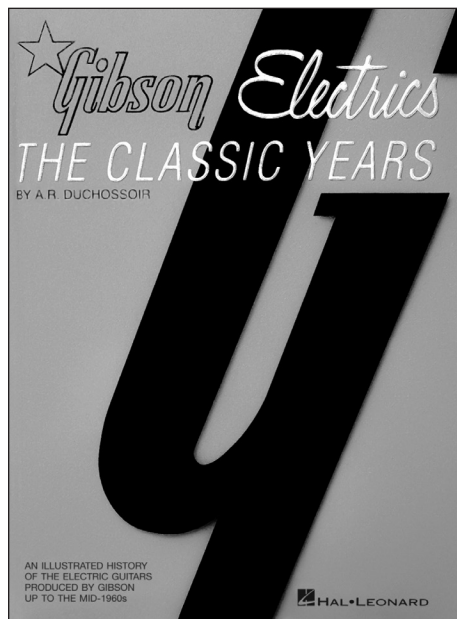
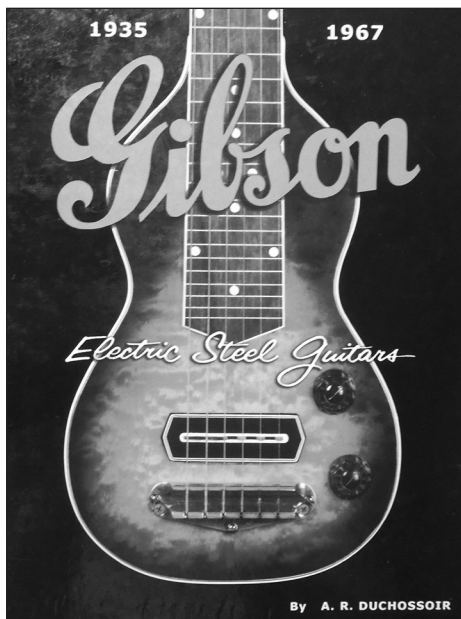


Author A. R. Duchossoir, a banker by trade, who documented the important Gibson electric guitar and steel guitar models.

my writing and research, I've focused mainly on the first four chapters of *Gibson Electric Steel Guitars*, where Duchossoir covers a wide range of Gibson's steel guitar offerings from the company's first lap steel (the Hawaiian Style L-1 model of 1928) through the eight-string, six-pedal Electraharp of 1941, as far as I can determine, the first commercial steel guitar with built-in (i.e., not later-affixed) pedals. Looking back through these pages, I was reminded of Duchossoir's biographical inserts on Roy Smeck and Alvino Rey detailing these musicians' important contributions to the steel guitar, the intriguing two pages Duchossoir devoted to experimental double-neck guitars built by Gibson for performers such as Rey and Gene Mack, as well as Duchossoir's three-page spread on Gibson's enduring Console Grande double-neck from 1938, an instrument in which Duchossoir seemed particularly interested.

Duchossoir supplied plentiful photographs throughout *Gibson Electric Steel Guitars* including thoughtfully enlarged reproductions of various pat-

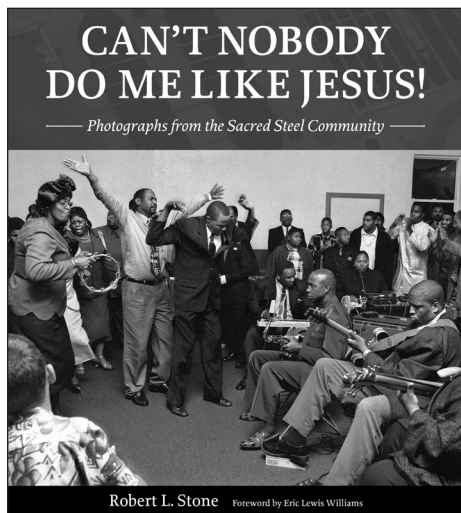
Two of the Gibson Guitar Books written by author and researcher André R. Duchossoir: *Gibson Electric Steel Guitars, 1935-1967* and *Gibson Electrics: The Classic Years*.



ents, including the two patents two Gibson employees submitted roughly seven months apart in 1941, proposing different pedal steel guitars, which were assimilated into the final design of the Varichord. Duchossoir also included pictures of some of the “matching amplifiers” Gibson paired with its steel guitars, as well as Gibson’s line of pedagogical materials, which debuted in 1937. Especially useful to me in my writing have been the clear, concise model specifications Duchossoir provided for every Gibson steel guitar model mentioned. The specs include brief information on the instrument’s branding (i.e., the style of the company logo affixed to the instrument and the material out of which the logo was fashioned), along with details on each instrument’s body, neck, fretboard, inlay markers, pickup and finish.

In *Gibson Electrics, the Classic Years*, a perhaps more tightly organized book from fifteen years earlier, Duchossoir discussed Gibson electric guitar models produced from the late 1920s until the mid-1960s, when, in Duchossoir’s view, the company produced its most popular and most influential designs. Though Duchossoir did not emphasize steel guitars in this book, he did devote two pages to Gibson’s initial attempts to produce an electric steel.

*The cover of Robert Stone’s just-released second book on the Sacred Steel genre.*



Mid-book, Duchossoir provided a thirty-one page insert of color photographs of Gibson guitars, supplementing the many other black and white photographs in the balance of the book. Duchossoir concluded *Gibson Electrics* with a list of factory order numbers and serial numbers for all Gibson guitars made between 1936 and 1965.

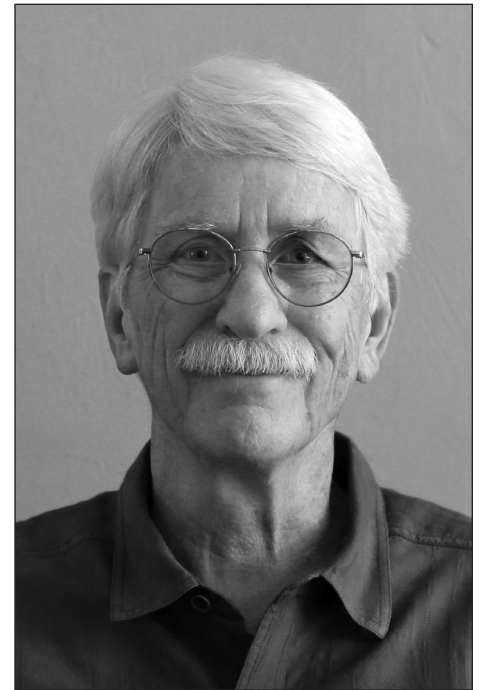
Duchossoir’s other books include his 2008 book *Guitar Identification: A Reference Guide to Serial Numbers for Dating the Guitars Made by Fender, Gibson, Gretsch, and Martin*.

Upon hearing of Duchossoir’s passing, a poster at the LesPaulForum.com chat board remarked, “He was one of the first people to delve seriously into the matter of vintage guitars and really dig. I remember snapping up those books!”, while another remarked appropriately, “À la vôtre [i.e., cheers], Monsieur Duchossoir!”

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Speaking of books related to the steel guitar, back in mid-December I added a new steel-related book to my personal library, Robert L. Stone’s *Can’t Nobody Do Me Like Jesus!: Photographs From the Sacred Steel Community*, brought out by the University Press of Mississippi on December 15. *Can’t Nobody Do Me Like Jesus!* (taking its title from a popular up-tempo gospel praise song) contains 152 beautifully printed duotone photographs of key contemporary figures of the sacred steel genre of electric steel guitar playing, which developed in African-American Pentecostal churches in the mid-1930s. The electric steel guitar rose to the top of the musical instrument hierarchy in two related churches: House of God, Keith Dominion and the Church of the Living God, Jewell Dominion. Today the instrument continues to perform a vital role in fiery worship services in some 200 churches found in twenty-six states, most east of the Mississippi.

Stone is best-known for his 2010 book *Sacred Steel: Inside an African*



*Author Robert L. Stone, who has written another important book on Sacred Steel.*

*American Steel Guitar Tradition*, the 264-page definitive study of the genre. *Can’t Nobody Do Me Like Jesus!* is far more than a mere “picture book” as it includes eleven pages of background information on the sacred steel genre, plus additional narratives setting up the eight categories into which Stone places his photographs (these bear such titles as “Church Meetings,” “Wakes, Funerals, and Tributes,” and “Festivals and Concerts”). Male and female sacred steel performers pictured include Willie Eason (who with his older brother Troman helped pioneer sacred steel playing), Aubrey Ghent, Lisa Lang and Robert Randolph. Randolph—with eight albums released so far—is arguably the best-known living sacred steel guitarist. Towards the book’s end, Stone thoughtfully provides a set of extended photo captions detailing each photograph.

Asked for his thoughts about the release of *Can’t Nobody Do Me Like Jesus!*, Stone replied as follows in a January 5, 2021 e-mail to me:

“I am thrilled with the recent release of *Can’t Nobody Do Me Like Jesus!*

*Continued on Page 16*

## More Harlin Brothers “Lore”

We got an interesting piece of memorabilia this past quarter from HSGA President Frank Della-Penna, a newspaper clipping of an article on the Harlin Brothers written by Steve Hall. Your editor had questions about the source and context of the article, and fortunately for us, we had on hand our *de facto* “researcher in residence,” Anthony Lis—who has written a detailed series on the Harlin Brothers in previous HSGA newsletters. It turns out that the article appeared in the December 26, 1983 edition of the Indianapolis Star and was the result of an interview reporter Steve Hall did with Jay Harlin, who was seventy-two years old at the time. The following is the text of Steve Hall’s article, which was titled “Put His Foot Down,” most likely a cute reference to the act of pressing a pedal with the left foot on the Jay Harlin-designed pedal steel guitar.

A “For Sale” sign hangs on the Harlin Brothers Music Store [at] 359 N. Illinois [in Indianapolis]. The interior is dark and empty and the upstairs hula studio is no more.

If one looked inside, he’d probably realize that Jay, one of the three remaining Harlin brothers, invented a musical instrument in widespread use today.

A back room, though, holds Jay’s contribution to music: the very first pedal steel guitar.

Country music fans have seen its offspring, a slender instrument with a fretboard and pedals that a player like Barbara Mandrell sits behind. The player frets with a steel bar, picks the strings with finger picks and changes tones with the pedals.

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*One of the few good photos we have of the Harlin Brothers Multi-Kord pedal steel guitar, played expertly here by the late Mike Scott at our Joliet 2005 Convention. Incidentally, Ian Ufton, the guitarist pictured here, performed at our Virtual Festival this month.*



*An “encore” 1940s snapshot of a Harlin Brothers gig with (left to right) Jimmie on ‘ukulele, Jay D. playing a 1949 or possibly earlier pedal steel prototype, Winn on upright bass, Harlin Brothers instructor Richard Baker sitting in on drums, and Herb on electric guitar. (Photo courtesy of Jay’s daughter Beth Harlin)*

Those pedal steels are silver and black and chrome, but Jay’s—which he says was the first one, patented about 50 years ago—is yellow wood with gaudy pink highlights and black moon, diamonds and other symbols on the white fretboard.

It’s an instrument born of the Harlin Brothers’ love of Hawaiian music and Jay Harlin’s frustration with the limitations of the lap steel guitar, which is played with a steel bar.

“When we first started playing, you had to play everything in open tuning on the lap steel,” Jay explained. “I started fooling around with different things and came up with this lever pedal setup, where you pressed the pedal and the lever came down on the strings, creating a different harmony. You could raise and lower the strings, too, and get a different effect.

Because it dramatically increased the range of steel playing, the pedal steel was hailed as a great innovation by musicians. First called the Kalina Multi Kord—Kalina is “Harlin” in Hawaiian—the device was later sold as the Harlin Brothers Multi-Kord.

Other manufacturers were quick to copy the device. “We never really pressed out our rights to our patents,” Jay sighed. “And we never went around bragging up the fact that we’d invented the pedal steel. Other companies got around the patents by changing the pedal and lever setup.”

The Multi-Kord had its ardent admirers including the great Hawaiian guitarist Alvino Rey and George Barr, who played the instrument on the Arthur Godfrey Show.

The Harlins promoted the pedal steel by giving Multi-Kords to professional Hawaiian guitar players and forming

an 11-piece “Multi-Kord Orchestra.” During special appearances, they played it behind Momikai, a performer on the Godfrey Show, and Hilo Hattie, a famous Hawaiian dancer, and many other musicians.

None of the Harlins can explain the appeal of Hawaiian music to brothers born in various states as their parents traveled around. Herb began playing it in Detroit and then Jay joined him.

As the other brothers—five in all—came along, they took their place in the band. Eventually they moved to Indianapolis around 1930, where they opened their studio, began a music publishing business, wrote music in instructional books and cut Hawaiian records for teaching hula.

“Music just came natural to us,” explains Winn, the gray-haired youngster of the surviving trio. “In Hawaiian music, you have Spanish-style playing using a steel bar on the frets and picks

on your fingers. That gives you that real sweet, eerie sound.”

Active Shriners, the Harlins played standards and popular tunes they had picked up on visits to Hawaii all over the country, often in Shriner parades in their boat-shaped float atop a Jeep. They also performed at luaus and had their own local radio show for more than 30 years.

In the mornings, the trio still rehearses at the store for appearances at country clubs and luaus. Herb, the oldest, plays the electric Spanish guitar, with Jay on pedal steel and Winn on upright acoustic bass.

*Your editor had originally intended this article to be supplemented by some observations by Anthony Lis concerning Steve Hall’s article. Well, what he sent me went far beyond supplementary material, so we’ll feature his complete story in the next issue of the Quarterly,*

## Treasurer’s Report

*(Balances as of December 31, 2020)*

<b>Beginning Balance</b>	<b>\$25,073.02</b>
General Fund	\$12,947.87
Scholarship Fund	\$9,291.15
<b>End Balance</b>	<b>\$22,239.02</b>
Japan Account	\$2,463.76

### Major Expenses

Newsletter/Postage	\$1,932.16
Virtual Festival	\$1,389.58
Misc/Software	\$99.00

### Major Income

Dues	\$380.00
Donations (General)	\$135.00
Donations (Scholarship)	\$10.00

*complete with amazing photos of Jay Harlin’s early pedal steel guitar prototypes and a wealth of new information not previously covered. Stay tuned! ■*

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## Remembering Mike Scott

*We just got the sad news from Richard Scott via Wally Pfeifer that his father, Mike Scott, longtime club member and professional steel guitarist known to us all, passed away this past December. Thanks to Mike's daughter Teresa Scott, who wrote us the following retrospective on Mike's life and professional accomplishments.*

Michael Alan Scott June 22, 1926 passed peacefully on December 8, 2020 at the age of 94 after a long battle with dementia. Pre-deceased by his beloved wife Vera (2011), they spent 60 years building a wonderful life together.

Originally from Wiltshire, England he emigrated to Canada in March 1954. Vera followed him six months later with their young son Richard. Their daughter Teresa was born in 1960.

Mike was attracted to the sweet sounds of the steel guitar back in England, sounds that he first heard played on a recording by Felix Mendelssohn featuring steel guitarist Roland Peachey. The song was "In the Mood."

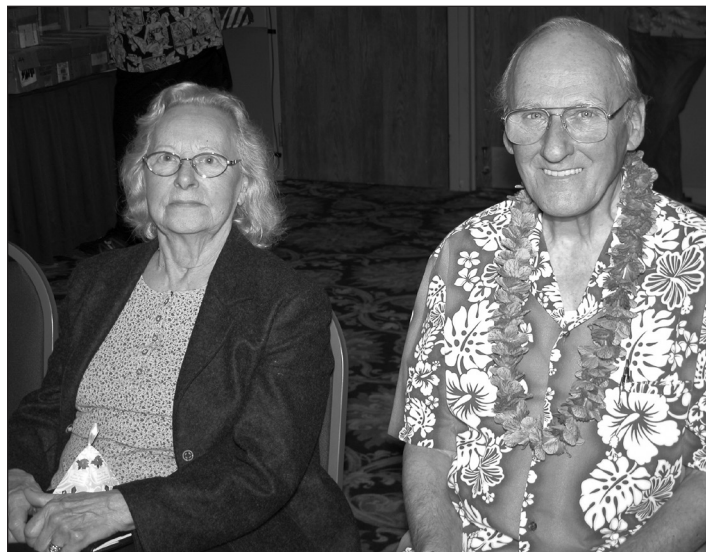
He started taking lessons from a local guitarist but after about ten lessons he quit and continued studying on his own. Soon after he had learnt enough to play with the local dance bands in his hometown area of Wiltshire, England.

When Mike arrived in Canada he immediately joined the Toronto Musicians Association and became a member of AFM Local #149. Eventually Mike formed his own Hawaiian music group and Mike "Malihini" Scott & his Hawaiianaires was born.

Over their extensive career Mike and his Hawaiianaires played literally hundreds of different venues, and he popularized Hawaiian music in some of Canada's most prominent hotels and private clubs, from the Beautiful Banff Springs Hotel in Alberta to the world acclaimed Royal York Hotel in Toronto. When the famous Trader Vics opened their Toronto location, Mike and his Hawaiianaires were chosen to open the room. They were also frequent musical guests at the infamous Bali Hai room in the Ports of Call restaurant.

Mike also played as a guest guitarist with Sam Makia's Hawaiian Orchestra at the Hawaiian Room of the Lexington Hotel in New York City, with Hal Aloma at the Luau 400 in New York City, and with Pua Almeida as his steel guitarist during the period he was playing in Toronto in the early '60s.

His unique and entertaining manner has endeared him to a vast following of Hawaiian music lovers around the world. Mike is considered one of the great exponents of Hawaiian music and has been featured on several CBC television specials, a TV appearance on City TV breakfast television. He has recorded with Don Paishon, well-known radio and



*A wonderful rendering of Joliet convention fixtures, Mike Scott and his wife Vera Scott, this one snapped at Joliet 2007.*

recording star with the "Hawaii Calls" radio show. As well, he has recorded several full length record albums and CDs. His song "Pua Nani O Hawaii" recorded in 1979 was featured in the Hollywood film *American Ultra* and several episodes of *SpongeBob Squarepants*.

Despite his success in music, Mike was never a full-time career musician. Yet when he retired from his day job he continued to perform and record music. His last live performance was in Toronto in 2014.

*[ED: Teresa Scott would like to direct members to the online obituary and especially to a guestbook on the same page where members can sign and remember Mike. Just go to [www.legacy.com/obituaries/thestar/](http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/thestar/) and search on "Michael Scott."]*

Some remembrances from members: President Frank Della-Penna writes, "Aloha Teresa, I am saddened by Mike's death. We were good friends and as I used to say, we used identical white Multi-Kord Hawaiian guitars. Mike was an excellent musician and I know many of our members have his LP and CD recordings, as well as video recordings from our AISGC conventions at Winchester and at HSGA in Joliet, Illinois. When he and Ian Ufton paired up, you could bet on a great musical experience. Very active in Canadian and U.S. music circles, he also had a following of folks in Europe and places beyond. Teresa, we all thank you for the care you provided to Mike during his illness. With warmest regards, Frank."

From Chris Kennison: "I just heard Mike Scott passed away (from Vaughn Passmore's post on Facebook). Such a great guy. I loved his playing. And his knowledge was deep on Hawaiian steel. So sad to hear..."

## Millie Tipka (July 29, 1937 - December 6, 2020)

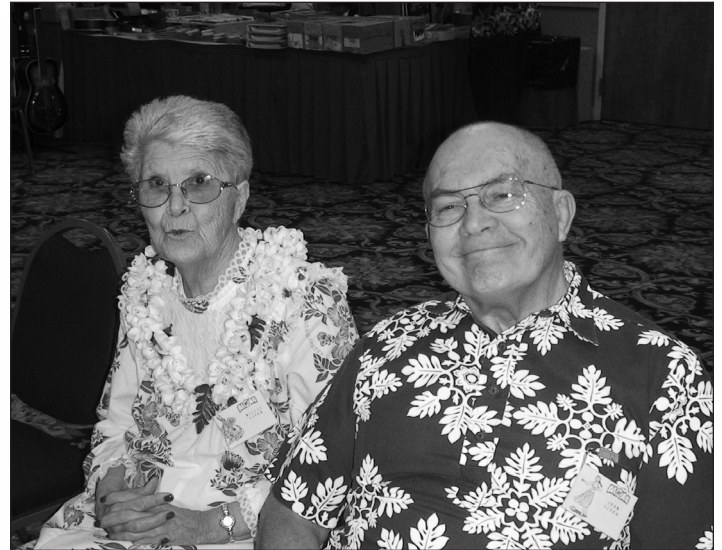
We got sad news just at press time that former longtime HSGA member Millie Tipka passed away in December. A fixture of our Joliet conventions, Millie handled our convention raffles raising funds for the club and generously donated prizes for the raffle over the years. One of the sad aspects of our move to Fort Collins was losing touch with so many of our early, core members from the Midwest like Millie and husband John Tipka.

Writes longtime former HSGA member Doug Smith: “Millie was one of a kind. We will miss her.” From Bobby Ingano: “Rest in love, Lady Millie, my smoking partner.”

The following was excerpted from Millie’s obituary, which appeared in the December 6, 2020 online edition of the New Braunfels, Texas *Herald-Zeitung*:

“Mildred Elizabeth (Straw) Tipka, 83, passed away peacefully in her sleep on Sunday, December 6, 2020, at her home in New Braunfels, Texas after a long illness. She was born on a farm in Swanton, Fulton County, Ohio on July 29, 1937. She was the daughter of Alvin and Hazel (Shanteau) Straw. Millie met her husband of 65 years, Major John William Tipka (US Army retired) in Toledo, Ohio. They were married on December 3, 1955 in Auburn, Indiana.

“She followed her husband wherever his military career sent them. She had a keen sense of adventure and always made each move whether stateside or abroad seem effortless and fun. She lived life fully and always had a smile on her face. She enjoyed traveling the world and taking cruises. She was a wonderful, loving wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and friend. In 2018, Mildred and her husband John moved from Columbus, Ohio, back to Texas after being gone for more than fifty years to be close to two of their daughters. She was active in many organizations throughout her life and was a member of the Green



*Longtime members Millie and John Tipka, just as we knew them!*

Mountain Boys Chapter of The Daughters of The American Revolution (DAR) in San Antonio, Texas.

“Due to the current [coronavirus] situation a celebration of Mildred’s life will take place at a later date. Memorial contributions can be made to The Alzheimer’s Association or The American Lung Association in her memory. ■

## HSGA Donations

Thanks, members, for your donations this past quarter. Donations help us keep up with ever-increasing operating costs and help to further our mission to promote and preserve Hawaiian steel guitar. The following members donated at least \$10:

Troy Brenningmeyer, Bethalto, IL  
Eric Rindal, San Francisco, CA

*At the fourth HSGA Japan Convention on October 27, 2018, Yukio Katagiri on steel guitar with backup by Mahana Lua.*



*A regular at Japan steel guitar shows, Tokyo’s Moto Suzuki at the 2018 HSGA Japan Convention playing his innovative “A76” tuning.*



## *E Komo Mai! Welcome, New Members*

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MYRAM HUDSON, 910 Skyline Dr, Junction City, KS 66441

MATT PERPICK, 105 2nd Street, Brooklyn, NY 11231

MIKE SCHWAY, 3208 Vallette St, Bellingham, WA 98225

### **OVERSEAS AND CANADA**

HAJIME TAKAHASI, 1-427-89 Ogawacho, Kodaira-shi, Tokyo 187-0032 Japan

HARUKO OZEKI, 5-9-31-2701 Kitashinagawa, Shinagawa-Ku, Tokyo, 141-0001 Japan

*SACRED STEEL Cont. from Page 11*

and forever grateful to the Arhoolie Foundation for the generous grant that made publication of this beautifully printed and bound volume by University Press of Mississippi possible. I selected the photos from nearly 7,000 frames of 35mm film and several hundred digital images shot between 1992-2008 in Florida, Georgia, North and South Carolina, Tennessee, Mississippi, New York, Pennsylvania and Michigan.

“Through these images, I endeavor to present a comprehensive view of the musicians, the context in which they function, and the culture that supports this musical tradition that remains so vibrant today. The roots of the tradition lie in the Hawaiian music fad that swept through the continental U.S. in the first half of the twentieth century. Willie Eason learned the rudiments of Hawaiian steel guitar from his older brother, Troman, who, in about 1937, took les-

sons at the Honolulu Conservatory of Music from a musician family members remember as a Hawaiian named Jack. My research and a conversation with Ralph Kolsiana revealed Troman’s instructor to be almost certainly Jack Kahauloopua. Willie Eason went on to be very influential in shaping what would become known as the ‘sacred steel’ tradition. His young brother-in-law, Henry Nelson, would establish a style of rendering hymns and praise music that has had lasting influence among players throughout the East. Henry Nelson’s son, Aubrey Ghent, took his father’s approach even farther, developing voice-like phrases executed with a lush vibrato for hymns (imagine Aretha Franklin’s voice rendered on the steel) and syncopated, rousing up-tempo praise music. Aubrey Ghent continues to play for worship services, and his young son, A. J. Ghent, is a rising star in secular music. Older members of the House of God still refer to the instrument as the Hawaiian guitar.

“Although the tradition in predominantly male, a few female artists excel, too. In my home state of Florida, Lisa Lang, known as ‘Lady of Steel,’ is among the most popular.

“The publication of this book coincides with my initial donation of approximately 6,400 35mm negatives and 124 audio interviews to the Arhoolie Foundation. I will be donating several hundred color slides and more interview recordings in 2021. Eventually, all

these materials will be accessible to the public at Arhoolie.org.

“I thank all the clergy, congregations and musicians for granting me the privilege of documenting their passionate musical tradition and vibrant culture. It was a labor of love.”

In an e-mail of January 6, 2021, Stone relayed to me that *Can’t Nobody Do Me Like Jesus!* is distributed internationally by UPM with regional distributors in Europe and the Asia/Pacific region.

*Details of Duchossoir’s passing and his age at death were obtained from “PFG Funéraires,” a Nogent-sur-Marne-based funeral announcement website. Thanks to Robert Stone for providing two photos and tweaking my original prefatory comments about Can’t Nobody Do Me Like Jesus!* ■



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