

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF MUSIC

**The Benefits of Hybrid Picking in an Undergraduate Guitar Curriculum to Equip Students
for a Diverse Performance Career**

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Abstract

This qualitative study underscores a hybrid picking approach to the guitar curriculum at the undergraduate level to ensure better career opportunities for college graduates. While classical and commercial guitar styles vary in methodology, practice, and performance, many undergraduate guitarists may feel underprepared for professional career opportunities in the commercial realm based on the specific curriculum in the academic domain. In many undergraduate guitar curricula, guitarists must often choose between a classical or commercial approach to learning. Undergraduate guitarists may not be experienced in diverse guitar styles that could further a musical career if opportunities go beyond classical or jazz. The qualitative methodology of this study will compare standard undergraduate classical and jazz guitar curricula to some of the demands in commercial styles. Examples include traditional picking or strumming with a plectrum, guitar styles that employ hybrid picking, positioned scales with open strings, chord extensions, classical arpeggios and exercises, and comprehension of commercial techniques. While limited texts offer some concepts to address the significance of this problem, an undergraduate hybrid picking curriculum may be applicable for students desiring a full-time performance career in music, where many opportunities exclude standard classical and jazz guitar styles. The findings of this study could be valuable to both guitar instructors and students due to some limitations of standard guitar curricula found in many universities.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Background

The guitar industry is a \$5.6 billion industry worldwide as of 2018.¹ With hundreds of millions of views on social media, guitar playing remains one of the most popular musical activities for amateur and professional musicians alike. For the professional, the price of reaching that level continues to grow in cost and complexity. Well-known schools of music and conservatories such as Juilliard, Berklee College of Music, and University of Southern California pride themselves on the diversity of their guitar faculty and continue to recruit top talent for their programs.”² Once enrolled, guitarists find themselves choosing between classical and commercial guitar styles due to the differences in their practice and performance. Commercial guitar students often struggle with classical repertory at the undergraduate level, and classical guitarists often struggle with commercial repertory. Di Liddo and Keaton claim,

Jazz guitarists usually don't know classical guitar repertoire, nor are many classical guitarists proficient in jazz. Undergraduate guitar curriculum and guitar faculty limited by specialized guitar skills may result in a style gap, resulting style gaps may be a disadvantage for students. Classical musicians who avoid the jazz idiom, a style no less significant than any other, will lack elements unique to the jazz experience.³

The reasons for this vary, including guitar professors who are limited to one style or student apathy toward an alternate style. No matter the reason, more schools are searching for a way to adjust their curriculum to bridge this gap. For example, multiple universities have

¹ Amy Wang, “Guitars Are Getting More Popular, So Why Do We Think They’re Dying?” Rolling Stone, accessed July 29, 2022, retrieved from <https://www.rollingstone.com/pro/news/guitars-are-getting-more-popular-so-why-do-we-think-theyre-dying-630446/>.

² Juilliard School, Juilliard School of Music, accessed July 21, 2022, 9:04, retried from <https://www.juilliard.edu/school/about-juilliard>.

³ Michael Di Liddo and Ken Keaton, "Classical Guitar and the College Jazz Guitarist," *American String Teacher* 43, 4 (1993): 70.

adopted commercial music performance degrees, which include guitar techniques as foundational elements as program leaders respond to the need for students to learn both popular and classical styles.⁴

Statement of Problem

Guitar faculty in many universities typically hold a wealth of talent, skill, and knowledge in their respective fields, whether in classical or jazz guitar styles. If guitar faculty have a specialization, they may feel underprepared if students desire to learn an alternative guitar style outside the faculty member's field. A collegiate faculty member may feel intimidated or unknowledgeable in areas outside that primary discipline. In those situations, both the faculty member and the student are placed in a difficult and uncomfortable situation.

For example, suppose a commercial rock and jazz professor who is not well versed in classical guitar styles has a student who desires to learn classical guitar repertory. In that case, that student might feel underprepared to execute the music, asking the rock/jazz faculty member to demonstrate. But that faculty member may not feel equipped to handle the demonstration, leaving both student and professor in an ineffective partnership. Jazz music is filled with extended chords, lead sheet interpretation, and 'swing-rhythm' – a rhythmic approach to eighth notes with a loose or relaxed pulse. Given the distinctly different nature of this type of music, an expert in jazz/rock is often unable to teach in the classical style. Some universities have noticed this dichotomy and "aim to examine elements of jazz pedagogy that can be applied to improve musicianship in the undergraduate classical lesson setting."⁵ Students often pay high tuition for

⁴ Bryan Powell, Andrew Krikun, and Joseph Michael Pignato. "Something's Happening Here! Popular Music Education in the United States," *IASPM Journal* 5, no. 1 (2015): 8.

⁵ Lilly Deborah Haley, "Using Jazz Pedagogy to Supplement the Undergraduate Classical Lesson Setting," (PhD diss., The Florida State University, 2018), iv.
<https://www.proquest.com/openview/1d8af2591180b58fd62350774968c8fb/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750>.

expensive and prestigious music programs yet may fail to perform adequately in both styles. Similarly, guitar educators may feel underprepared to teach outside their preferred styles. Not being prepared technically can cause missed performance opportunities upon graduation. Thus, a hybrid guitar curriculum that teaches elements of classical and commercial styles is a plausible solution that could address this problem.

Statement of Purpose

This study will present evidence that blending jazz and classical styles of a particular guitar technique (picking) in the undergraduate curriculum will better prepare graduates of guitar programs for the workforce. Most undergraduate guitar curricula include two methods of picking articulation. These methods are PIMA for classical guitarists, and plectrum, or pick-style, for the jazz guitar curriculum. Hybrid picking is a combination of the two articulations. For guitarists who employ the pick-style approach but still desire the advantages of fingerpicking, a combination of the plectrum, and the remaining three fingers, the middle, ring, and pinky, can be adequately developed for performances in many styles.

Hybrid picking in commercial guitar dates to the 1930s and has been exploited by guitarists in multiple music genres. Some styles are impossible to perform without the use of hybrid picking, such as blues music, where the performer uses the plectrum to drive the lower strings creating a backbeat with standard descending chromatic notes on the top strings in a shuffle feel. But despite the long-standing use of hybrid picking in the industry, higher education institutions have been slow to adapt to the reality of a professional guitarist's work world.

In the late 1970s, Belmont University in Nashville, Tennessee, became the first School of Music to offer a degree in commercial music.⁶ Randall Allsup, Professor of Music Education at Columbia University, writes,

In recent years, popular music has become a growing area of music study and is increasingly accepted in schools and universities around the world. Despite this general enthusiasm, classically trained music teachers bring a certain hesitation to this art form, perhaps because too few have had formal hands-on experience with it.⁷

While institutions, such as Belmont University,⁸ have added commercial music degree programs over the years, the resistance from the more classically trained guitarists (and even some jazz guitarists) continues to dominate at more traditional conservatories and schools of music. In fact, some undergraduate jazz guitar instruction may also challenge hybrid picking, as “practitioners presenting the same old repertoires, with deep-rooted dogmatic excuses to maintain traditional authentic value” stifle the learning of other diverse musical styles.⁹

If undergraduate guitarists desire a career in multiple styles of music, they should not be limited by one kind of picking articulation. Traditional jazz guitar curricula with no inclusion of other popular styles may “lead to {a} narrow scope and unconsciously fall into a default setting.”¹⁰ A narrow scope of guitar techniques and styles could jeopardize career opportunities in a diverse field of popular music performance.

⁶ Belmont University, Commercial Music, accessed July 29, 2022, retrieved from <https://www.belmont.edu/cmpa/music/undergrad/commercial-music/index.html>.

⁷ Randall Everett Allsup, "Popular Music and Classical Musicians: Strategies and Perspectives," *Music Educators Journal* 97, no. 3 (2011): 30.

⁸ Belmont University, Commercial Music, accessed July 29, 2022, retrieved from <https://www.belmont.edu/cmpa/music/undergrad/commercial-music/index.html>.

⁹ Mazlan, Chamil Arkhasa Nikko, "Utilizing Pragmatism Approach in Learning Jazz Guitar Reharmonization Technique Using Malay Asli Song," *Jurnal Seni Musik* 9, no. 1 (2020): abstract.

¹⁰Ibid., 51.

Significance of Study

Hybrid picking is an aspect of commercial guitar performance that is growing and in demand within the field. If this idea were integrated in colleges and universities more often, guitarists would be better equipped and have further success in the music industry. The technique often includes playing bass notes with the pick on the lower strings, while the remaining fingers of the right-hand play melodies and short melodic phrases on the upper strings. The prominence of this style can be seen in millions of YouTube views of artists who use the technique. An exact approach to hybrid picking can seem ambiguous. Some descriptions do not prescribe which right hand fingers to employ. In another text, Pearson claims, "hybrid picking is a combination of two techniques: fingerstyle and pick. The pick is held between the thumb and index finger, which allows for standard pick technique, while the middle and ring fingers work independently."¹¹ This enables the performance of rhythmic-harmonic accompaniment, as well as polyphonic textures and melodic lines."¹² While variations of the hybrid approach to right-hand fingers remains, a common practice is for the use of the pick, middle, and ring fingers – with occasional implementation of the pinky.

Research Questions

This study is based on two fundamental questions: How could lesson use of hybrid guitar picking in instructional repertoire benefit undergraduate students in contemporary music

¹¹ Wyn Pearson, *Hybrid Picking: Country and Modern Guitar Styles*, (Pacific: Mel Bay, 2008), Introduction, 3.

¹² Marcos Maia and Carlos Fiorini, "Hybrid Picking Applied to Classical Guitar," *Per Musi* 37 (2017): 1.

education? In what ways can hybrid picking train the undergraduate guitarist for a musically diverse performance career?

Hypothesis

If a blended guitar method and curriculum are implemented in teaching classical and jazz guitar students, they will be better equipped to successfully perform and teach diverse styles in the music industry. Thus, a guitar method/curriculum is needed that will provide blended guitar instruction.

Aspects of music repertoire using hybrid picking techniques that could benefit undergraduate students in contemporary music education include scales and arpeggios, polyphony, and harmonic chord sequences. A hybrid picking curriculum can also train the undergraduate guitarist for a performance career in terms of stylistic diversity, knowledge of repertoire, and adaptability. Many undergraduate guitar students "must deal with problems that affect them uniquely in realizing and establishing their learning methods, and the university does not offer appropriate guidance or provide resources that function cohesively for them to succeed."¹³ Insufficient guidance and lack of resources can limit opportunities for graduating guitarists entering a diverse performance field. Furthermore, due to the rigorous nature of classical guitar curriculum, students may not be allowed to select another style in commercial music.¹⁴ Research may provide more evidence of collaborative training in both styles. The inquiry then becomes, in what ways might the undergraduate guitarist feel underprepared for

¹³ Harold James Odegard, "The Plight of Jazz Guitar Students and Proposed Solutions," (PhD diss., The University of Texas at El Paso, 2004), v.

¹⁴ Matthew J. Rescsanszky, "Mixing Formal and Informal Pedagogies in a Middle School Guitar Classroom," *Music Educators Journal* 103, no. 4 (2017): 26.

professional career opportunities in commercial music? How, then, do music educators blend the traditional and informal approaches in their studios, highlighting the strengths of each for the benefit of students?

Definition of Terms

The following concepts are used in commercial and classical guitar teaching, methods, and performance. These core concepts are specific to the thesis.

Hybrid Picking: A performance of playing the guitar with a plectrum and the right-hand fingers. Hybrid Picking has become much more common from the 1960s to the current period in 2022. Many artists such as Chet Atkins, Tommy Emmanuel, and Pasquale Grasso are well-known for this style. Hybrid Picking is becoming more desirable among guitar performers to combine the techniques, blending rock, jazz, blues, and classical genres.

PIMA: The traditional classical guitar practice including the thumb, index finger, middle finger, and annular finger (ring finger), also known as fingerpicking. Classic right-hand fingers for the guitar are *P* for pulgar, for the thumb; *I* for indice, for the index finger; *M* for medio, which is the middle finger; and *A* for the anular, or ring finger. In classical guitar, the names of the fingers are in Spanish because the classical guitar is closely associated with the great Spanish guitarists of the last two centuries.

Methods of the classical guitar include lower case letters or *p.i.m.a* underneath or next to notes in a guitar score. These symbols give the classical guitarist directions on how to articulate the composition according to the arranger's will.

The Pick or Plectrum: A hard triangle device, typically made of plastic, wood, metal, glass, tortoiseshell, or other materials. Picks are used to strum guitar chords and play single notes and

have been used for thousands of years. According to Menasché, "Guitar-like instruments played with some sort of plectrum have existed for centuries, but nearly 100 years ago, plectrum innovations sparked a tone and technique revolution."¹⁵

String-bending: A technique used in commercial styles by flexing or pushing a guitar string down or up on the fretboard, creating a bending pitch, like a glissando. String contorting is pervasive in nearly all commercial guitar styles yet is scarce in the classical guitar curriculum.

Tapping: The tapping technique shares a history from violinist and guitarist Nicolo Paganini (1782-1840) to Vittorio Camardese (1929-2010) and was popularized by Eddie Van Halen (1955-2020) in the 1970s. This technique is employed when the guitarist reaches over the fretboard with the picking hand and hammers notes in addition to their fretting hand playing legato patterns. *Two-hand tapping* (as the technique is often called) creates a keyboard or organ effect on the guitar.

Thumping Bass: A percussive low note sound on the bottom strings of the guitar (6th – 4th string), played with a plectrum or thumb-pick. Thumping bass was popularized by the Mississippi Delta guitarists, who used a thumb-pick on the lower strings, usually the 6th (low-E) through the 4th (D). The technique provides a backbeat in contemporary western music. Simultaneously, the other fingers (including the index finger, if the artist is using a thumb-pick), middle, and ring play the melody and additional harmonies, including licks, slurs, string bends, and other ornaments.

¹⁵ Emile Menasché, "The (Surprisingly Long) History of the Guitar Pick," *Premier Guitar*, February 27, 2017, accessed July 29, 2022, <https://www.premierguitar.com/gear/the-surprisingly-long-history-of-the-guitar-pick>.

Thumb-pick: A hard plectrum that wraps around the thumb, typically made of plastic, wood, metal, glass, tortoiseshell, and other materials.¹⁶ The thumb-pick allows greater freedom, including the index finger of the right hand, allowing the guitarist to play additional notes simultaneously with the bass strings.

Chapter Summary

The international guitar industry maintains multiple opportunities for undergraduate guitarists who desire a full-time living in the music business.¹⁷ Today, music majors wishing to graduate from a school of music with a full-time career need to be more diversified in their performance practice. Students could struggle to sustain a career in music performance because they may not be prepared for the 21st-century music industry.

Characteristics of lesson repertoire in hybrid picking techniques that could benefit undergraduate music students include scales and arpeggios, legato phrasing, and polyphony. While classical and commercial guitar styles vary in performance practice, undergraduate classical guitarists may feel underprepared for professional career opportunities in the commercial realm. Similarly, undergraduate jazz guitarists limited through the college curriculum may fail to pursue a full-time music career, as research finds music careers often include multiple styles of music.¹⁸ Integrating hybrid picking into undergraduate curricula could expand full-time career opportunities in multiple styles for guitarists.

¹⁶ Happy Traum, *Flat Pick Country Guitar*, (London: Oak Publications, 1973), 4.

¹⁷ Alex Williams, "Guitars Are Back, Baby!" *The New York Times*, accessed July 29, 2022, retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/08/style/guitar-sales-fender-gibson.html>.

¹⁸ A. C. de Villiers, "Music Graduates and Communities of Practice." *South African Journal of Higher Education* 33, no. 1 (2019): 29.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

The techniques included in undergraduate texts are specific to two academic styles: classical and jazz or pick style. Some of the literature consists of fundamentals of music and technical aspects such as hand placement, posture, and picking techniques, whether PIMA or playing with a plectrum. Classical guitar literature used in undergraduate education for modern music educators tends to challenge entrenched music education philosophies and practices.¹⁹ In a study on the future of music education, Lucy Green, Emerita Professor of Music Education at the UCL Institute of Education, UK, argues, that “popular music has often been cast in antipathy to education.”²⁰ She further adds that, “although higher education has been slower to recognize popular music, increasing numbers of traditional music degrees are currently incorporating modules on popular music.”²¹ In their well-known general music education text, Mark and Madura go further in suggesting a larger paradigm shift, stressing the role of ‘arts integration’ for all educators different from what their prior training might have encouraged.²² In this context, arts integration could include hybrid picking to highlight a diverse range of music styles in undergraduate curriculum. Since this topic has performance elements, the literature review that follows includes standard review of scholarly work on the topic, but also a review of websites

¹⁹ Jose Luis Passalacqua. *Pattern Perception as a Basis for the Development of Reading Exercises for the Classical Guitar*, (City: University of Miami, 2000), 8.

²⁰ Lucy Green, *How Popular Musicians Learn: A Way Ahead for Music Education*, (United Kingdom: Routledge, 2017), 159.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 168.

²² Michael L Mark, & Patrice Madura, *Contemporary Music Education*, (Boston: Cengage Textbook, 2014), vii, Kindle.

and videos. The following materials collaboratively show various reasons for the possible implementation of hybrid picking in undergraduate programs and curricula.

Texts in Undergraduate Curriculum

Texts in undergraduate guitar teaching are limited to either classical performance practice [PIMA] or standard jazz plectrum use - like strumming and picking. A performance career in multiple guitar styles would include a combination of fingerpicking and using the plectrum. What is omitted from or scarce in many texts are multiple styles of examples where hybrid picking is essential. Or, if a curriculum contains various styles, as in *Jazz Guitar*, by Hal Leonard, there are minimal exercises to develop adequate training for music outside the traditional jazz catalog.²³ Problems facing faculty could also relate to stylistic techniques scarcely taught within undergraduate curricula. Many music colleges offer instrumental programs, which could be limited by curricular structure, performance mediums, and a limited scope of few performers.

Andrés Segovia (1893-1987) was a classical guitar virtuoso who arguably did the most to popularize classical guitar repertory, increase technical sound, and lead the instrument to the concert stage as a serious solo instrument.²⁴ Segovia's "manner of performance exploited the guitar's palette of tonal colors, captivating large audiences and drawing attention to arguably the instrument's chief virtue: a great richness of timbral variety that allows for specific musical effects in the absence of a wide range of dynamic contrast."²⁵ In contrast, Segovia criticized the

²³ Jeff Schroedl. *Jazz Guitar*, (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard Corporation, 2003).

²⁴ Graham Wade, *Traditions of the Classical Guitar*, (Richmond: Alma Books, 2018), xv.

²⁵ William M Nelson, "The Techniques of Guitar Playing," *Music Library Association* 73, no. 1 (September 2016): 109.

guitar technique of Brazilian composer Heitor Villa-Lobos. "When Segovia approached Villa-Lobos at a party in Paris and questioned some techniques used in his compositions - Villa-Lobos took Segovia's guitar and showed that using the fifth finger in the right hand was possible."²⁶

Joe Pass (1929-1994) was an American jazz guitar virtuoso who pushed the expected boundaries by expanding chord voicings, walking bass lines, reharmonizing jazz standards, and mastering solo performance. He possessed great agility and speed in his hands. Pass is another instrumentalist who challenged the musical establishment with new avenues of implementation. Joe Pass exerted "an outsized influence on the New Orleans jazz guitar tradition of New Orleans, jazz guitar educators."²⁷ He criticized available commercial guitar methods, writing,

Classical guitarists have had a few hundred years to evolve an organized, disciplined approach to playing: a proper method. The plectrum guitar is so recent an innovation that we're only beginning to recognize its possibilities as a legitimate instrument. The early [electric] guitar players combined elements of the classical style with banjo or mandolin picking techniques to form a sort of guitar method. ...thirty years later, I was shocked to discover that the situation had improved only slightly.²⁸

Many guitar methods include techniques from both classical and jazz performance standards. Left hand posture, right-hand positioning, fingerpicking, plectrum picking, dynamics, expression, music notation, and tablature are significant commonalities among these texts.

²⁶ Mitchell Lee Turbenson, "An Analysis of Villa Lobos' Twelve Etudes for Guitar," (PhD diss. University of Arizona, 2012), 10.

²⁷ David M Mooney, "Joe Pass' 'Catch Me!' 'Joy Spring,' and 'For Django:' Transcription and Analysis," (PhD diss., New York University, 2015), 10.

²⁸ Daniel Lee, *The Development of an Electric Guitar Meta-Canon for Australian Schools: Connecting Cultural Islands from the UK and USA*, (39th conference of the Australian and New Zealand Association for Research in Music Education, University of Auckland, N.Z. 2016), accessed December 11, 2022. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Daniel-Lee-95/publication/324888966_Developing_an_Electric_Guitar_Meta-Canon/links/5b3435f3aca2720785ef797c/Developing-an-Electric-Guitar-Meta-Canon.pdf

Various guitar methods in undergraduate programs teach the same pick-style guitar concept, typically alternate picking, or the down-up motion of the plectrum. It could be that many guitar instructors trained from previous college methods were limited to a standard concept of only two styles – classical and jazz. Many performance concepts became established as standard and found their way into an invariable pedagogy. Traditions of performance techniques do not always contain modern approaches to modern styles. In many schools, guitar methods for undergraduates are divided between two performance options. The first option at the collegiate level is typically the classical fingerpicking option known as PIMA. For many jazz and commercial guitarists, the second option is the standard practice of alternate picking and strumming with a plectrum.

Modern guitar performance styles are pervasive in the 21st century. They can be found on social media platforms like YouTube; TV shows American Idol and America's Got Talent, Internet radio, Spotify, and Amazon Video. Whether playing the melody, soloing, or accompanying, the performance often involves what many call hybrid picking. Hybrid picking is a combination of two techniques: picking style, where the thumb and index finger hold the plectrum, and the other fingers, known to the classical world as PIMA; *p* (thumb), *i* (index), *m* (middle), and *a* (ring) are employed. The following undergraduate guitar methods are broken into three sections: Classical Guitar Literature Used in Undergraduate Music Education, Guitar Literature and Recordings Used in Undergraduate Jazz Guitar Education, and Guitar Class Literature. The methods can be used for teaching or performing hybrid picking technique. Many compositions, etudes, and exercises within the texts can be performed with hybrid picking. Undergraduate classical guitar is often taught and performed with specific right-hand fingering, known as PIMA, and includes strings of nylon and nylon wound with wire.

Classical Guitar Literature Used in Undergraduate Education

Several classical composers' musical works can be a powerful study for hybrid picking. One example is Bach's "Prelude in D Minor." This Prelude BWV 999,²⁹ arranged for classical guitar in D Minor, offers a rich harmony of descending bass notes. This work, and others like it, can be performed with PIMA, alternate picking with a plectrum, and hybrid picking. Differences between each harmonic and rhythmic scenario determine a combination between plectrum playing and hybrid picking. There are several cases where the bass note and melody are five and six strings apart. In the hybrid technique, the pick could play the bass notes, and the middle and ring fingers would play the notes on the higher strings. A collection of Bach's pieces could be used in hybrid pick-style pedagogy because they include classical arpeggios and contrapuntal melodies - which could not be played with the plectrum alone. Other pieces in the text which may be useful studies are the "Courante" and "Bourrée," BWV 996,³⁰ "Gavotte 2," BWV 995,³¹ and "Prelude" and "Fugue," BWV 997.³² A catalog of Bach's solo works in which hybrid picking can be employed has yet to be written.

The Complete Carcassi Method by Mel Bay contains Matteo Carcassi's exercises and pieces in the original form.³³ These were "modernized" by the Spanish master, Francisco Tárrega, with fingerings for the right hand. Basic music theory, including notes, lines, clefs, and the circle of fourths and fifths, give the student knowledge about music notation. Dynamic

²⁹ Stephan Gruber, *The Bach Lute Works for Guitar, in Standard Notation and Tablature*, (Independently published, February 28, 2020), Kindle., 95.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 5.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 34.

³² *Ibid.*, 30-44.

³³ Mel Bay, *The Complete Carcassi Guitar Method*, (Pacific: Mel Bay Publications, 2010).

markings, the guitar's shape, and tuning instruction set a foundation for proper performance. The first exercise in first position employs *i* and *m*. The text contains modern right-hand fingerings for classical practice, but many pieces can be used to teach hybrid picking. Specific pieces include “Caprice in Dm,” and studies No. 1, No. 4, No. 7, No. 8, No. 9, No. 13, No. 14, No. 16, No. 18, and No. 20 from Opus 60. Most exercises and studies can be performed adequately using hybrid picking.

Classical Guitar Pedagogy, A Handbook for Teachers, discusses how to teach guitar.³⁴ The method explores topics such as posture, musicianship, and performance, which must be understood by both the instructor and the student. Many undergraduate students studying classical guitar often desire to explore contemporary guitar techniques for songwriting, classic rock, and worship music. Though the text contains useful information relating to classical performance practice, there is a gap in the literature for blended commercial guitar pedagogy. Many students first come to guitar by learning the open chords and strumming patterns with a pick. Practical chapters that may imply contemporary and classical practice include avoiding hand injuries, practicing for performances, stage presence, etiquette, and stage fright.

Solo Guitar Playing, published in 1968 by Frederick Noad, remains a standard method for introducing classical guitar.³⁵ The introduction includes a brief lineage of the classical guitar from the English Elizabethan Period to Francisco Tárrega (1852-1909), ending with Andrés Segovia (1893-1987). Noad's foundation of technique and repertory in the text are based on these iconic classical guitar performers and most likely from previous methods, including studies from Carcassi, Sor, Giuliani, and others. Classical works from previous guitar performers are typically

³⁴ Anthony Glise, *Classical Guitar Pedagogy; a Handbook for Teachers*. Mel Bay, 1997.

³⁵ Frederick Noad, *Solo Guitar Playing*, 4th ed, (New York: Amsco Publication, 2008), Kindle.

regarded as essential study for undergraduate classical guitarists. In many ways, Noad's text is seen as a staple method in classical guitar pedagogy because of the amalgamation of literature, techniques, and performance philosophy. The entire method is based on the classical guitar technique PIMA. Several of the pieces can also be adapted to teach hybrid picking. Some works include "Italiana," anonymous from the 16th century, "Allegro Grazioso," "Etude in D" by Fernando Sor, "Lagrima," by Tárrega, "Alman" by Robert Johnson, "Bourrée in Em," by Bach, and countless others. Practicing two or three of these compositions from Noad's text could increase student versatility for finding additional work in the commercial music realm.

The Christopher Parkening Guitar Method is a classical guitar method divided into three sections.³⁶ The first section displays the anatomy of a nylon-string guitar, including strings, frets, fingerboard, and the bridge. The classical posture of sitting with the guitar is also displayed with eight illustrations. The right hand, PIMA, is discussed with placement toward the lower end of the sound hole. Two different strokes, namely the rest and free strokes, are illustrated with diagrams. The fundamentals of music notation include lines, the staff, notes, note values, and time signatures. Compared to other academic texts, an atypical approach in this text is that the Parkening method starts the student reading on the lower three strings within one page. This could be more efficient than other texts, which typically introduce students to each string on a separate page. Accessible to intermediate exercises and pieces also include duets with which the teacher can accompany the student. The text concludes with a brief history of the classical guitar and an open chord chart that contrasts with most other modern standard guitar books. This

³⁶ Christopher Parkening, Jack Marshall, and David Brandon, *The Christopher Parkening Guitar Method-Volume 1, The Art and Technique of the Classical Guitar*, (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard Corporation, 1997).

applies to the thesis because many fundamental classical guitar exercises and repertory can be taught to include hybrid picking for more advantage in commercial music.

Pumping Nylon by Scott Tennant is one of the best-selling classical guitar texts in the last 20 years.³⁷ Tennant's text includes a wealth of information on several performance subjects including posture, fingerings, legato (including hammer-ons and pull-offs), exercises for left and right-hand, finger independence, accuracy, and building speed. The solo piece "Fanfare" could be a formidable challenge for classical, fingerstyle, and possibly hybrid picking. Fanfare includes contrary motion, slurs, and legato, including natural harmonics and harmonics between the third and first strings. An additional challenge to this piece is the composite meter, which can be an introduction to progressive rock music. The use of tablature and terminology such as hammer-on and pull-off relate to modern music education, as terms such as these are pervasive in the rock, country, bluegrass, and jazz guitar genres. Potential exercises for hybrid picking can be used in the text. These exercises could train a combination of the plectrum with the middle and ring fingers. The method's section on opposing motion could be an adequate exercise in hybrid picking. Still, as an iconic classical text, there is no mention of hybrid picking or plectrum playing – as expected. What is unexpected is that the following texts used in undergraduate jazz guitar education rarely mention hybrid picking.

³⁷ Scott Tennant, *Pumping Nylon*, In *TAB, A Classical Guitarist's Technique Handbook*, (Van Nuys: Alfred Music, 2005).

Guitar Literature and Recordings Used in Undergraduate Jazz Guitar Education

Mickey Baker's Complete Course in Jazz Guitar begins with a foundation of new chord concepts.³⁸ Practicing chord progressions and strumming through various tonalities is a certain way to hear unique qualities of a chord progression. Baker writes, "Chords are essential to a jazz musician. The old style of strumming chords for guitar will never do in modern playing, so we will have to work out a complete system."³⁹ While the author speaks of modern playing, it is implied that the left hand's chord shapes are more adaptable for accompanying chord melodies and introductions to songs. Halfway through the text, the author shares knowledge and diagrams about arpeggios, scales, and special runs which apply to harmonic functions. Modern guitar playing in the 21st century typically involves techniques outside of traditional jazz guitar approach. One vital aspect not included in Baker's text is rhythmic accompaniment for Latin styles, like the Bossa Nova. Bossa Nova on the guitar can be more efficient when employing the hybrid technique. The text appears limited to standard pick style technique and does not mention fingerstyle jazz or fingerpicking technique. If jazz guitar students are limited to this text, they could lack versatility for some jazz guitar accompanying techniques, where a plectrum might be absent. This text illustrates that many jazz guitar methods do not include fingerpicking techniques or hybrid picking. A right-hand technique not using any PIMA fingers appears to be a gap in the literature.

Al Di Meola is a jazz fusion guitarist who was an undergraduate at Berklee College of Music for a short season in the 1970s. Di Meola's performance background predicated on jazz

³⁸ Mickey Baker, *Complete Course in Jazz Guitar, Book 1*, (Frederick: Ashley Publications, 1996), Kindle.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 39.

and classical music is evident in the 1976 recording “Land of the Midnight Sun.”⁴⁰ In the recording, Di Meola performs J. S Bach's “Sarabande” from the “Violin Partita No. 1 in B minor.” Di Meola uses hybrid picking on measures where two or three harmonic notes fall on non-adjacent strings. Di Meola starts the piece with a down strum of the plectrum. He employs a hybrid technique by measure three due to the wide interval of sixths on the D and B strings; the G string is in the middle of the left-hand chord position, but it does not sound with the scraping or dragging of the pick. The cleanliness indicates the hybrid picking technique. If the recording is slowed down to 75%, or by half, a clear distinction is made that Di Meola avoids the G string because if he were to strum the harmony, a scraping sound of the pick would ensue. This technique occurs in measures 3, 10, 11, 14 (end of the bar), 17, 20, 23, 26 (last two beats), 31, and 32. Di Meola finishes the piece in measure 33 with a down strum of the plectrum. From a technological perspective, a slight reverb gives the recording an additional expansive sound – like a small concert hall. The audio recording is moderately bright because steel strings are used instead of nylon. Moderate classical dynamics and tempo alterations give an arguably authentic feel to this interpretation of a classical guitar work. This applies to the thesis in that it combines traditional and modern techniques.

In *The History of Jazz*, Ted Gioia provides a well-researched commentary on how commercial music, blues, and jazz have been a bridge to modern contemporary music.⁴¹ Syncopation, polyrhythm, and stylistic diversity are among the significant iconic influences of blues and jazz. Virtuosity and compositional practices from the classical music realm also seem

⁴⁰ Al Di Meola, “Sarabande from Violin Sonata in Bm,” Track #3 on *Land of the Midnight Sun* Columbia Records, 1976, Vinyl.

⁴¹ Ted Gioia, *The History of Jazz*, (London: Oxford University Press, 2011), Kindle.

to have impacted contemporary music performances of today. Miles Davis studied for a brief time at classical music's prestigious school, Juilliard. Jazz composers who influenced classical music harmony and composition include George Gershwin and Herbie Hancock. In many university curricula, classical music and jazz are some of the most sought-after genres, further highlighting that a performing artist making a living would benefit from being experienced in both genres to be adaptable to modern music.

Classical Studies for Pick-Style Guitar, by William G. Leavitt, is standard classical repertoire for jazz guitarists.⁴² It displays 20 classical guitar works from past generations, ranging from Bach to Kreutzer. Each piece shows a pick-style approach to performing the arrangement and some dynamic implications. The pieces of classical masters like Carcassi, Carulli, and Sor have been arranged to challenge pick-style guitarists with a blend of alternate and economy picking. The hybrid picking technique is absent from the text; it would be useful for training in modern picking practice and could be applied to classical melody and harmony. This applies to the thesis because it shows a blend of classical and jazz guitar performances. Of particular interest is “Waltz” by Matteo Carcassi. A temporary modulation to the key of D Minor includes wide intervals performed by string skipping in the harmony. This passage could emphasize hybrid picking if the text were written today.

Another aspect of this piece is the technique of a partial strum. This technique involves carefully strumming a select number of strings without sounding strings that do not belong in the sound. This occurs in most of the arrangements. The musical symbols and rondo song form train the commercial guitarist in classical practice, except for the use of the pick instead of fingerstyle.

⁴² William Leavitt, *Classical Studies for Pick-Style Guitar: Solos and Duets*, (Milwaukee: Berklee Press Publications, 1968), Kindle.

This text shows that standard classical guitar pieces can adequately be performed and interpreted with a pick. Some arrangements could be better suited for hybrid picking, which may be more efficient than the constant use of alternate picking.

Modern Method for Guitar, Volume One, by William G. Leavitt, is a book used by guitarists who desire to study commercial guitar and learn proper technique, position playing, alternate picking, accompaniment, chords, and scales.⁴³ The text is a strong foundation for guitarists looking to play jazz and swing styles. A vital aspect of the method is that guitarists who already play rock and blues styles may be familiar with many scale shapes and movable chords common to both genres. Fingerpicking is an undeniable technique in many commercial styles, including accompanying pop music artists. The text lacks any information or examples on fingerpicking. The classical approach of PIMA is absent as well. As a current method, a gap exists due to a lack of any right-hand fingerpicking for modern styles. In contemporary music education guitar performance, hybrid picking could potentially fit in reevaluating such a text.

The Real Book, published by Hal Leonard, includes jazz and swing music with popular standards, Broadway show tunes, Gypsy arrangements, and Latin styles, which are common in popular music.⁴⁴ This invaluable text is another staple in commercial music pedagogy at both high schools across the country and universities offering undergraduate studies in commercial music. It contains hundreds of timeless songs ranging from swing, bebop, blues, ballad, and Latin. *The Real Book* is necessary for teaching melody, harmony, sight-reading, song form, and improvisation. Hybrid picking may be more efficient and desirable for rhythmic aspects of guitar

⁴³ William Leavitt, *A Modern Method for Guitar, Volume One* (Milwaukee: Berklee Press, 1966), Kindle.

⁴⁴ Hal Leonard Corporation, *The Real Book - Volume I: C Edition* (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard) Kindle Edition.

performance, including comping, accompanying, and syncopation. The undergraduate guitarist could better perform syncopated rhythms involving lower bass strings and melodies on the upper strings. In such cases, the hybrid picking technique would include playing the bass notes on the lower strings while the middle and ring fingers play the syncopated harmonies on the upper strings. The hybrid picking approach is more pronounced in the bossa nova style because of the syncopated harmonies. The text will be a constant reference in undergraduate jazz guitar curricula.

Guitar Class Literature

While hybrid picking technique is nearly absent from the presented undergraduate guitar texts, some methods used in undergraduate guitar classes include the technique, yet hybrid picking is seldom preferred. *The Unorthodox Guitar, A Guide to Alternative Performance Practice*, by Mike Frengel, shows that contemporary styles include new techniques. He writes, "getting a traditional instrument to speak in novel ways requires an unorthodox approach."⁴⁵ Traditional instruments must implement new performance techniques to be more adaptable in a contemporary musical world. Frengel further says, "Hybrid picking involves using both a pick and the fingers. Pick players primarily employ the technique to expand the polyphonic potential of the guitar. The pick is held between the thumb and index finger and is mainly used for lower strings."⁴⁶ The definition of hybrid picking provided here harmonizes with other researched texts.

⁴⁵ Mike Frengel, *The Unorthodox Guitar, A Guide to Alternative Performance Practice*, (London: Oxford University Press, 2017), Kindle, ix.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 64.

Guitar foot pedals discussed in this text are scarcely employed in classical guitar curriculum. A modern approach to contemporary guitar performance, including hybrid picking technique, is the implementation of digital effects pedals, musical interfaces, recording programs, such as Logic and Pro Tools, and guitar synthesizers. A chapter on digital effects, instrumental augmentation, and composing for the future includes descriptions of modern music technology. This short, concise text shares a common understanding of hybrid picking and contemporary music education.

Jerry Snyder's Guitar School, Method Books 1 and 2 are comprehensive guitar texts used in music education.⁴⁷ Like most texts within the field, it includes the guitar's most essential and rudimentary practice. Aspects of music notation, melody reading, chord formation, and rhythmic playing are broken down into a user-friendly approach. Diagrams and illustrations of holding and playing the guitar are necessary for basic instructions for proper future techniques. The text emphasizes two styles of picking. Many examples in notation and tablature follow this foundation but have a potential reference to hybrid picking, yet terms it "pinch technique."⁴⁸ "Pinch technique" sometimes refers to playing a chord – with the pick on the lowest string, and the other remaining fingers sound the upper strings. There is little to differentiate between what the author means by using the same terminology for two different picking techniques. Snyder writes,

The following "pinch technique" can be played fingerstyle with the thumb and middle finger or in pick style with the pick and middle finger. In the fingerstyle, the thumb (p) and middle finger (m) pluck or pinch the chord on beats 2 and 3. In pick style, use the pick (≥) to play the lower note and the middle finger (m) to pluck the top note of the

⁴⁷ Jerry Snyder, *Jerry Snyder's Guitar School, Method Books 1 & 2: A Comprehensive Method for Class and Individual Instruction*, (Van Nuys: Alfred Music, 1999), Kindle.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 14.

chord on beats 2 and 3. Let the bass note played on beat one ring throughout the measure.⁴⁹

Snyder's brief description of what he terms "pick style with the middle finger" is considered "pinch technique." Though the name "pinch technique" is less common, this could show further recognition of hybrid picking technique which is scarce in music education method books. Hybrid picking technique can also be mischaracterized with names like "chicken pickin'." But the term "chicken pickin'" implies a "cluck-cluck" sound heard in much country music. "Chicken Pickin'" is specific to country guitar, but the technique without the "cluck-cluck" sound is understood as hybrid picking, which is used in most guitar styles.

Articles, Theses, Videos, and Books on Hybrid Picking

In How Hybrid Picking Can Open Up a World of Progressive Performance Possibilities, Gustavo Assis-Brazil writes, "In some ways, playing [the guitar] using only a pick or fingerstyle limits your potential."⁵⁰ Suppose undergraduate guitarists are limited to traditional classical guitar compositions and techniques. Modern music, including funk, blues, R & B, rock, country, disco, soul, and many other forms of popular music, could not be achieved. Such limitation is because there is a distinct sound and adaptability with the guitar pick, also known as a plectrum. Traditional boundaries are equally problematic if an undergraduate guitarist is limited through a college curriculum where pick-style technique is taught, but only in jazz. Assis-Brazil's article includes nine specific examples of hybrid picking where the execution of scales, chords, and

⁴⁹ Jerry Snyder, *Jerry Snyder's Guitar School, Method Books 1 & 2: A Comprehensive Method for Class and Individual Instruction*, (Van Nuys: Alfred Music, 1999), Kindle,14.

⁵⁰ Gustavo Assis-Brazil, "How Hybrid Picking Can Open Up a World of Progressive Possibilities," *Guitar World*, (September 2, 2020): 5.

arpeggios appear to be much more versatile than the limitations of some standard undergraduate curricula.

Hybrid Picking Guitar Technique, by Levi Clay, is published by Fundamental Changes in Guitar.⁵¹ The text shows multiple guitar styles in modern music. Clay's book breaks down hybrid picking at the rudimentary level. The author discusses the advantages of hybrid picking. As the student progresses through the book, basic exercises introducing the guitar pick in combination with the middle and ring fingers are displayed in traditional and contemporary music styles. The author chooses Johann Sebastian Bach's "Prelude in D" from "The Well-Tempered Clavier BWV 846" for one of the final pieces combining conventional classical guitar techniques with a plectrum. A last piece in the text employing the same traditional and modern styles includes a contemporary blues solo. These contrasting musical pieces show that hybrid picking can be highly versatile in traditional and contemporary musical practice.

Teaching Music in Higher Education, by Colleen Conway, includes a wealth of information for preparing music majors to build a profile which consists of a resume to promote a full-time career.⁵² Demonstrated excellence in performance and teaching on a musical instrument is one of the main components of earning a living. University preparation of diverse music relating to genres and styles could attract employers and contacts who are more aware of contemporary music styles, expecting a professional guitarist to be adaptable in performance.

⁵¹ Levi Clay, "Hybrid Picking Guitar Technique, Master the Techniques, Secrets, and Versatility of Modern Hybrid Picking on Guitar," *Fundamental-Changes in Guitar* (2021). Kindle.

⁵² Colleen M Conway, *Teaching Music in Higher Education*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020), Kindle.

Leyenda, Op. 47, composed by Isaac Albeniz, is a virtuosic guitar piece performed in the classical guitar tradition.⁵³ The music has a fast flamenco feel and references Phrygian tonality. Andrés Segovia, Julian Bream, and John Williams, all seen as classical guitar authorities, have performed this piece. It is often a favorite among classical guitar concertgoers and is an outstanding achievement if one can master the piece at a high level. YouTube teacher Ben Eller displays an adequate performance of the main pedal tone riff using hybrid picking. This applies to the thesis because the mixed technique is adaptable and can be used for some of the most virtuosic selections of classical guitar literature.

Rick Graham is a rock guitar teacher and performer with an undergraduate degree in classical guitar performance.⁵⁴ Graham is known for modern rock guitar and makes a full-time living as a guitarist with online lessons and social media. He performs “Partita in E” by J.S Bach with hybrid picking. The approach to the classical piece on the electric guitar could parallel any traditional classical performer. The audio aspects of the performance include reverb and several musical dynamics giving the melody a desirable contour. Two differences compared to the conventional approach are Rick Graham's use of the electric guitar reverb and steel strings rather than nylon strings. The video has just below 400,000 views compared to other well-known classical artists like Sanel Redzic, averaging between 200,000 – 733,000 in the same period.⁵⁵ This shows that an artist trained in classical guitar performance can play classical masterpieces

⁵³ Ben Eller, “*Master Hybrid Picking by Learning THIS Classical Masterpiece*,” (Weekend Workshop 216) Accessed March 22, 2022, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2J-Gf8NDens>

⁵⁴ Rick Graham, “J.S. Bach - Partita in E (Free tabs),” June 19, 2015, music video, 3:32, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zDI05mAkNzk>.

⁵⁵ Sanel Redzic, “Partita BWV 1004 - Johann Sebastian Bach,” played by Sanel Redzic, Uploaded September 16, 2016, YouTube video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hymeyfown0A>.

using modern electric guitar and hybrid picking. It is essential to reference examples of a modern blend between traditional classical and jazz guitar performance techniques. This performance supports that stylistic diversity in guitar technique could better serve the undergraduate guitarist in pursuing a lifelong career as a performer.

The History of Chicken Pickin,' by James Hunt, discusses the contributions of hybrid picking, which the author calls "chicken pickin'."⁵⁶ Hunt writes, "chicken pickin" refers to the 'clucking' staccato tone from the guitar strings that is fundamentally as percussive as melodic. And while 'chicken pickin' is a technique used primarily in country and honky-tonk music, players in other genres also have adopted it."⁵⁷ Country guitar legends James Burton, Dale Hawkins, and Merle Travis are some of the first credited with using hybrid picking. As the author implies, hybrid picking is recognized in nearly every genre outside traditional classical guitar performance. Though some scholars agree that the history of 'chicken pickin' started with famous country artists who were all white, the article fails to mention the possible contributions of artists in the Mississippi Delta, a period before the 1950s. Robert Johnson (1911-1938) is an earlier example known as the King of the Delta Blues. Johnson used a thumb-pick and the other fingers to play the upper strings. The thumb-pick is a device that wraps around the thumb keeping the index, middle, and ring fingers available to play adjacent strings. Johnson's technique could be considered the prehistory of hybrid picking technique if the author is claiming that the technique was fashioned out of 1950s country guitar artists. Arguably, Mississippi Delta blues guitar legends such as Robert Johnson could be the primary catalyst for the technique, because they employed a pick with the fingers. It may be notable that people from

⁵⁶ James. Hunt, "The History of Chicken Pickin'," *Sweet Water: inSynch*, (October 29, 2019) <https://www.sweetwater.com/insync/history-chicken-pickin/>.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

different races and cultures use hybrid picking techniques. Diversity is another overtone in the thesis relating to discovery.

Play Like Eric Johnson, by Chad Johnson, shows why Eric Johnson could be one of the most well-known rock, blues, and acoustic musicians to have captured wide acclaim using hybrid picking.⁵⁸ Many of Eric Johnson's compositions could not be performed with standard classical or jazz guitar techniques. One would have to employ hybrid picking to perform Johnson's music. In this book, Chad Johnson comprehensively analyzes Eric Johnson's guitar licks and compositional introductions. Some of Eric Johnson's techniques, including string skipping, thumb fretting, hybrid picking, vibrato, muting, harmonics, pre-bending, and economy picking, are displayed with a short instructional diagram. This work highlights an artist with a performance career in multiple styles employing hybrid picking.

Cliffs of Dover, by guitarist Eric Johnson, is arguably the most famous of Johnson's compositions.⁵⁹ Johnson combines four modern guitar techniques: jazz guitar performance techniques, classical guitar arpeggios, economy style picking, and artificial harmonics. The video starts with Eric Johnson's hybrid picking on chords and suspended harmonies. Shortly after, Johnson begins a virtuosic pentatonic cascade using economy picking. After this display of technique, the band provides a groovy rhythmic and harmonic foundation to which Johnson plays this most famous anthem. This piece includes artificial harmonics on the guitar, which are scarce in traditional jazz guitar curriculum. Traditional jazz guitar performance would not include effects pedals and rock-like pinch harmonics.

⁵⁸ Chad Johnson, *Play Like Eric Johnson, the Ultimate Guitar Lesson*, (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard, 2016), Kindle.

⁵⁹ Eric Johnson, "Cliffs of Dover," MusiciansEmpire.com, August 5, 2012, music video, 6:20, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZUECcou-34A>.

Another aspect of this video is Johnson's use of distortion and digital effects. Reverb and slap-back delay accompany a flawless tone with left-hand chords and hybrid picking. Major and harmonic minor tonality blend together with a crunch of modern sound. Johnson's amalgamation of hybrid picking, audio effects, and two-octave arpeggios exemplify modern guitar performance techniques. Eric Johnson does not have academic guitar credentials, yet his methods can be employed in undergraduate curricula.

Classical Hybrid Picking Ideas, by Land Scape Guitar, shows short video examples of hybrid picking.⁶⁰ A visual performance accompanies musical notation, and tablature accompanies the hybrid picking technique. Natural harmonics, polyphonic lines, and two-octave major arpeggios display hybrid picking efficiency.

Hybrid-Picking on Acoustic, How to Take Your First Steps, by Jimmy Leslie, introduces freedom from the pick, which for some commercial players, may be a new concept. Arpeggios and contrapuntal lines create a foundation for incorporating hybrid-picking strategies.⁶¹ Leslie writes, "Many finger-stylists use the first three fingers primarily, but since the index finger is occupied pinching the pick along with the thumb in hybrid-picking, fingers 2 and 3 become primary."⁶² The description is the most common approach to hybrid-picking. For open chords, Jimmy Leslie writes, "Form an open D chord and focus on the top three strings so that the

⁶⁰ Land Scape Guitar, "Classical Hybrid Picking Ideas ex 1 & 2," March 29, 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z7aoeZTHjsk&t=7s>.

⁶¹ Jimmy Leslie, "Hybrid-Picking on Acoustic: How to Take Your First Steps," *Guitar Player Magazine*, (August 28, 2020) <https://www.guitarplayer.com/lessons/hybrid-picking-on-acoustic-how-to-take-your-first-steps>.

⁶² Ibid.

arpeggiated chord tones are low to high, A, D, F#. Get a click going on a metronome. Try repeating the arpeggio up from strings three to one in time."⁶³

Hybrid-Picking on Acoustic could be an accessible approach to learning hybrid picking because guitarists are familiar with open chords on the guitar. Basic open chords are some of the first sounds many guitarists learn to make. A fundamental approach for hybrid picking can offer ease based on familiar chord shapes. A simplistic approach to a new educational outcome is critical in modern music education. The hybrid picking technique with the basics of open chords could be an essential discussion in the thesis.

Hybrid Picking Applied to Classical Guitar, by Marcos Maia and Carlos Fiorini, is a scientific article that shows applications of hybrid picking.⁶⁴ The article discusses how hybrid picking is applied to the classical repertory. The author discusses the history of the plectrum, going back some 4000 years, and a quick lesson in the early beginnings of right-hand fingerpicking. Some professionals who already use hybrid picking may disagree with elements in this article about which right-hand fingers to use. Maia writes, "The technical features of using a pick, associated with fingers to pluck the strings, as in hybrid picking, results in feasibility and diverse guitar performance possibilities, expanding the scope of varied repertoire."⁶⁵

Most guitarists employ the pick with the middle and ring fingers for hybrid picking. Similarly, the author includes the pinky known as "c." The document does not mention academic

⁶³ Jimmy Leslie, "Hybrid-Picking on Acoustic: How to Take Your First Steps," *Guitar Player Magazine*, (August 28, 2020) <https://www.guitarplayer.com/lessons/hybrid-picking-on-acoustic-how-to-take-your-first-steps>.

⁶⁴ Marcos Maia and Carlos Fiorini, "Hybrid Picking Applied to Classical Guitar," *Per Musi* 37 (2017).

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 2.

education, including university-level guitarists. It also does not suggest how hybrid picking technique may provide more career opportunities for classical or jazz undergraduates.

Hybrid Picking Guitar Technique by Levi Clay teaches hybrid picking from an intermediate approach with arpeggios, intervals, and chords.⁶⁶ While there are a fair number of examples for each chapter, there is no explanation of music notation or tablature used in every instance. Clay's experience underscores that a dogmatic musical curriculum still exists among universities. Some undergraduate guitar professors still show that techniques and styles outside the tradition are forbidden if a student is studying classical or jazz guitar. Pearson writes hybrid picking "can work with any style and, once you integrate it into your playing, you may find that it becomes part of your day-to-day approach to your instrument."⁶⁷ Clay also claims, "When it comes to technique education, instruction for the guitar is sadly lacking, compared to an instrument like the piano, which has hundreds of years of evolution behind it."⁶⁸

Risteski's article, *A New Guitar Teaching Philosophy*, shares new insights for guitar instructors who were previously educated in traditional classical music practice.⁶⁹ Risteski maintains that university guitar instruction should not be limited by a philosophy that there is only one way to perform. In 21st-century academic musical training, students "deal with varying degrees of ability and motivation." Risteski writes, "With the world changing rapidly, the abilities acquired in guitar schools today need to be reassessed as to how students are expected to

⁶⁶ Levi Clay, "Hybrid Picking Guitar Technique," *Fundamental Changes*, (2021): 2.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁶⁹ Ice B. Risteski, *A New Guitar Teaching Philosophy*, Universidad de Guanajuato, 2012., 38.

learn."⁷⁰ The article's following statement could be the antithesis of some guitar educators who disparage any change in their teaching practice. The author writes:

Professional guitar teaching practice is not constrained by a belief that there is one best way. Many university teachers deal with students of varying degrees of ability and motivation. Guitar teachers should be invited to extend their range of guitar teaching approaches in a secure, risk-taking environment. If this were not enough, they often must teach a variety of musical styles.⁷¹

Risteski's article shows a gap in undergraduate educational curriculum and teaching practice for students who desire to be more versatile between classical and jazz guitar performance techniques.

Dr. Deborah Sheldon is Chair of Music Education at Temple University and Boyer College of Music and Dance. In *7 Things Music Majors Can Do When Facing the Job Market; Majoring in Music*, Dr. Sheldon shares powerful insights for success as a self-employed musician.⁷² The report's topics are how to be an outstanding musician, improvise, acquire entrepreneurial skills, become broad-based and well-trained, and combine advocacy with exchange to create better programs. Dr. Sheldon recognizes the importance of talent, capability, and relevance in the musician's job search. Relevance in employment industries requires knowledge and experience with new technologies, social diversity, and adaptability by integrating multiple music techniques and styles that can aid undergraduate guitarists for many career possibilities. New technologies could suggest the integration of guitar foot pedals and social media networking to build a fan base. Sheldon also mentions the ability to improvise. In

⁷⁰ Ice B. Risteski, *A New Guitar Teaching Philosophy*, Universidad de Guanajuato, 2012., 38.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 38.

⁷² Deborah Sheldon, "7 Things Music Majors Can Do When Facing the Job Market; Majoring in Music," March 19, 2022, <http://majoringinmusic.com/7-things-music-education-majors-can-do-make-themselves-more-employable-2/>.

relation, Edward Smaldone, Professor of Composition and Director of the Aaron Copland School of Music at Queens College, says, "knowing how to improvise means you can adapt."⁷³ This skill can lead to improved ensemble and solo performances with various genres of music.

Improvisation is often a difficult performance topic for undergraduate classical performance majors. Improvisation can encompass rock, jazz, funk, blues, worship music, and other styles with broader career opportunities. The thesis will attempt to show potential performance deficits in college guitar curricula. These challenges could help broaden student knowledge and experience in some curricula.

⁷³ Deborah Sheldon, "7 Things Music Majors Can Do When Facing the Job Market; Majoring in Music," March 19, 2022, <http://majoringinmusic.com/7-things-music-education-majors-can-do-make-themselves-more-employable-2/>.

Chapter Three: Methods

Introduction

The focus on examining standard guitar methods led to the use of historical action research as this study's foundational research method. Examining existing literature provided an understanding of what continues to be a tradition and why hybrid picking guitar techniques remain absent. Information gathered from academic books, internet articles, publications, concert footage from YouTube, websites, and blogs provided the base of knowledge from which the remaining work developed.

Design

A comparative evaluation of undergraduate guitar methods included Aaron Shearer's *Classic Guitar Technique Volume 1*,⁷⁴ *The Segovia Technique* by Vladimir Bobri,⁷⁵ Frederick Noad's *First Book for the Guitar*,⁷⁶ Charles Duncan's *A Modern Approach to Classical Guitar*,⁷⁷ Christopher Parkening's *Guitar Method, A Modern Method for Guitar*,⁷⁸ by William Leavitt, *A Modern Method for Guitar Scales*, by Larry Baione,⁷⁹ and Mickey Baker's *Complete Course in Jazz Guitar*.⁸⁰

⁷⁴ Aaron Shearer, *Classic Guitar Technique*, Vol. 1, (Van Nuys: Alfred Music Publishing, 1985).

⁷⁵ Vladimir Bobri, *The Segovia Technique*, (London: Bold Strummer Limited, 1990).

⁷⁶ Frederick M. Noad, *Solo Guitar Playing, Book I*, (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard, 1985).

⁷⁷ Charles Duncan, *A Modern Approach to Classical Guitar (Music Instruction): Book 1-Book Only*, (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard Corporation, 1996).

⁷⁸ Christopher Parkening, Jack Marshall, and David Brandon, *The Christopher Parkening Guitar Method-Volume 1: The Art and Technique of the Classical Guitar*, (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard Corporation, 1997).

⁷⁹ Larry Baione, *Modern Method for Guitar Scales*, (Boston: Berklee Press, 2018), Kindle.

⁸⁰ Mickey Baker, *Complete Course in Jazz Guitar, Book 1*, (Frederick: Ashley Publications, 1996,) Kindle.

Research Questions and Hypothesis

The classical guitar texts contain similarities in practice, including posture, strokes, tone production, sitting, and right-hand PIMA. These are presented with slight variation, as "there are only two ways to strike a string."⁸¹ One text hardly mentions "popular music"⁸² for learning chords. Another author notes "popular music," claiming, "The plectrum, [or pick-style] guitar sets serious limitations upon the instrument."⁸³ Opinions of this type could marginalize modern guitar techniques from undergraduate texts. Deviation from traditional practice standards is often seen as undesirable.

The jazz guitar texts contain similarities, including picking patterns, chord and scale shapes, and various positions for the left hand on the guitar. None of the texts mention classical PIMA, fingerpicking, or hybrid picking – which could be used in all methods with some limitations.

Lucy Green, Emerita Professor of Music Education at the UCL Institute of Education, UK, found that "informal learning practices that go into the making of popular music are very different from the usual pedagogic methods of formal music education."⁸⁴ Merry found that "Teachers and authors of method books had consistently expressed a concern stating that the

⁸¹ Christopher Parkening, *The Christopher Parkening Guitar Method - Volume 1, Guitar Technique*, (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard Corporation, 1999), Kindle.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 10006.

⁸³ Aaron Shearer, *Classic Guitar Technique*, (Van Nuys: Alfred Publishing, 2009), Apple Books, 10.

⁸⁴ Lucy Green, *Music, Informal Learning and the School: A New Classroom Pedagogy* (United Kingdom: Routledge, 2017), 90.

field of classical guitar education, in general, was an area that required reevaluation in terms of proper teaching method materials and pedagogical practices."⁸⁵

Guitar instructors have long held such sentiments. In 1953, Andrés Segovia implied that most guitar methods were "absent of practical systems of studies and exercises," which would lead a student to mastery of the guitar. Merry also observed that "far too many students embark on their college careers with little or no preparation at the pre-college level"– and "most method books continue to be widely used by many guitar teachers, with good results. However, these works are not suitable for the beginning guitarist."⁸⁶

David Carter, Assistant Professor of Music at Loyola Marymount University, writes, "Much literature related to music education and jazz education focused on improvisation. Although research on the status of jazz education within the preservice music education curricula exists for a small number of individual states, there is still a gap in current and comprehensive literature."⁸⁷ This gap in the literature underscores a need for additional guitar techniques, which can be applicable in multiple performance styles. Carter also says,

Music degree programs "are enveloped with limitations of four intimidating systems: state-mandated legislation and certifications, university requirements, National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) or similar requirements and recommendations, and often most difficult of all, the traditional practice and teaching in higher education. For jazz curriculum methods, faculty member perspectives indicated a moderately high agreement ($M = 7.39$; $SD = 2.36$) when asked if there was a need for a separate college course in jazz methods as the necessary techniques."⁸⁸

⁸⁵ Renthungo Merry, *A Paradigm for Effective Pre-College Classical Guitar Methodology: A Case Study of Two Models of Effective Instruction*, (Dissertation for Doctorate, University of Northern Colorado, 2010), 2.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 4-5.

⁸⁷ David Carter, "Instructor Perspectives and Jazz-Related Courses for Undergraduate Music Majors at NASM Accredited Colleges and Universities," (2020), 2-3.

⁸⁸ Merry, 48.

Chapter Four: Research Findings

Introduction

It seems necessary to evaluate existing literature and practice if undergraduate guitarists plan on meeting the demands of the multi-faceted music industry. Johansson says, "Musicians' engagement with stylistic diversity would likely benefit from a corresponding engagement with technical diversity, which could lead to a revision in performance practices."⁸⁹ Performance practices for modern careers in guitar contrast with much of the undergraduate guitar curriculum. If the goal of music majors is a full-time career in performance, being limited by one stylistic approach may significantly decrease their chances of success.

Dawn Bennett, in *Understanding the Classical Music Profession*, "published by Routledge, writes, "Musicians in the twenty-first century require a broad and evolving base of skills and knowledge to sustain their careers as cultural practitioners."⁹⁰ Contemporary styles of music have much more cultural relevance than ever because popular music is pervasive in western culture. Because of this reality, undergraduate guitarists desiring a full-time performance career must strive to be relevant.

Guitar curricula in undergraduate programs often present challenges for contemporary techniques and diversifying performance opportunities. *Harold James Odegard*, contributor of jazz education for University of Texas, El Paso, and Boston University College of Fine Arts, writes, "materials and resources available don't suitably address their concerns in college."⁹¹

⁸⁹ Mats Johansson, "On the Relationship Between Technique and Style: The Case of the Violin," *Music Education Research* 17, no. 2 (2015): 137.

⁹⁰ Dawn Bennett, *Understanding the Classical Music Profession: The Past, the Present and Strategies for the Future*, (London: Routledge, 2016), 1.

⁹¹ Harold James Odegard, "The Plight of Jazz Guitar Students and Proposed Solution" (PhD diss., The University of Texas at El Paso, 2004, 2.

Odegard also found that "very few [jazz guitar] teachers and authors provide an overall picture of what a person needs to learn."⁹² Curriculum limitations may fail undergraduate guitarists for styles such as funk, blues, pop, percussive-acoustic, and country music. Similarly, the undergraduate classical curriculum may not adequately prepare students for performing outside the standard practice. *Music School Central* finds, "It is prudent for any young musician recently graduated from college looking to boost income by diversifying performance opportunities among chamber, orchestral, solo, studio session, and popular-genre gigs."⁹³ Munnelly writes, "it seems that a greater effort could be made to understand what the expectations of today's music students are, especially at a time when so many are talking about the need for curricular change."⁹⁴ There is also "a growing amount of literature on portfolio careers that calls on higher education music programs to offer a more realistic depiction of what a career in music looks like."⁹⁵ Based on the findings, a career in music appears vastly different from what many undergraduate programs offer in guitar curricula.

This chapter will answer two research questions. Research Question One: How could lesson use of hybrid guitar techniques in instructional repertoire benefit undergraduate students in contemporary music education? Research Question Two: In what ways can the hybrid curriculum train the undergraduate guitarist for a musically diverse performance career?

⁹² Harold James Odegard, "The Plight of Jazz Guitar Students and Proposed Solution" (PhD diss., The University of Texas at El Paso, 2004, 23.

⁹³ The Results of Peter & Lauren's Study, "What Happens to Music Majors After They Graduate College? New Study Reveals Amazing Data," accessed July 29, 2022, <https://musicschoolcentral.com/what-happens-to-music-majors-after-they-graduate-college-new-study-reveals-amazing-data/2/>.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 236.

⁹⁵ Karen Patricia Munnelly, "Understanding Career & Degree Expectations of Undergraduate Music Majors," (PhD diss., The Ohio State University, 2017), 236.

There are often limitations in jazz and classical guitar curricula in addressing styles outside of the curriculum, raising additional questions. Are there specific pieces or techniques that may be taught to satisfy both the endeavors and knowledge of commercial and classical guitarists? In what ways can an undergraduate hybrid picking curriculum train guitarists for a diverse performance career?

In an article in the *American String Teacher*, Philip Hii states, "Even among [these] students, however, the level of technique is generally poor, and they are usually unable to cope with the more complex and virtuosic pieces required of them at the college level."⁹⁶ It is crucial to examine how hybrid picking is used in various musical styles to learn how hybrid guitar techniques in instructional repertoire could benefit undergraduate students in contemporary music education. "Schools of music are sometimes steeped deeply in classical music traditions, and it is important to help students be more aware of musical styles and genres outside of that tradition. If students can have the opportunity to make music and experience diverse musical traditions, they may be able to bring this experience into their future musical profiles."⁹⁷

Hybrid picking may better equip undergraduate guitarists for employment opportunities that vary stylistically outside their chosen guitar genre. Hybrid picking instruction can be used in training undergraduate students, not only in contemporary styles where it is already in use, but in performing classical and jazz repertoire typically taught in the university context. The following examples show popular classical and jazz selections performed with hybrid picking. These musical selections presented are used in undergraduate guitar curriculum yet are not considered

⁹⁶ Philip Hii, "Teaching Classical Guitar at the College Level: A Perspective," *American String Teacher* 42, no. 1 (1992): 52.

⁹⁷ Colleen M Conway, *Teaching Music in Higher Education*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020), Kindle, 86-87.

for training in hybrid picking. Learning the following selections the way they are presented in this thesis blends classical and jazz guitar picking techniques.

Classical Guitar Repertoire Featuring Hybrid Picking

A well-known composition often taught at the undergraduate level is “Lágrima” by Francisco Tárrega. Typically a standard freshman undergraduate classical guitar composition played with PIMA, “Lágrima,” can be achieved with hybrid picking.⁹⁸ Enyedi Sándor plays the piece entirely on steel string acoustic guitar, with mild attention to appropriate dynamics and feel. Many of Tárrega’s works can be performed with hybrid picking, and steel-string acoustic guitar and the plectrum are widely used in music performance and modern music education.

The music of J.S Bach is popular for guitarists using hybrid picking techniques. Bach’s “Air on G String” is performed by guitarist Yngwie Malmsteen with hybrid picking.⁹⁹ By using hybrid picking, Malmsteen shows that more standard classical guitar literature can also be performed using the technique. Malmsteen uses an acoustic-electric guitar with steel strings; electric guitars are another modern approach to music education.

Bach’s “Bourrée” from “BWV 996 Lute Suite” is another standard classical guitar piece that can be used to teach hybrid picking techniques.¹⁰⁰ The work consists of two contrapuntal lines on the lower and upper strings of the guitar. The plectrum would play the bass notes on the lower strings, while the other right-hand fingers would play the melody on the upper strings.

⁹⁸ Enyedi Sándor, “Lágrima - (Fingerstyle Guitar Cover),” October 25, 2015, Facebook video, 2:14, <https://www.facebook.com/enyedi.sandor/videos/1029827523736629/>.

⁹⁹ Cleindark, “Air on G String Acoustic,” January 1, 2018, YouTube video, 4:33, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PHLFHzY04uE>.

¹⁰⁰ Stephan Gruber, *The Bach Lute Works for Guitar, in Standard Notation and Tablature*, (Independently Published, 2020), Kindle, 13.

Another example is Gustavo Assis-Brasil, who plays Bach's "Invention # 8" on Solo Guitar.¹⁰¹ These performances show practical examples from classical guitar literature where the two independent voices of the invention are played on separate strings. Again, the plectrum takes the lower string while the other right-hand fingers play the upper strings. The compositions could not be executed with the single use of the plectrum.

Other classical compositions like Pachelbel's "Canon in D" could be useful for teaching hybrid picking in undergraduate guitar education because of the tempo. Typically performed from slow to moderate tempo, instruction of the piece can also teach hand placement and tone. The arrangement in *Masterworks for Guitar* by Hal Leonard can adequately be performed using hybrid picking.¹⁰² By using hybrid picking on such arrangements, the guitarist can switch between classical and commercial music styles. The arrangement can also prepare undergraduate guitarists for diverse performance opportunities because of the popularity of the piece.

Like the popularity of Pachelbel's "Canon in D," is Bach's "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring," as arranged in *Bach for Guitar*.¹⁰³ Teaching this arrangement using hybrid picking allows the student to quickly switch between picking with the plectrum and aspects of PIMA. Many times, performance opportunities include a diverse range of musical selections with fingerpicking or plectrum use.

As presented on acoustic and electric guitars, the examples of hybrid picking techniques can prepare both classical and undergraduate jazz guitarists for both academic styles. Instructing

¹⁰¹ Gustavo Assis-Brasil, "Gustavo Assis-Brasil plays "Invention # 8" on Solo Guitar," July 20, 2017, YouTube video, 1:30, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fkD07m5pGhs&t=10s>.

¹⁰² John Hill, *Master Works for Guitar*, (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard, 2002), 39.

¹⁰³ Howard Wallach, *Bach for Guitar, Easy to Intermediate Pieces for by J.S Bach Transcribed for Guitar*, (Van Nuys: Alfred Publishing, 1997), 29.

elements of standard classical guitar curriculum simultaneously with the technique, the student learns important fundamentals of classical performance. At the same time, using the plectrum can introduce new guitar techniques applicable to contemporary music education. Similarly, instructing classical guitar compositions with hybrid picking can train undergraduate guitarists in diverse styles outside the potentially limited curriculum. Such diversity can increase performance opportunities leading to full-time careers in music.

Jazz Guitar Repertoire Featuring Hybrid Picking

The following selections are standards often used in jazz curriculum. Teaching jazz standards using hybrid picking can blend two stylistic techniques together leading to diverse undergraduate guitar curriculum. Where undergraduate classical guitarists seldom use a plectrum, incorporating the right-hand fingers simultaneously with the pick may be less foreign when learning contemporary music. Below are examples where classical right-hand fingering and pick-style techniques are simultaneously incorporated.

“Someday My Prince Will Come,” by Julian Lage,¹⁰⁴ is a transcription featuring tablature and musical notation, with video commentary on how to perform the arrangement with hybrid picking. Tunes like “Someday, My Prince Will Come” are cataloged for undergraduate jazz guitar repertory. Since the performer’s right-hand fingers play the higher notes while simultaneously holding the plectrum, undergraduate jazz guitarists could be introduced to elements of classical PIMA. The study would also create less dependency on pick-style playing, often taught in undergraduate jazz guitar texts.

¹⁰⁴ Kaven Girouard, “Julian Lage | Someday My Prince Will Come | Chord Melody + Solo Transcription | TABS | Lesson,” July 9, 2020, YouTube video, 2:52, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vzvZtXeh8BI>.

“Lil' Darlin' with a Joe Pass Feel”¹⁰⁵ is a video of the famous jazz standard in the style of Joe Pass. The melody is played on the top strings with the middle and ring fingers while the plectrum performs a walking bass line on the lower strings. The example could be ideal for further studies in jazz guitar chord melody using hybrid picking. Undergraduate classical guitarists studying this song with hybrid picking could be introduced to extended harmonies higher up on the fretboard.

“Summertime,” by George Gershwin,¹⁰⁶ is a famous jazz standard from the opera *Porgy and Bess*. The performer maintains a classic jazz guitar sound using an archtop guitar with accompanying plate reverb. The bluesy melodic number interspersed with jazz chord syncopated harmonies is performed with hybrid picking. The slow tempo may give students studying the piece more time to understand the feel of hybrid picking - especially if the technique is new for undergraduate guitarists already versed in another style.

“All The Things You Are,” by Jerome Kern,¹⁰⁷ is a jazz standard recorded by Ella Fitzgerald, Chet Baker, Joe Pass, John Coltrane, and countless others. The tune contains a harmonic sequence of ii-V7 progressions, often used for study as the "harmonic structure commonly found in jazz."¹⁰⁸ The improviser starts the arrangement using hybrid picking on chord harmonies where the plectrum plays the bass note on the lower strings, and the right-hand

¹⁰⁵ Rob Hobson Mixing Engineer, “Li'l Darlin' - Hybrid Picking Jazz Guitar Arrangement,” November 24, 2016, YouTube video, 1:21, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jHR0WmrscJY>.

¹⁰⁶ Ricardo Chiarion, “Summertime (George Gershwin) – Solo Jazz Guitar” April 23, 2021, YouTube video, 7:42 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j0fo1yWkuyc>.

¹⁰⁷ MmckMusic, “All the Things You Are,” January 22, 2017, YouTube video, 2:05, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wm3EBy_qmAE.

¹⁰⁸ Mark Laughlin, "Sequential Jazz Piano Songs: 26 Easy Favorites Carefully Selected and Arranged in Order of Difficulty." *The American Music Teacher* 68, no. 6 (2019): 52.

fingers play the additional harmonies on the middle and upper strings. Improvisation in contemporary music education is essential for learning and can include multiple styles of performance.

“Satin Doll,” performed by John Pizzarelli,¹⁰⁹ has been a favorite among jazz enthusiasts and has been recorded by multiple iconic artists, including Joe Pass, Wes Montgomery, and Ella Fitzgerald. Graham Dechter is the highlighted soloist, while the jazz orchestra provides the arrangement's rhythmic and harmonic foundation. Dechter uses hybrid picking during a walking bass line of the jazz standard beginning at 3:48. Mr. Dechter also uses hybrid picking technique on other jazz standard arrangements, including Duke Ellington's “In a Mellow Tone.”

The Role of Hybrid Picking Scales and Arpeggios in Developing a Diverse Performance Career

Scales and arpeggios have been a long-standing tradition in musical training. They develop pitch recognition through the distances of various intervals, highlight tonality, and can train guitarists for musical proficiency in multiple styles. In classical guitar practice, the “Segovia scales,” as they are known, have been highly influential among teachers and performers. Segovia said, “scale exercises and mastering any instrument at all are inseparable, and this especially applies. Nothing forms the fingers of both hands better than scales.”¹¹⁰ The scales relate to works of various composers, including Fernando Sor, Dionisio Aguado, and Francisco Tárrega. When fingerings in the original scores are ambiguous, it is recommended to use the Segovia scales.

¹⁰⁹ VeoJam, “John Pizzarelli – Satin Doll at Jazzwoche Burghausen,” April 29, 2012, YouTube video, 5:30, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dj8OYADMfKE>.

¹¹⁰ Andreas Stevens, "Andrés Segovia's Unfinished Guitar Method: Placing His “Scales” in Historical Context," *Soundboard Scholar* 3, no. 1, (2017): 5.

Studying Segovia scales correspond to multiple period guitar styles, including sonatas, fantasies, divertimentos, waltzes, serenatas, dances, etudes, fantasias, fandangos, and preludes.

In commercial styles, *A Modern Method for Scales* by Larry Baione, is a respected instruction book applying to multiple types of commercial guitar.¹¹¹ Baione's method presents a comprehensive approach for scale practice and application. The text stresses using fingerings and scale positions to adapt to various playing contexts. The studies apply to nearly all styles of music outside of the classical guitar.

The scales presented in these methods can be performed with hybrid picking technique. Of particular importance is the pentatonic scale mentioned in Baione's method. Rock, country, bluegrass, and blues music incorporate the pentatonic scale. The standard two-notes-per-string concept of the A minor pentatonic starting on the 5th fret could be a beginning foundation for multiple performance styles – especially when incorporating hybrid picking.

Hybrid picking scales can teach a combination of picking and right-hand finger coordination through multiple styles. A plectrum is typically held by the thumb and index finger. Because the thumb and index finger have the plectrum, the middle and ring fingers can also sound notes alternately or simultaneously with the plectrum. The combination of the plectrum held by the thumb and index finger with notes on higher strings sounded by the middle and ring fingers can lend harmony or melody. A rudimentary approach for introducing hybrid picking would start with sounding two notes on separate strings alternately, as in an octave. The lower string would be sounded with the plectrum, and the adjacent or upper string would be picked with the middle or ring fingers.

¹¹¹ Larry Baione, *A Modern Method for Scales*, (Boston: Berklee Press, 2018).

Arpeggios are pervasive in methods used at the undergraduate level. The arpeggios relate to exercises and compositions and can be used to train a musician's overall musicianship. Three classical methods, including Fernando Sor's Method, the Carcassi Method, and Giuliani's 120 studies for the right hand, are filled with arpeggios in both open and closed positions. In Sor's Method, Opus 44, Twenty-Four Little Progressive Pieces, exercise No. 1 can serve as a solid introduction to the hybrid picking technique (see Figure 1).



Figure 1: Select measures from Fernando Sor's Method, Opus 44, Twenty-Four Little Progressive Pieces, exercise No. 1, arranged for hybrid picking technique.¹¹²

Hybrid picking arpeggios with open chords can train the undergraduate guitarist for multiple styles, including arpeggiated guitar accompaniment. Another introductory approach is from the traditional classical guitar literature of Mauro Giuliani's famous 120 Studies for the Right Hand.¹¹³ In particular, the first ten arpeggio exercises could be used to teach hybrid picking. However, there would be some differentiation between the original instruction of the method about the right-hand fingers. As the index finger and thumb hold the pick, the arpeggios would have to be played with different alterations of the middle and annular finger. Although

¹¹² Mel Bay, *Complete Sor Studies*, (Pacific, MO: Mel Bay Inc, 1994).

¹¹³ Mel Bay, *Complete Giuliani Studies*, (Pacific, MO: Mel Bay Inc, 1995).

PIMA is a standard approach for this example, mastering it using hybrid picking develops the hybrid technique's posture, feel, and sound relating to commercial styles (see Figure 2.)



Figure 2: Excerpt from Mauro Giuliani's famous 120 studies for the right-hand arranged for hybrid picking technique.¹¹⁴

Legato technique, also known as hammer-ons and pull-offs, is an articulation that many guitarists use to bring smoothness and softer phrasing as compared to staccato or picking every note with the plectrum or right-hand fingers. In developing hybrid picking, these can be used to develop speed and precision for several commercial styles, including jazz, traditional acoustic fingerstyle, electric rock, and country guitar. More professional development for hybrid picking would be legato scale and arpeggio exercise.

"After plucking a string with the right hand, one of the fingers of the left hand (not already used for pressing one of the frets) presses a fret causing another note onset. Descending legato is performed by plucking the string with a left-hand finger previously used to play a note."¹¹⁵ Hybrid picking scales and linear arpeggios with legato can conserve energy in performance, especially compared to the rigorous nature of picking every note with the plectrum or the right hand. The technique also creates a smooth contour in phrases with a more subtle

¹¹⁴ David Grimes, *Complete Giuliani Studies*, (Pacific, MO: Mel Bay Inc, 1995), 8.

¹¹⁵ Tan Hakan Ozaslam, and Josep Lluís Arcos, "Legato and Glissando Identification in Classical Guitar," *7th Sound and Music Computing Conference SMC*, (2010), 457.

approach than standard picking. Legato articulations "are not as powerful in energy and have different characteristics in terms of harmonicity, compared to the plucking onsets."¹¹⁶

Closed position scales, which include notes falling on open strings, create a contemporary sound, as found in bluegrass, country guitar solos, and traditional fingerstyle acoustic. Figure 3 shows a two-octave C scale starting in the fifth position, with notes of the scale that fall on open strings. Tablature is essential for teaching hybrid picking scales. The numbers on the staff show when notes should be played open, not fretted. The reason for this is two-fold: the un-fretted notes allow for the timbre of style and dispel any confusion about which note to play and where it should be played.

Figure 3. A fifth fret positioned scale using hybrid picking for a piano-sustain effect. As the performer plays the scale, the open notes sustain to create additional harmonies while a unique legato effect sounds.¹¹⁷

The Carcassi Method, published by Mel Bay, contains a complete series of the Italian master's scales, cadences, and exercises. The scale exercise in the key of C major can be modified using hybrid picking. The open string scenario constructed for this exercise is

¹¹⁶ Tan Hakan Ozaslam, and Josep Lluís Arcos, "Legato and Glissando Identification in Classical Guitar," *7th Sound and Music Computing Conference SMC*, (2010), 457.

¹¹⁷ Created by Keith Cooper.

positioned from the 5th fret. This positioning allows notes to ring on open strings whenever possible. Guitar styles of rock, bluegrass, country, and fingerstyle acoustic incorporate similar scale approaches for efficiency and a specific sound.

Many exercises in Carcassi's method such as the scale below, can apply to country music, acoustic fingerstyle, and modern percussive acoustic guitar styles. Figure 4 shows another aspect of undergraduate classical guitar methods which can be used to develop hybrid picking techniques.



Figure 4: A Carcassi C major scale exercise arranged in fifth position using the hybrid picking technique.¹¹⁸

Countless other recognized guitarists use hybrid picking and legato in many of their solos and compositions. Examples can be found in Brad Paisley's song "Time Warp." Paisley employs a hybrid picking approach at a fast tempo with A Mixolydian and F altered scales. Paisley takes excellent advantage of the open string while fretting notes between the second and seventh frets.

In Figure 5, Paisley's pattern above the fifth fret is pentatonic scale based. Stylistically, Mixolydian tonality often applies to rock music. This is a common scale passage in various styles of guitar performance - including country, bluegrass, and acoustic fingerstyle guitar. The tonality is shared in both jazz and country rock music pertaining to dominant sounds.

¹¹⁸ Mel Bay, *The Complete Carcassi Method*, (Pacific, MO: Mel Bay Inc, 1994), 16.

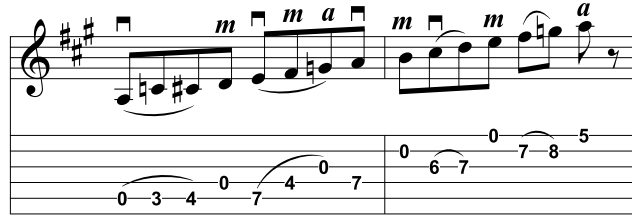


Figure 5: Brad Paisley's articulation of this altered dominant 7th legato riff.¹¹⁹

The first four measures of the song descend on a brisk A Mixolydian scale. After the "A" section, a similar scale pattern comes back rooted in the fifth position but incorporates open strings. The hybrid scale articulation "give some hints for an easier playability of legato techniques" required throughout the rest of the composition.¹²⁰ Chet Atkins employed a similar hybrid scale technique in the tune "Bigfoot."

Tommy Emmanuel's song "Timberlake Road" from the album "Only" employs a similar technique, creating an aggressive acoustic rock sound. This element of Tommy Emmanuel's guitar performance echoes other guitar virtuosos of the past, ranging from Merle Travis to Chet Atkins. Mr. Emmanuel's technique is also reminiscent of many rockabilly guitarists who have recorded on numerous Nashville recordings. These include Brent Mason and Johnny Highland.

The late Stevie Ray Vaughn is often recognized as one of the top guitarists of the last 50 years; he gives a rare solo acoustic performance carrying a steady shuffle rhythm, bassline on the bottom strings, and guitar licks in the style of Robert Johnson.¹²¹ The style of acoustic blues that

¹¹⁹ Brad Paisley, "Brad Paisley – Time Warp (Live on Letterman)," Uploaded November 9, 2010, YouTube video, 4:30, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tHlmYlwUKHU>.

¹²⁰ Jan-Peter Herbst, "Shredding, Tapping and Sweeping: Effects of Guitar Distortion on Playability and Expressiveness in Rock and Metal Solos," *Metal Music Studies* 3, no. 2 (2017): Abstract.

¹²¹ SightNSoundNH, "Stevie Ray Vaughan Acoustic Guitar Solo- RARE Video Footage," Uploaded August 31, 2013, YouTube video, 3:32, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5aS7_QMX_xg.

Stevie Ray Vaughn is playing could not be possible without hybrid picking. The plectrum carries a solid foundation for the bass notes in collaboration with the shuffle feel. His middle and ring fingers pick the top strings of the guitar in triplet fashion producing a wide array of dominant-sounding guitar licks.

In hybrid picking, legato scale and arpeggio practice can be used to develop speed and precision for jazz styles. Since arpeggio soloing was the basis of early jazz improvisations, two-octave arpeggios, including harmonies above the seventh interval, outline chord tones that apply to the harmony.

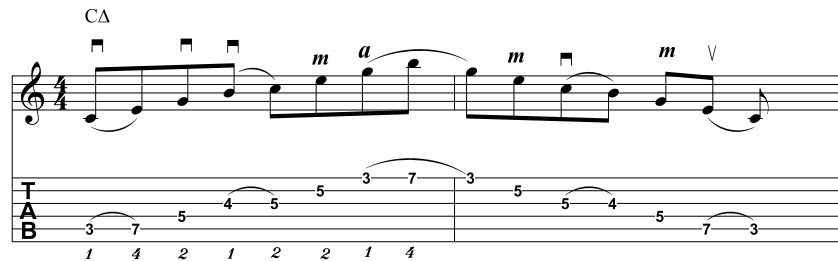


Figure 6: Hybrid picking on jazz-type arpeggios allows smooth articulation through legato and pick movement.¹²²

Julian Lage, a leading contemporary jazz guitarist who graduated from Berklee College of Music, maintains a practice routine where the technique is employed. Like classical etude studies, Lage's daily warmups, including scales, arpeggios, and chord-melodies, frequently display hybrid picking.¹²³

Truefire is a popular website boasting 2,000,000 guitarists who learn many styles and techniques worldwide. *Truefire* claims to be the most popular site for guitar education online. In

¹²² Created by Keith Cooper.

¹²³ Julian Lage, "Guitar Etude #4 by Julian Lage," Uploaded December 28, 2010, YouTube video, 2:37, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SwdZJD5vB_8&t=93s.

a lesson on YouTube, guitarist Tim Miller discusses the best approach to articulating a jazz arpeggio, including higher tertian harmony. The arpeggio, an A13#11, is articulated using hybrid picking. Miller mentions that using conventional picking techniques, he could not play the arpeggio at top speed.¹²⁴

Hybrid Picking Chords and Accompaniment

Hybrid picking is commonly used in modern guitar performance. Live performances, online guitar lessons, and method books reveal the common use of the technique. Many respected guitarists employ the technique for a diverse range of musical styles. Specific execution of stylized scales, arpeggios, and melodic fragments are more accessible with the technique and varies depending on the stylistic dialect. Examples might be the desired sound of electric country guitar and the "chicken pick" sound, or jazz guitar exercises where two and three-octave scales employ the technique. Other common practices of the technique in modern guitar performance are chord accompaniments and chord melodies like the style of Joe Pass.

Chord sequences support the hypothesis because the guitar is used as a significant component of accompaniment in diverse genres. From strumming simple songs to arpeggiating a lullaby, the hybrid picking technique can be a highly versatile aspect of accompaniment. The guitarist has the advantage of the agility of the plectrum, as the middle and ring fingers play the upper strings alternately or simultaneously. Hybrid picking can employ various accompaniment patterns, including strumming, arpeggiating, and syncopated rhythms for a diverse range of styles.

¹²⁴ TrueFire, "Creative Arpeggio Design - Hybrid Picking Approaches - Tim Miller," Uploaded February 22, 2016, YouTube video, 4:05, <https://youtube.com/watch?v=CQSP1QJ1BvQ>.

Gretchen Menn is a contemporary guitarist and composer from San Francisco, California. Her video lesson, "5 Ways to Learn Hybrid Picking,"¹²⁵ published by Acoustic Guitar Magazine, addresses a fundamental approach to playing chords for musical accompaniment. Menn says, "The versatile technique is used across genres—guitarists from Jimmy Page to Jorma Kaukonen have made it an essential part of their acoustic work."¹²⁶ Menn suggests starting with open chords or arpeggios to create more versatility in guitar performance. Menn's lesson could be an excellent approach for commercial music majors whose primary instrument in schools of music is the guitar.¹²⁷

John Scofield uses hybrid picking on a chord melody in jazz/funk style in a YouTube video called "John Scofield Jazz Funk Guitar I," produced by Music Garage. In another video called "John Scofield - Solo | Elbphilharmonie Sessions, he uses the technique in a solo performance to highlight harmonies of an octave from 2:32-2:35.¹²⁸ Another occurrence is around 19:22, where Scofield is playing pure fingerstyle, but he tucks the plectrum into the palm of his hand. After a short melodic phrase, Schofield employs the plectrum between his thumb and index finger and plays accompaniment aspects through 19:47. Chip Stern, a staff writer for *Jazz Times* says that John Scofield "is a champion of an emerging modern style of electric jazz

¹²⁵ Gretchen Menn, "Video Lesson: 5 Ways to Learn Hybrid Picking," *Acoustic Guitar* (February 16, 2016) <https://acousticguitar.com/video-lesson-5-ways-to-learn-hybrid-picking/>.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Music Garage, "John Scofield Jazz Funk Guitar I," YouTube video, Uploaded October 13, 2021, 1:04:46, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mEwUTTK8Veo> and Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, "John Scofield - Solo | Elbphilharmonie Sessions," YouTube video, February 18, 2022, 22:47, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o7DOnWUGn0U>.

guitar."¹²⁹A third time that Scofield makes this shift is on a tune called "Easy for You," arranged by Michael Arbene, from the concert in Stockholm in 2016. This happens between 39:10 and 39:33.

“All Strings Attached” was an iconic concert in 1987 where hybrid picking was employed. The performance featured jazz guitar legends Larry Coryell, Larry Carlton, J. Abercrombie, J. Scofield, and Tal Farlow. On the popular tune ‘Autumn Leaves,’ Tal Farlow (1921-1998) begins with octaves and harmonies using hybrid picking. Another world-famous jazz guitarist, Larry Carlton, displays the technique from 2:54-3:10.¹³⁰

In another selection called "My Romance," Tal Farlow again highlights the technique by creating artificial harmonics by playing over the fretboard. This approach gives the sound of a synthesizer. The technique is shown between 19:19 - 22:39.

In the blues guitar genre, the artist Robert Cray uses the technique in a live performance during the composition "Right Next Door (Because of Me)."¹³¹ His approach highlights two opposite strings, the G and B. The blues-based guitar lick in the 8th position sounds like minor 7th harmonics, with C as a pedal tone. Cray does this to lower volume, reaching a lonesome dynamic level and creating variation in the composition's mood and timbre.

¹²⁹ Chip Stern, “John Scofield: Will the Real John Scofield Please Stand Up?” *Jazz Times* (May 31, 2019) <https://jazztimes.com/archives/john-scofield-will-the-real-john-scofield-please-stand-up/>.

¹³⁰ Amirez, “All Strings Attached /Tal Farlow /Larry Coryell/John Scofield/John Abercrombie /Larry Carlton,” YouTube video, 59:19, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-9krBaXQcGs>

¹³¹ Muzon, “Robert Cray in Concert 2008,” YouTube Video, 47:36, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pgMDJoTh-QM> (3:47-3:52).

Hybrid Picking Diverse Styles of Music

Al Di Meola, an American jazz guitarist who toured with Chick Corea, employs the technique in “Sarabande' Violin Partita No. 1 in B minor” by J.S Bach. This short, famous composition from the baroque period can adequately be performed in traditional classical guitar style using PIMA or with a hybrid picking technique.

On a live version of “All the Things You Are” by jazz icons Pat Metheny and Jim Hall, Pat Metheny uses the hybrid picking during a solo, which can be visibly seen from 2:51 to 2:55 in the video.¹³² "Using a hybrid of pick and fingers can offer the best of both worlds and is a popular choice among many jazz guitarists, including Joe Pass, Pat Metheny, and others."¹³³ For smooth jazz, Larry Carlton with Room 335, SRW Swing Band,¹³⁴ uses hybrid picking in a groovy swing feel with a modern touch. Carlton's solo exhibits wide intervals with a unique country guitar feel.

Hybrid picking is frequently used in chord accompaniments in rock music. Undergraduate guitarists who study hybrid picking on chord accompaniments could be more prepared for diverse commercial styles. A study of the technique could incorporate syncopated rhythms where the plectrum picks the bass notes while the right-hand middle and ring fingers play the upper harmonies on the offbeat. The technique is also displayed in the intro of Eric

¹³² Docbop, “Pat Metheny Picking,” *Jazz Guitar Online* (November 16, 2014) <https://www.jazzguitar.be/forum/guitar-technique/39219-pat-metheny-picking.html>.

¹³³ Jeff Schroedl, “Hal Leonard Guitar Method - Jazz Guitar,” (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard, 2003), Kindle, 8.

¹³⁴ SWR Big Band, “Larry Carlton – Room 335|SWR Big Band,” YouTube video, Uploaded April 27, 2017, 6:40, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pfPs0VwhoYc&list=RDpiQK0IuoTAI&index=7>.

Johnson's famous anthem, "Cliffs of Dover."¹³⁵ Johnson creates a wide array of sonic textures to introduce this composition.

In the chord playing, the plectrum sounds the bottom note while his middle and ring fingers pick the additional harmonic notes on the adjacent string. Johnson uses this to limit the more robust sound of a full strum of the plectrum. The dynamic produced could be seen as more sentimental or intimate in sound than the harsher nature of strumming every chord in a church hymnal, as in block chord style. Johnson's hybrid picking on the chordal harmonies consists of two and three notes. The hybrid picking approach, including Johnson's soft dynamic level, can apply to picking block-style chords, as displayed in a church hymnal. Many guitarists who play pick-style guitar often wonder what to play when presented with a traditional hymn in a worship set. The guitarist can use this technique for block chords – leading to a soft attack rather than the robust sound of a full strum of the plectrum.

Slash (b. 1965) is best known for his acoustic and electric rock playing for the famous band Guns and Roses. In a 2017 performance, Les Paul with Slash accompanies a blues-based backing for a jazzy trio.¹³⁶ Paul performs dominant 9th-based harmonies with a glissando effect as an accompanying technique for the soloist. Paul uses hybrid picking technique with a plectrum held by his thumb and index finger while his ring and pinky fingers sound the upper harmonies with syncopation. In response, Slash showcases a blues solo using single-string pentatonic phrasing. By 1:47 in the performance, Slash harmonizes the third string (G) with intervals of sixths on the first string. Slash performs this by employing the hybrid picking

¹³⁵ Eric Johnson, "Eric Johnson Cliffs of Dover – Live," Recorded live DECEMBER 14, 1988, YouTube video, 6:11, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Nd7EZ3k39s>.

¹³⁶ Chris Lentz, "Les Paul with Slash," Uploaded April 16, 2017, YouTube video, 6:27, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w0QJ2-J-2p0&list=RDpiQK0IuoTAI&index=9>.

technique to keep from sounding the B string. If Slash simply strummed the top three strings with the plectrum, the attack would be harsh, and the percussive nature of the plectrum would detract from the cleaner sound. The technique presented here evokes an authentic blues sound, possibly suggesting honoring some of the earliest African American blues artists. Les Paul (1915-1929) was recognized as a virtuoso commercial guitarist who came up mainly on the electric guitar and is credited with creating multitrack recordings. Les Paul, who employed hybrid picking, is understood to have performed country-rock and jazz guitar for both records and television.

In a live performance recorded on YouTube, world-renowned performer Tommy Emmanuel uses hybrid picking technique to accompany "The Nearness of You." Between markers 1:56 and 2:48 of this performance, Mr. Emmanuel switches from single-string picking to hybrid picking at the downbeat of the cadence. Mr. Emmanuel uses the plectrum for the lower bass notes, while his middle and ring fingers play the upper harmonies with a relaxed sense of time. This approach allows more arpeggiated texture and expands the choices of choral harmonies to accompany the soloist. In this context, hybrid picking creates an adaptable accompaniment with arpeggios, chords, and harmonies on the upper strings. When Mr. Emmanuel switches from accompanist to soloist, the plectrum creates a tremolo effect (2:57-3:00), and the robust sound of the pick plays single lines. The wide dynamic range of Emmanuel's picking techniques may fulfill the expectation of agility and sensitivity in ballad music. The sound and feel of the performance could scarcely be possible with the simple use of the plectrum or with traditional PIMA.

A YouTube video, "Pasquale Grasso - Guitar Lesson - Arpeggios & Comping," shows a new jazz guitar virtuoso mesmerizing audiences. Mr. Grasso discusses a quick tutorial on jazz

chord comping using the hybrid picking technique.¹³⁷ As discussed in this video, jazz guitar players widely use the hybrid picking while comping for other soloists and commercial ensemble performances. Mr. Grasso also mentions in the video that "you can do the same when you want to comp for yourself."¹³⁸ This statement, made by a current jazz guitar icon, underscores the diversity of the hybrid picking technique relating to accompanying styles.

Latin-Style Musical Accompaniment

Truefire offers lessons on "The Latin Guitar Playbook" by Doug Munro.¹³⁹ The video lesson includes instruction about playing three distinct Latin styles of music with hybrid picking, including the mambo, merengue, and rumba. Munro similarly showcases hybrid picking by keeping the plectrum, held by the thumb and index finger on the bass notes, and using the middle and ring fingers to sound the offbeat harmonies on the upper strings.

How Hybrid Picking Polyphony Could Support a Diverse Performance Career

Another approach combining hybrid picking technique and polyphonic music applies specifically to classical and jazz styles. The plectrum is the standard choice for commercial music majors, with guitar as their primary instrument. For commercial music majors who may not be familiar with contrapuntal music, a study in the genre would introduce pick-style players to using the other fingers of the right hand for the upper melodies. At the same time, the pick plays the lower strings. The concept also applies to jazz guitar performance. Great jazz guitar

¹³⁷ MyMusicMasterclass, "Pasquale Grasso - Guitar Lesson - Arpeggios & Comping," Uploaded June 5, 2018, YouTube video, 2:05, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hNzhwTFVAEs>.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 1:46.

¹³⁹ Doug Munro, "Latin Guitar Playbook," True Fire, July 13, 2021, <https://truefire.com/acoustic-guitar-lessons/latin-guitar-playbook/c1696>.

virtuosos have used hybrid picking technique in collaboration with contrapuntal lines. In a PhD dissertation on “Improvising for Solo Jazz Guitar,” James Sherlock writes, "Joe Pass, Martin Taylor, Lenny Breau, and Ted Greene were able to play contrapuntal possibilities that are generally considered unplayable using a pick."¹⁴⁰ For a musically diverse performance career, hybrid picking in polyphonic music could apply to genres of classical music and contrapuntal improvisation lines in jazz. Sherlock writes, "Many players have great success with the hybrid picking method where you hold the pick with thumb and index finger and use your other right-hand fingers (including your "pinky") to achieve a wider contrapuntal style."¹⁴¹

A more advanced selection of Bach's work would be his “Two-Part Inventions,”¹⁴² arranged for solo guitar. Nearly all of Bach's “Lute Works for Guitar” can be used as excellent pedagogy for teaching hybrid picking techniques and the standard repertory of traditional classical guitar music. Some challenges arise in Bach's Lute Works for hybrid picking, as in the case of more than four notes within the harmony.

An example is “Sarabande,” from “Suite No.3 BWV 997.” Some of the introductory chords include four notes simultaneously. When this occurs, a downward strum of the plectrum can suffice, or using the pick and a three-finger approach, which includes the pinky (c). As there is currently no formal practice to hybrid picking technique, many performers practice with the pick and the middle and ring fingers, while others prefer incorporating the pinky for four-part harmony.

¹⁴⁰ James Marcus Sherlock, "Improvising for Solo Jazz Guitar: A Whole-Instrument Approach to Integrating Single-Line and Polyphonic Concepts," (PhD diss., University of Tasmania, 2018), 16.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 17.

¹⁴² Ken Hummer, *J. S. Bach: 15 Two-Part Inventions: Transcribed for Solo Guitar*, (Alfred's Distinguished Performer, 2003), Kindle.

Many well-known pieces of J. S. Bach could be effective studies for classical and commercial guitarists in polyphony. For undergraduate guitarists already knowing musical notation and guitar performance, pieces at the intermediate level would include “Minuets I and II” from the “Cello Suite in G major BWV 1007.” A more advanced study in mastering the hybrid picking technique might consist of “Bourrée,” from the “Suite in E minor, BWV 996,” and “Prelude” from the “Cello Suite in G major, BWV 1007.”

This combination allows the undergraduate guitarist to perform polyphony-based traditional classical guitar repertory, potentially bridging the gap between classical and contemporary music. Sole found that when teaching undergraduate students the music of Bach, "unexpected transformations became an opportunity to implement a responsive pedagogy that became a bridge between classical and popular music."¹⁴³ Bach's music was used for students to experience and process different musical techniques and styles, including "heavy metal, punk, surf, and rap."¹⁴⁴ In studying fragments of Bach's Inventions, Feingold explains that students developed "a sense of melodic and rhythmic continuity, {a} sensitivity to horizontal and vertical relationships between two voices, and {developed} physical and audible stimulation."¹⁴⁵ Sole and Feingold's findings represent critical aspects in general musicianship where hybrid picking guitar could adequately represent a harmonization between standard classical guitar practice and

¹⁴³ Meryl Sole, "Bach Re-Invention: Bridging Classical and Popular Music in the College Classroom," *Journal of Popular Music Education* 3, no. 2 (2019): Abstract.

¹⁴⁴ Sole, abstract.

¹⁴⁵ Shulamith Feingold, "The Preparation of a Holistic Musician: Developing a Musical Ear, Musical Understanding and Sensitivity to Music Through the Teaching of Instrumental Music," *The Reflective Musician in a Global Society* (2008), 62.

commercial guitar techniques. Polyphonic melodies can also train the guitarist's ear to recognize harmony when involved in studio recording sessions for vocalists or live performances.

According to existing literature, nearly all guitarists who graduate from a college music program with guitar as their primary instrument will face a diverse music scene. A wide range of performance opportunities becomes available when a guitarist is exceptionally versatile with techniques that can be employed in various music styles. If the undergraduate guitar curriculum were more inclusive of alternative techniques such as hybrid picking, many classical and commercial music styles could expand multiple playing opportunities that might otherwise be limited by a curriculum solely based on academic traditions. On a popular classical guitar website, a post reads, "There is no salary for a classical guitarist unless one is teaching at a university or some other music school."¹⁴⁶ On another website, a guitar instructor with a master's degree in performance writes, "It's never too late to learn how to improvise. You didn't waste time if you want to learn blues and improvisation."¹⁴⁷

Most undergraduate guitarists graduating with a four-year degree as performance majors typically do not find themselves as full-time performance artists. Professor Kelly A. Parkes, Chair of the Department of Arts and Humanities for Music & Music Education, Teacher's College Columbia University, writes that "most music graduates are not full-time "gigging" musicians; nor are they generating significant income from this activity."¹⁴⁸ Undergraduate guitarists in a limited job market based on a narrow college curriculum often become part-time

¹⁴⁶ <https://www.classicalguitardelcamp.com/viewtopic.php?t=15594>.

¹⁴⁷ <https://www.classicalguitardelcamp.com/viewtopic.php?t=15594>.

¹⁴⁸ Kelly A Parkes, and Brett D Jones, "Motivational Constructs Influencing Undergraduate Students' Choices to Become Classroom Music Teachers or Music Performers," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 60, no. 1 (2012): 104.

guitar instructors. If one is lucky, full-time employment teaching guitar can be found in a music store or in a middle or high school. When this happens, many undergraduate guitarists may be unprepared for a diverse music education practice if their entire four-year curriculum is heavily rooted in standard classical and jazz repertory. In the same article, Fredrickson found "documented differences and suggested that music performance students should have access to more instruction about pedagogy in the private studio."¹⁴⁹ The findings could easily include hybrid picking techniques relating to multiple styles.

The hybrid curriculum can train the undergraduate guitarist for a performance career in terms of repertoire, adaptability, and stylistic diversity. Knowing how to perform simultaneously with the plectrum and fingers prepares the undergraduate guitarist for many styles outside traditional classical and jazz guitar practice.

Delta Blues and Hybrid Picking

The diverse guitar styles of the Mississippi Delta are integral to contemporary music education because Delta music has inspired rock music over the last 70 years. Two main aspects of the Delta guitarists' techniques would be a thumping bass and a performance sounding as if there were two guitars. This was often done when the delta guitarist would sound the driving rhythm on the lower strings with a plectrum and use the other right-hand fingers to play slide blues licks and additional harmonies on the top strings. In Robert Johnson's "Sweet Home Chicago," he starts the tune in a shuffle feel with introductory pick-up notes on the high E string while harmonizing the note on the third string. Johnson does this by picking the G string and

¹⁴⁹ Kelly A Parkes, and Brett D Jones, "Motivational Constructs Influencing Undergraduate Students' Choices to Become Classroom Music Teachers or Music Performers," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 60, no. 1 (2012), 12.

using his other right-hand fingers to sound the notes on the high E string. After this initial lick, Johnson sets forth in a percussive sound of staccato rhythm on the lower strings, clearly expressed with the plectrum. Johnson's authentic blues guitar sound included guitar licks on the upper strings and a thumping rhythm on the lower strings. The sound could not be possible using standard classical PIMA technique because Johnson's sound is particular to the percussive nature of the plectrum - as presented in the 1936 *Sweet Home Chicago* recording.¹⁵⁰

Similarly, it is not probable that a performer using standard picking can produce separate notes on separate strings. One would simply have to resort to a plectrum with fingers to achieve Johnson's sound for the style. Delta repertoire represents a tremendous cultural diversity of the African American population. A popular book including similar styles to Johnson's playing is *Fingerpicking Blues Solos*,¹⁵¹ published by Mel Bay. Each of these could be used to teach hybrid picking.

Adaptability

Adaptability is another critical aspect of undergraduate guitarists trained in hybrid picking. Mellander writes, "research shows that people's tastes and preferences for music vary widely not just across demographic groups but also across cities and geographic areas."¹⁵² Fox and Wince showed "that individuals from small farm towns preferred folk, rock, and country music, while individuals from larger regions preferred jazz and blues music, yet classical music

¹⁵⁰ Irayoswahili, "Sweet Home Chicago," YouTube video, Uploaded October 19, 2007, 3:05, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O8hqGu-leFc>.

¹⁵¹ *Finger Picking Blues Solos*, (Pacific: Mel Bay, 2000).

¹⁵² Charlotta Mellander, Richard Florida, Peter J. Rentfrow, and Jeff Potter, "The Geography of Music Preferences," *Journal of Cultural Economics* 42, no. 4 (2018): 594.

was found among those that are "sophisticated."¹⁵³ For undergraduate guitarists limited by a standard academic curriculum, a potential handicap regarding music performance opportunities exists. Popular music includes new styles, attitudes, and communities. Undergraduate guitarists trained in hybrid picking have an expanded knowledge of repertory and could be adaptable in multiple performance styles.

Performance Venues Where Classical and Popular Music Styles Are Played with Hybrid Picking

Religious music, including contemporary worship songs, black spirituals, and hymns, can employ musicians in weekly performances by houses of worship. These performances often include a worship service, seasonal productions, Christmas musicals, and a summer concert series featuring an artist. Medium to large churches have specified monies to be paid to musicians from outside the congregation to assist in the production of musical performances. Typical guitar strumming with the plectrum would be adequate for contemporary worship music, while hybrid picking could be employed for fingerpicking slower ballads. For hymns and more traditional music, the block-chord style could be played either with full-down strums of the plectrum or using the hybrid style.

Pit orchestras and Broadway shows include both classical and popular instruments. In many Broadway shows such as *Phantom of the Opera*, *Godspell*, *Wicked*, *Rock of Ages*, *MJ – The Musical*, and *Tina Turner Musical*, undergraduate guitarists trained in multiple techniques and styles of music could make a full-time living from playing this genre. Some report that the average weekly salary for a Broadway musician stands at \$1885, or around \$7000 per month.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵³ Charlotta Mellander, Richard Florida, Peter J. Rentfrow, and Jeff Potter, "The Geography of Music Preferences," *Journal of Cultural Economics* 42, no. 4 (2018): 594.

¹⁵⁴ Logan Culwell-Block, "How Much Money Do Broadway Actors Make?" *Play Bill*, (April 16, 2018), <https://playbill.com/article/how-much-money-do-broadway-actors-make>.

The music of Broadway and pit orchestras is written in musical notation with contemporary chord symbols written above the staff. The charts are much more detailed than standard head charts or real book tunes because of the more prescriptive approach of the composers.

Commercial guitar markings, including slides, string-bending, glissandos, and rock rhythms, are placed on or around the musical staff indicating the desired technique and sound. An example of this could relate to shows such as *Rock of Ages*, where 1980s guitar styles are integral to the performance and experience. Special guitar techniques, such as finger-tapping, dive-bomb harmonics, palm-muting, and the pick-scrape, are typically outside the norm of academic curriculum. The hybrid picking technique could answer a diverse range of techniques used in Broadway shows and Musical theater. Teaching hybrid picking lets the guitarist maintain control of the plectrum with the pick and index finger while the middle finger taps notes on the fretboard. A divebomb harmonic is typically played with the plectrum sounding the note as the guitarist uses the tremolo bar to depress the sound. Palm muting is a standard technique in the rock genre and can be played with the simple use of the plectrum. The advantage of hybrid picking is playing additional harmonies with the right-hand fingers while the plectrum mutes a rhythm on the lower strings.

Studio work is far and wide and can include everything from big Hollywood productions to Top 40 radio, to jingles for commercials, and a myriad of other functions where recorded music is necessary. Multiple performance styles are included in studio sessions. These range from singer-songwriter recordings, where the guitarist strums acoustic patterns, electric lead lines in songs, guitar effects for sonic atmospheres, a nylon string guitar to foreshadow a vocal line, fingerpicking for a country ballad, and countless other functions. The studio guitarist must be sensitive to dynamic levels, articulations, improvisation, music theory, and note reading and

interpretation. A hybrid academic curriculum that could be played with one technique, as in the hybrid pick style, could prepare the undergraduate guitarist for the different performance expectations in the studio. In studying classical music, proficient technique, dynamics, articulation, and music notation might prepare the performer for success, leading to future recommendations in the industry. A study of jazz, blues, and Latin music may develop the performer's sense of timing and improvisation, having a "lick" library for hooks, ad-libs, and solos, further adding to the creative approach of the recording.

Why Not Only P.I.M.A. or Pick-Style?

Many guitarists can be bound to one instrument for various reasons, including space limitations or budget. Many young musicians, particularly those starting, may not have the budget for multiple guitars or large amounts of music equipment. Travel arrangements can also restrict the number of instruments and music equipment one can bring. These restrictions are prevalent when guitarists first graduate from an undergraduate program, typically with minimal performance opportunities and large tuition debts. Hybrid picking expands the options for performing on one guitar, where classical and various commercial styles are the expectation.

Popular guitar styles that may come up in various performance opportunities include hybrid picking. Examples might include Delta blues, modern jazz acoustic, country guitar, and fingerstyle acoustic. A second reason for hybrid picking among diverse performance opportunities includes guitar genres where classical PIMA or a plectrum cannot fulfill the style. If undergraduate guitarists are exclusively trained in the two academic approaches, performance opportunities including multiple genres may not be an option.

Stylistic Diversity

A fundamental problem in undergraduate classical music education may be the misconception that the two worlds of classical and popular music are eternally separated - and that there is little possibility of bridging this gap. Allsup writes, "One common misconception classical musicians bring to the study of popular music is that the two art forms exist across a seemingly vast, unbridgeable gulf."¹⁵⁵ This misconception could be rooted in two ideas: one is the adherence to dogma. A second is that classical music is somehow better than popular music because classical music is more complex. In many institutions, "teaching methods seemed to be unquestioned dogma, the mantra of teacher music education," while academic guitar instruction still seems to "remain in a state of infancy."¹⁵⁶

Undergraduate classical guitar techniques vary when studying traditional composers and performers, including Bach, Carcassi, Tárrega, Segovia, and Heitor Villa-Lobos. In the music of J. S Bach arranged for the guitar, various interpretations can include ornamentation, free or rest stroke, right-hand fingering, and key - which could also involve alternate tunings of the guitar strings. Undergraduate guitar teachers also use the works of Dionisio Aguado and Fernando Sor. Still, their works "lack sufficient content, and not all technical aspects concerning the technique of the classical guitar have been covered."¹⁵⁷ Van Der Walt finds that "Sor is of the opinion that the only fingers of the right hand that are suitable for playing are the thumb, the indicio finger,

¹⁵⁵ Randall Everett Allsup, "Popular Music and Classical Musicians: Strategies and Perspectives," *Music Educators Journal* 97, no. 3 (2011): 31.

¹⁵⁶ Gabriel Rusinek, and José Luis Aróstegui, "Educational Policy Reforms and the Politics of Music Teacher Education," *The Oxford Handbook of Social Justice in Music Education* (2015), 84 and Eli Harrison, "Challenges Facing Guitar Education," *Music Educators Journal* 97, no. 1 (2010): 53.

¹⁵⁷ Cornelia Susanna Nielu Van Der Walt, "The Relevance of the Teaching Methods of Dionisio Aguado, Fernando Sor and Andrés Segovia for Guitar Technique in the late 20th Century," PhD diss., 1996., 33.

and medio finger, as these three fingers form a natural straight line in an extended line."¹⁵⁸ This variation among techniques from the classical guitar world shows there can be interpretive differences and ambiguity in some of the pedagogy for classical guitar in an undergraduate curriculum. Other differences can include whether to use right-hand fingernails for sound projection and varying philosophies of sight-reading among teachers.¹⁵⁹

In the study of jazz guitar, there is a focus on improvisation and a heavy emphasis on chart reading and interpretation. Head charts, for example, have been a longstanding tradition since the Swing era and include the melody, time signature, and key, with chord symbols above the staff. It is unusual to find jazz charts with detailed prescriptions as in many classical music scores. A chart in jazz guitar suggests an ambiguity unlike those found in many classical texts. While classical texts often include strict articulation, dynamics, phrasing, tempo changes, repeat signs, and expressive mood, jazz charts have a sketch of the basic harmony and melody. Articulation, dynamics, phrasing, tempo changes, and expressive mood are negotiable.

When hybrid picking technique is included in undergraduate guitar curriculum, it can increase stylistic diversity for the student. If undergraduate guitar programs included a method on hybrid picking technique, or if the instructor required select pieces to be learned using the technique, students who graduate with guitar performance might enjoy stylistic multicultural adaptability solidifying more significant performance opportunities. The National Association of Schools of Music (NASM), which gives accreditation to more than 630 colleges, claim the purpose of receiving their accreditation is "to establish and maintain threshold standards for the

¹⁵⁸ Nielu Van Der Walt, 33.

¹⁵⁹ Jose Luis Passalacqua, "Pattern Perception as a Basis for the Development of Reading Exercises for the Classical Guitar," PhD diss., University of Miami, 2000, 2.

education of musicians while encouraging diversity and excellence."¹⁶⁰ One way to acquire this diversity and excellence in guitar education is the inclusion of hybrid picking in the curriculum.

The study of blues guitar often includes players who use hybrid-picking techniques. Many Delta blues compositions and Chicago-style electric blues licks would be impossible to perform using only a plectrum or traditional fingerstyle without a plectrum. One would have to use the hybrid picking to create the harmony of notes coupled with the attack of the plectrum. The acoustic style of Delta blues and the electric style of Chicago blues would include a diverse study of Robert Johnson, Buddy Guy, and B.B. King.

Undergraduate guitarists who learn hybrid picking can be introduced to the unique aspects of blues music, including the shuffle feel, blues scales, glissando techniques, and microtones in between Western scale pitches. The most authentic way to perform the music of many blues artists is hybrid picking. The feel of shuffle with a pulsating rhythm of blues scale fragments on upper strings is often the result of a thumping bass. A study of this performance style could introduce undergraduate guitarists to blues scales, tempo alterations, feel, and novelty expressions like quarter-string bends, glissandos, and even the use of a slide. Since there is a historical and contextual link between blues music and other styles, including rock 'n' roll, a practice of the hybrid technique can lead to a diversity of multiple styles.

Hybrid Picking Latin Music: Bossa Nova, Farruca, and Tango

American undergraduate music programs may also benefit from teaching more Latin styles because researchers "believe that the development of tools for different music styles is as

¹⁶⁰ National Association of Schools of Music, NASM Handbook, Constitution, 2021-2022, 3, accessed July 17, 2022, <https://nasm.arts-accredit.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2022/04/M-2021-22-Handbook-Final-04-08-2022.pdf>.

important as the development of tools for other languages than English.”¹⁶¹ Latin music can expose students to unconventional harmonic practices, rhythms and syncopations, and musical endings different from other genres.¹⁶²

Undergraduate classical guitarists who study Latin music and the Bossa Nova learn a unique perspective on harmony. McCann writes that the style is "one that sounds most dissonant concerning the major scale, and consistent emphasis on it challenges the rules of Western classical composition."¹⁶³ The style can teach classical music majors a wider distribution of harmony, including chord substitutions, "rhythm (subtle temporal off-sets to create the groove), distribution of patterns, {and} sound."¹⁶⁴

The Bossa Nova is often found in undergraduate jazz guitar curriculum, as evidenced in the Real Book, published by Hal Leonard. Compositions like “Blue Bossa,” “Black Orpheus,” “The Girl from Ipanema,” and “Meditation” are among the most popular. Challenges can arise for undergraduate jazz guitarists who attempt to create a credible feel for the style. Sony writes, "The problem involves choosing the right chords, rhythm patterns, coherently alternating between these patterns, following the tempo of the singer, and rendering all that with an acoustic guitar sound."¹⁶⁵ For undergraduate jazz guitarists who rely on the plectrum or pick style guitar,

¹⁶¹ Carlos N. Silla, Jr, Celso AA Kaestner, and Alessandro L. Koerich, "Automatic Music Genre Classification Using Ensemble of Classifiers." *IEEE International Conference on Systems, Man and Cybernetics*, (2007), 1688.

¹⁶² Eli Harrison, "Challenges Facing Guitar Education," *Music Educators Journal* 97, no. 1 (2010): 50.

¹⁶³ Bryan McCann, "Blues and Samba Another Side of Bossa Nova History," *Luso-Brazilian Review* 44, no. 2 (2007): 24.

¹⁶⁴ C. S. L. 2015. *Sony François Pachet and Pierre Roy*. Paris, France, Adobe Digital PDF. <https://www.francoispachet.fr/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/pachet-15c.pdf>

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

an authentic feel and the sound of Bossa Nova may be challenging at best. Syncopated rhythms across bar lines, with bass notes landing on the downbeats, could be possible with the plectrum. Still, the hybrid picking technique presents less challenge since the available right-hand fingers can play the syncopated harmonies. The Bossa Nova approach originally included the thumb playing bass notes and the other remaining fingers playing the syncopations on the upper strings. Hybrid picking can be viable for plectrum players to bridge this gap.

Another criticism of jazz guitar education is that "jazz musicians rely on a stock of cultural models whose basic types are made up of a further set of structural, temporal, and harmonic features."¹⁶⁶ Studies in compositional aspects of guitar accompaniment in song endings can also prepare students for more stylistic diversity. The Bossa Nova can have an improvised ending communicated by the vocalist. Studies in Bossa Nova may teach students "how to build up slowly by developing a motive and how to end the tune, etc."¹⁶⁷ Learning Bossa Nova with hybrid picking can be less technically challenging than mastering traditional right-hand picking techniques with cultural syncopations while cultivating alternative cadence points.

Aspects of Flamenco guitar often include great left-hand legato ability and body percussion. Some Latin guitarists show that many flamenco techniques and stylistic compositions can be played with a plectrum.¹⁶⁸ Some Farruca compositions arranged for guitar can be valuable for developing right-hand hybrid picking technique and left-hand legato strength. Spark writes, "Ligados are used in rapid scale passages, and for legato playing," which can

¹⁶⁶ Mark Doffman, "Jammin'an ending: Creativity, Knowledge, and Conduct Among Jazz Musicians." *Twentieth-century music* 8, no. 2 (2011): 208.

¹⁶⁷ C. S. L. Sony, 2.

¹⁶⁸ Ben Woods Guitar, "SOLEA with Pick 1 - Ben Woods - Flamenco Guitar with Plectrum, YouTube video, 0:54, January 8, 2019. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JAsfAuvFvh8&t=237s>.

prepare the student for rock-style passages as recorded by famed guitarists Joe Satriani and Angus Young.¹⁶⁹ The techniques are almost identical. The first note on each string could be sounded with the plectrum. This could be used to start the rapid flow of ascending or descending scale passages, whether in Flamenco or rock guitar.

Tango is another variation of Latin music that has been greatly popularized worldwide. Famous composers, including José Ferrer and Astor Piazzolla, have composed well-known tangos that can be played on guitar. Several of their works can be arranged for hybrid picking techniques. José Ferrer's "Tango No. 1," "Opus 19," and "Tango No. 3," as well as other works, seem to work well with hybrid picking. For more rigorous musical training, Astor Piazzolla's "Truinfal" could be a practical challenge in training based on the varied articulation between staccato notes and accented pitches.

Music publisher Mel Bay published a book on *Guitar Tangos – Plectrum Guitar*, where a more efficient approach for the method might be hybrid picking.¹⁷⁰ Using hybrid picking on Mel Bay's tango arrangements would free up the use of the plectrum on the upper strings, where the right-hand middle and ring fingers can play the melody and additional harmonies. This method holds value as the tangos vary from key to key, using standard and drop D tuning. The melodies are constructed using ornaments and occasional left-hand legato for the phrases.

Studies in Latin music teach cultural music performance and composition from the Iberian Peninsula to South America and up through Mexico. While Latin music represents over a billion people, genres like the Bossa Nova and the Tango have become well-known in the United States, as evidenced on television, on the radio, and in a collection of works by many leading

¹⁶⁹ Paul Sparks, "Guitar Performance in the Nineteenth Centuries and Twentieth Centuries," *Performance Practice Review* 10, no. 1 (1997): 7.

¹⁷⁰ William Bay, *Guitar Tangos, Plectrum Guitar*, (Pacific, MO, William Bay Music), 2012.

composers. A hybrid picking approach to this rich catalog can create more stylistic diversity with syncopated rhythms, unique harmonic vocabulary, and further development of the left-hand legato technique.

Various selections from undergraduate guitar curricula and texts could be used to implement hybrid picking techniques widely used in commercial music performances. Most career guitarists who play with a plectrum use hybrid picking for harmonies and melodic lines that include more than one note on separate strings. In modern music education, a diversity of guitar techniques would be needed to perform many current genres of music adequately. Several new guitar styles have been introduced over the past 50 years since guitar teaching methods have become codified in the university setting. Some music could not be accomplished without the hybrid picking technique due to the sound, performance style, and agility. Hybrid picking also allows quick transition between picking and chordal or arpeggio accompaniment for styles both in and outside the academic community.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

Summary of Purpose for Hybrid Picking Curricula

"Musicians in training should concentrate on developing many skills to be versatile rather than to play one kind of music. Current conditions require any number of skills from one person,"¹⁷¹ states Karen Munnelly. The nature of guitar performance has changed drastically since the introduction of the instrument into the university realm over more than 5 decades. Even at the university level, classical guitar is not the only approach to studying the instrument. Today colleges offer commercial music and jazz performance degrees. Over the last 15 years, social media, including YouTube, national television programs, radio, and significant events such as the Super Bowl, have arguably made the guitar the world's most recognized instrument outside the human voice. Because of such technologies, new approaches to guitar performance techniques are showcased in diverse musical genres.

A limited curriculum could present a narrow view of repertory and practice. These limitations can prevent performance opportunities individually and collaboratively, jeopardizing a full-time career. There are limitless performance opportunities for undergraduate guitarists, but much of the work can be highly diverse stylistically. Institutions of higher education that advertise jobs in music upon graduation can do more for performance majors' expectations. Similarly, undergraduate students must be taught diverse styles and techniques applicable to the 21st century job market. Parkes writes, "If the job prospects are potentially dim and career education is absent, then what are the reasons for choosing a career in music performance?"¹⁷²

¹⁷¹ Karen Patricia Munnelly, "Understanding Career & Degree Expectations of Undergraduate Music Majors." (PhD diss., The Ohio State University, 2017), 34.

¹⁷² Kelly A. Parks and Brett D. Jones, "Students' Motivations for Considering a Career in Music Performance," *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education* 29, no. 2 (2011): 21.

Undergraduate guitarists entering the job market, whether in classical music or jazz, should significantly consider developing versatility in more than one discipline.

Undergraduate guitar curricula could do more to implement hybrid picking. Gustavo Assis-Brazil writes, "In some ways, playing [the guitar] using only a pick or fingerstyle limits your potential."¹⁷³ Based on the existing research and data, Assis-Brazil's statement is credible. Styles including blues guitar, country, and bluegrass may not be possible in the authentic sense as the styles definitively show the use of the hybrid technique. Pick-style guitar, and traditional classical styles [PIMA], appear to have adequate educational literature for collegiate training in their respective styles. As guitar performance styles expand in the 21st century, more inclusive approaches could be taken to prepare undergraduate students for a diverse performance career. In some undergraduate guitar curricula, there is an overlapping between classical and popular music literature. Styles that bridge the gap between jazz and classical guitar curriculum are the Latin styles of Bossa Nova and Tango. Many Latin styles can be used to teach the hybrid picking technique.

A wide variety of classical guitar literature can be performed using hybrid picking. These include texts: *The Bach Lute Works for Guitar*, published by Mel Bay, *The Complete Carcassi Guitar Method*, and many pieces from *Solo Guitar Playing* by Frederick Noad. Popular selections like these can be used as a bridge between classical music training and hybrid picking for multiple other styles.

The jazz guitar curriculum, including the style of chord melody and other rhythmic accompaniments between the bass and treble strings, can also be used to train the hybrid technique. Jazz icons, including Tal Farlow, John Scofield, and Al Di Meola, employ hybrid-

¹⁷³ Gustavo Assis-Brazil, "How Hybrid Picking Can Open Up a World of Progressive Possibilities," *Guitar World* (September 2, 2020): 5.

picking technique. Contemporary jazz, funk, and rock guitarists, including Julian Lage, Pasquale Grasso, Cory Wong, and Eric Johnson, use the method pervasively. These guitarists' diversity and popularity could define a 21st-century approach to modern guitar techniques. The findings corroborate the literature review. Maia writes, "The technical features of using a pick, associated with fingers to pluck the strings, as in hybrid picking, results in feasibility and diverse guitar performance possibilities, expanding the scope of varied repertoire."¹⁷⁴

Challenges

Existing methods used in the guitar curriculum have a scarce presentation of hybrid-picking technique. Out of nine standard methods in some undergraduate programs, only three texts mention the hybrid picking technique. Jerry Snyder's *Guitar School, Method Book 2*, uses the term "pinch technique" for two notes that fall on a downbeat, yet does not specify the term hybrid picking. Other methods used in the guitar class curriculum scarcely mention hybrid picking and still focus on playing popular and classical music with either the plectrum or PIMA.

Undergraduate students who desire to learn styles outside the standard curriculum could meet challenges when educators are limited in their knowledge and performance capability outside their specific discipline. This can happen for reasons including dogmatic philosophies of existing styles and unfamiliarity with new techniques by the instructor. In some music schools, "every school music teacher is required to develop basic knowledge and versatility concerning several styles, including popular music, as soon as they begin their teacher education, to fulfill the diverse requirements of contemporary music education."¹⁷⁵ Undergraduate students who trust

¹⁷⁴ Marcos Maia and Carlos Fiorini, "Hybrid Picking Applied to Classical Guitar," *Per Musi* 37 (2017): 2.

¹⁷⁵ Lucy Green, *Music, Informal Learning and the School: A New Classroom Pedagogy*, (United Kingdom: Routledge, 2017), 28.

institutions with high tuition costs should have the right to ask the instructor for assistance in learning music outside the curriculum.

Important Considerations of this Study

Existing guitar literature in undergraduate programs may not be as diverse as needed to prepare students for the current musical landscape. Current research on music education shows that popular music styles have been “historically marginalized in American music education.”¹⁷⁶ In the 21st century, musical styles have exploded into a myriad of performance practices. Some music instructors do not accept contemporary guitar practices; therefore, a once-relevant curriculum may not have room to host new performance techniques and styles. In some music schools, a requirement for instructors is “to develop basic knowledge and versatility concerning a number of styles, including popular music, in order to fulfill the diverse requirements of contemporary music education.”¹⁷⁷

Based on research in social media, guitar publications, and guitar performances in multiple styles, hybrid picking is widely used among guitar enthusiasts and guitar virtuosos. Because of this, there is a need in the undergraduate guitar curriculum for more awareness of unconventional methods.

¹⁷⁶ Vincent C. Bates, Jason B. Gossett, and Travis Stimeling, “Country Music Education for Diverse and Inclusive Music Classrooms.” *Music Educators Journal* 107, no. 2 (2020): 28-34.

¹⁷⁷ Lucy Green, *Music, Informal Learning and the School: A New Classroom Pedagogy*, (United Kingdom: Routledge, 2017), 28.

Limitations of the Study

The limitation of this study is that it examines published pedagogical methods and musical sources and does not consider that some guitar teachers may teach the hybrid method in lessons. Considerations were made based on traditional undergraduate guitar curricula relating to the demands of commercial styles, including stylistic diversity, knowledge of repertoire, and adaptability. These may relate to aspects of a musically diverse performance career, but motivation may be a large part of the success of a performance career in guitar. The study was primarily based on the educational aspects of preparedness in performance careers.

Hybrid picking blends aspects of the significant academic styles, namely classical and jazz. Some classical and flamenco selections might not be adequately performed using hybrid picking. Challenging works in these styles are often written for the specific use of PIMA. Musical aspects of such arrangements could be rearranged to fit hybrid picking, but not all music is about technique - but beauty and uniqueness. Many works are specific to a performance practice, and pick-style, PIMA, and hybrid picking have their applications. Hybrid picking could be the most diverse for the styles and potential performance opportunities presented.

Actions

If guitar educators share a concern about their students' musical and stylistic growth leading to a performance career, it would be advisable for instructors to be more aware of hybrid-picking technique. Many academic institutions encourage continuing education for faculty and staff. Because of this, it could be important for guitar instructors to take advantage of additional knowledge and application in the technique.

If students are limited to one academic style, consider challenging the student to learn techniques, including scales and arpeggios, using hybrid picking. This can also introduce an alternative technique used in most commercial guitar styles.

Thesis Summary

Hybrid-picking technique relates to repertoire, adaptability, and stylistic diversity and is used pervasively in nearly every guitar style. Multiple examples, including repertoire and technique from classical and jazz guitar education, show that these academic styles and a diverse range of other genres, including blues, rock, and Latin, include iconic players who use the hybrid technique almost exclusively. Undergraduate guitarists should be aware of the technique with practical application for its usage. Based on the literature, video footage, interviews, and research, the technique may present more possibilities for undergraduate guitarists desiring a full-time career in guitar performance. Many working guitarists with full-time performance careers find that hybrid picking applies to multiple styles. Classical guitar repertoire and jazz guitar styles can be performed using hybrid picking. Though there are some limitations with the classical and Latin repertoire, this should not discount the teaching and mastery of the method. Some students may find interest in other commercial styles outside of the standard academic curriculum by studying some well-known classical and jazz guitar performers. This is because of the inclusion of unique harmonic functions and syncopation in their respective musical styles.

In the undergraduate music curriculum, students are often required to display excellence in scales and arpeggios, polyphony, and harmonic chord sequences. In his book, *Classic Guitarists*, Jim Tosone speaks of the importance of scales and arpeggios for many guitarists who have enjoyed a successful performance career.¹⁷⁸ Joe Pass, the famed jazz guitarist,

¹⁷⁸ Jim Tosone, *Classic Guitarists* (Jefferson: McFarland & Company, Inc, 2000) Kindle, loc 4.

recommended a practice sequence: “chord, scale, chord, arpeggio.”¹⁷⁹ Because scales and arpeggios can be played with PIMA, this should not exclude the teaching of hybrid picking for these rudiments. Many popular styles where scales and arpeggios are executed with hybrid picking carry a specific sound, feel, and efficiency. It is essential to stress the practice of hybrid picking, especially in commercial undergraduate guitar education.

Examples of artists who play scales and arpeggios using hybrid picking include Chet Atkins, Tommy Emmanuel, Brad Paisley, Eric Johnson, Julian Lage, Gustavo Assis-Brasil, Brian Setzer, and Danny Gatton. Their music and the styles they represent could not be possible without the feel and tempo they perform. Hybrid picking scales and arpeggios to fulfill the diverse styles that these artists represent would be the only answer.

Another reason for teaching hybrid picking with scales and arpeggios is that it teaches the application of the technique for multiple styles of music. The ability to adequately perform multiple types of music could lead undergraduate guitarists to a diverse field of performance opportunities.

In the culture of music education, polyphony is also an important historical function of music. For example, in Johann Sebastian Bach's polyphonic style, most guitar transcriptions would have to be played either fingerstyle or with hybrid picking since the common use of the plectrum is limited to one string or strumming chords. The hybrid technique allows guitarists to quickly switch between picking and fingerstyle. The hybrid picking technique could equip undergraduate guitarists for a musically diverse performance career in the 21st century.

¹⁷⁹ Joe Pass, *Joe Pass Guitar Style* (Van Nuys: Alfred Publishing, 1985), Kindle, loc 129.

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