

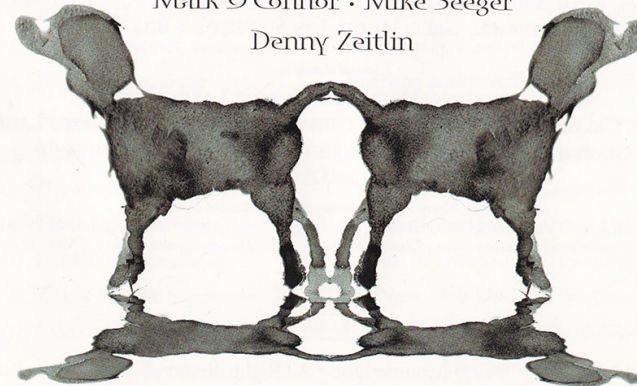


David Grisman

DAWG DUOS

with

Hal Blaine • Jim Boggio • Bryan Bowers
 Bob Brozman • Vassar Clements • Bela Fleck
 Zakir Hussain • Julian Lage • Edgar Meyer
 Mark O'Connor • Mike Seeger
 Denny Zeitlin



ACD-38

DAWG DUOS

Produced by DAVID GRISMAN for DAWG PRODUCTIONS

Executive producer — CRAIG MILLER

Recorded & mixed by DAVID DENNISON at DAWG STUDIOS

"Anouman" recorded by PAUL STUBBLEBINE

Final masters recorded on a custom 1" 2-track analog machine

Mastered by PAUL STUBBLEBINE

Design & layout by D. BRENT HAUSEMAN

Photos by JIM BROWN, JIM CORBETT, D. BRENT HAUSEMAN, R.R. JONES,
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 D'ANDREA PICKS and D'ADDARIO STRINGS

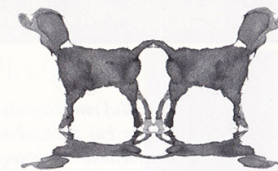
Edgar Meyer appears courtesy of Sony Classical Records

Bela Fleck appears courtesy of Warner Bros. Records • Bryan Bowers appears courtesy of Rounder Records
 Mark O'Connor appears courtesy of Sony Classical Records • Zakir Hussain appears courtesy of Moment Records



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"Like twelve different inkblot reflections, these duo encounters with great practitioners of the acoustic arts inspire unique musical patterns and symmetries. Thanks to all the participants for their splendid interactivity."

DAVID GRISMAN, mandolin & mandola

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|------|
| Track 1. EDGAR MEYER, bass | Mando-Bass Boogie Sonata (David Grisman) | 2:58 |
| Track 2. BELA FLECK, banjo | Clinch Mountain Windmills (Legrand/Stanley) | 5:45 |
| Track 3. BRYAN BOWERS, autoharp | Mandoharp Fantasy (David Grisman) | 3:36 |
| Track 4. HAL BLAINE, drums | Buttons and Bows (Livingston/Evans) | 5:24 |
| Track 5. MARK O'CONNOR, violin | Caprice for CM (David Grisman) | 4:55 |
| Track 6. BOB BROZMAN, National guitar | Trinidadian Rag (Grisman/Brozman) | 4:49 |
| Track 7. DENNY ZEITLIN, piano | Anouman (Django Reinhardt) | 7:05 |
| Track 8. MIKE SEEGER, banjo | John Johanna (Arr. Grisman/Seeger) | 2:52 |
| Track 9. JIM BOGGIO, accordian | Swingin' Sorrento (Arr. Grisman/Boggio) | 4:20 |
| Track 10. ZAKIR HUSSAIN, percussion | New Deli Duo (Grisman/Hussain) | 9:35 |
| Track 11. VASSAR CLEMENTS, fiddle | Mule Skinner Blues (Fimmie Rodgers) | 1:39 |
| Track 12. JULIAN LAGE, guitar | Old Souls (Grisman/Lage) | 6:02 |

Total time 61:26



Edgar Meyer - bass

A skilled composer and master performer, Edgar Meyer has amazed audiences since his teens. As comfortable at bluegrass festivals as he is at chamber music recitals, his collaborative projects range from mainstream country with Garth Brooks and Reba McIntyre through various projects with Bela Fleck, Sam Bush, Mike Marshall, Mark O'Connor and Yo-Yo Ma to orchestral performances at Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center. His compositions have won Edgar critical acclaim and earned him several awards and grants.

Edgar is the Paganini of the arco bass. We met nearly 20 years ago after a DGQ concert in Indianapolis, where he was a teenaged prodigy. Some folks brought him to a party after the gig to play for us. I was astounded then and I remain astounded today. When I asked Edgar if he'd like to record a duet with me, he came for a weekend and we worked nonstop perfecting about four pieces. After he'd returned home with the tapes, he called to say he'd like to redo everything. Not one to deny perfectionism, I took him up on his offer and we recorded again. Edgar inspired this piece—and he was right; we did do better the second time around.

Bela Fleck - banjo

The 5-string banjo once belonged solely to the realm of bluegrass music; then came Bela Fleck. Propelling his original style of music into areas previously unexplored on the banjo, he has performed with a diverse range of musicians including noted jazz artists such as Chick Corea and Branford Marsalis. Bela has won two Jazziz Readers' Poll awards, been voted "Best Banjoist" five years in a row by Frets magazine and won a Grammy along with 10 other nominations.

This is a rare recording of Bela playing without his usual finger-picks, a bare-bones approach that certainly brings out the funky side of Michel Legrand's famous theme "Windmills of Your Mind." I never saw *The Thomas Crown Affair* and had missed out on this tune until Bela suggested we play it. Somehow we managed to turn it into Ralph Stanley's classic "Clinch Mt. Backstep" before grinding to a halt somewhere on the steppes of Russia. It's always fun to hear Bela reinvent banjo playing, which he does nearly every time he picks one up.



Bryan Bowers - autoharp

An instrumental innovator, Bryan Bowers uses a unique five-finger picking style to play the autoharp, a zither-like device with preset, labeled bars that mute strings not in the designated chord. Originally a guitarist from Yorktown, Virginia, Bryan was discovered by the Dillards, who invited him to play at the Berryville Bluegrass Festival. His remarkable technique, infectious humor and engaging storytelling have made Bryan a popular mainstay of clubs and festivals nationwide. Primarily a live performer, his debut recording, released in 1977, has been followed by only three other albums.

Bryan and I go back a long way—lots of hanging out at festivals all over the country. And there was the time he and his wife made a huge breakfast for the entire DGQ (first version) after an appearance in Seattle. I always thought that the mandolin and autoharp were a perfect match and devised this composition to take advantage of each instrument's uniqueness. Bryan's a real soulful singer as well, and we recorded a neat version of the old hymn "Farther Along" which I hope you'll get to hear on a future release.

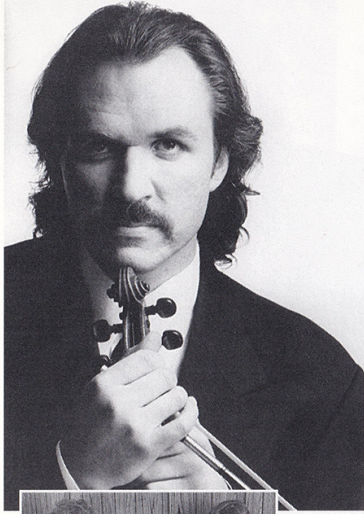


Hal Blaine - drums

Even on an album of luminaries, Hal Blaine's achievements stand out from the crowd. Part of the infamous "Wrecking Crew"—a group of studio musicians who changed the face of the recording industry in the '50s and '60s—Hal appeared on literally thousands of tracks. His "credits" list seems endless and includes Elvis, Sinatra, the Beach Boys, Simon and Garfunkle, John Denver and Phil Spector. He has been awarded an astonishing 362 gold records, eight "Record of the Year" awards—seven consecutively—and Rock and Roll Hall of Fame membership.

This carefree tune, an Oscar winner from *The Paleface*, has stuck with me since I was a kid. One day after a session for *Not for Kids Only*, Hal and I were fooling around in the studio and recorded this version. In addition to laying down a groove that won't quit, Hal has the uncanny ability to come up with the perfect part for any and every song. He had a little trouble with his trusty steed at the end of this cut, but I think he planned it that way. Don't you?





Mark O'Connor - violin

Mark O'Connor joined the David Grisman Quintet shortly out of high school, playing guitar and mandolin as well as fiddle. With roots to both Texas fiddler Benny Thomasson and renowned jazz violinist Stephane Grappelli—and nearly everyone in between—Mark's mastery of many different idioms has earned him respect from every corner of the musical world. An accomplished composer, he also instructs at many schools of music as well as his own internationally acclaimed Mark O'Connor Fiddle Camps.

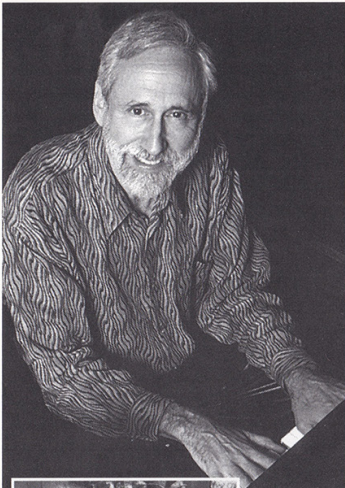
I met Mark in 1974 at a bluegrass festival in Southern California; he was 13 and playing incredibly. A few years later he sat in with my quintet in Seattle, and shortly thereafter hired most of us to help him record a guitar album, *Markology*. When it was time to find a guitarist for our first tour with Stephane Grappelli, Mark was up for the task. He remained in the quintet for a year and a half and helped develop the dawg sound. I wrote this tune for us to play and dedicated it to Craig Miller, my friend and manager of 25 years, who also managed Mark for 10 years.



Bob Brozman - National guitar

The "highest-tech" instrument on this recording, a National Resophonic guitar, belongs to Bob Brozman. Since discovering these art deco-era instruments at age 14, Bob has made them the subject of a lifelong study, literally writing the book on their evolution. For the last 20 years, Bob has toured extensively throughout the U.S., Canada and Europe. Along the way, he developed an interest in Hawaiian-style music recorded from 1915 to 1935, and has produced five reissue albums of the best of this genre.

Bob Brozman truly is "Mr. National Guitar"—no one has done more to popularize and promote these unique steel-bodied instruments in recent times. His musical proclivities are equally eccentric and embrace a variety of styles and genres including Hawaiian, blues, early swing and calypso, which influenced the original tune heard here. To complement Bob's sound, I played a National mandolin on this cut. Early in 1999 Bob and I, along with dobro expert Mike Auldridge, got together to record *Tone Poems III*, capturing the sounds of the great resophonic and slide instruments.



Denny Zeitlin - piano

Denny Zeitlin is undoubtedly one of the few psychiatrists who claims Bill Evans as a major inspiration. A classically trained pianist, Denny has pursued jazz with a passion that sustained his interest even while studying medicine at Johns Hopkins University. With a distinctive style that is both inventive and complex, he began his recording career in 1964. Since then, he has earned dual recognition as an acclaimed pianist and highly regarded psychiatrist living and working in San Francisco.

I discovered Denny Zeitlin on his first LP *Live at the Trident*, which I found in Dayton's record store in New York City circa 1965. Twenty years later I met him through George Marsh, the great drummer who has worked with both of us.

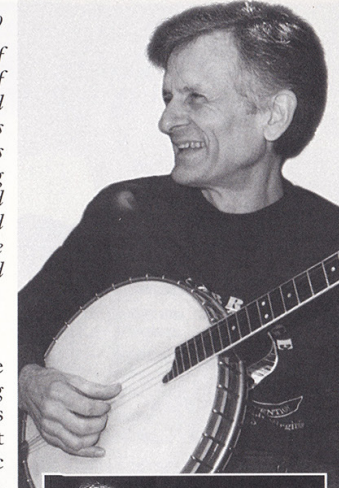
We did some jamming together and even played a duo gig at a San Francisco Jazz Festival in the '80s. Denny's impeccable chops, combined with his highly developed harmonic sophistication and rhythmic intensity, make him one of the great jazz pianists of our time. "Anouman" is a seldom-heard masterpiece written and recorded by Django Reinhardt shortly before his untimely death in 1953.



Mike Seeger - banjo

Mike Seeger has devoted his life to the pursuit of traditional folk music. He is a founding member of the New Lost City Ramblers, an influential band that brought authentic string-band sensibilities to the young folk movement of the '50s and has performed into the '90s. In addition to playing several different instruments, Mike has produced over 30 documentary recordings. He has earned recognition from several institutes including the Smithsonian Institution, the Rex Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Mike's been one of my heroes since my days as a teenager attending New Lost City Ramblers concerts in New York. He also produced the first bluegrass record I ever heard, the classic *Mountain Music Bluegrass Style* on Folkways. We've gotten to know each other more recently as peers and enjoy getting together to make—and talk about—music, and joined forces with fellow old-timer John Hartford to produce *Retrograss* in 1999. The mandola and banjo are a perfect combination of sonorities; Mike uses the Dock Boggs tuning here to play this tune popularized in the '20s by Kelly Harrell.





Jim Boggio - accordion

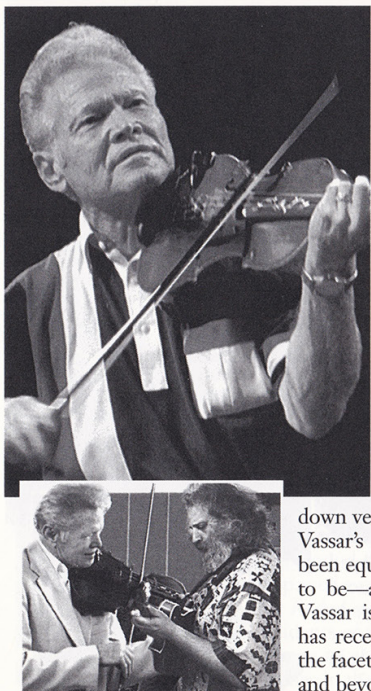
The late Jim Boggio was the self-proclaimed "King of the Stomach Steinway," a typically wry comment from this accomplished accordionist. Trained at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, he played for years in the large hotel show-rooms of Las Vegas and Reno. After moving to California, he cofounded the Cotati Accordion Festival in the '80s, an annual gathering of fellow enthusiasts. Jim performed with groups such as the Swamp Dogs, Alto Madness and Dan Hicks and his Acoustic Warriors.

The first dollar I earned in the mandolin business came from playing this tune. Walking down the street in 1961, I was flagged over by an Italian wedding party who noticed that I was carrying a mandolin; they offered to pay me to play one song. I ran home, figured out "Sorrento" from memory, then ran back and played it for the wedding guests. Jim Boggio was a good friend and a masterful accordionist. Sadly, he passed away in 1996, the day after recording a session for Rudy Cipolla. Portrait of an American Original. The residents of Cotati, California, where Jim lived, raised money to erect this bronze statue which permanently resides in the town square.

Zakir Hussain - percussion

As soon as he was able to sit up, Zakir Hussain began learning the drums. His father was the tabla player for famed sitarist Ravi Shankar, a position Zakir took over while still in his teens. In addition to hundreds of classical Indian sessions, he has worked with Mickey Hart, John McLaughlin, Van Morrison, Jefferson Starship and others. His own group, Rhythm Experience, has been described as "pan-cultural percussion" and is a reflection of his involvement in world music.

I listened to a great deal of Indian music in the '60s and one of my favorite recordings from that period featured Ali Akbar Khan and a teenaged Zakir, son of the great Alla Rakha. Today, at age 48, Zakir is considered the best Indian percussion on the planet. This piece, the first music we ever played together, was recorded at a session coproduced by my flutist, Matt Eakle. I guess it's as close to the experience of playing a raga as I'll ever come. I switched from mandolin to mandola in the middle of this tune; can you tell where?



Vassar Clements - fiddle

In a career that spans over 50 years, Vassar Clements has performed with such diverse talents as Bill Monroe, Paul McCartney and the Grateful Dead. One of Monroe's Blue Grass Boys from 1949 to 1956, Vassar left to fiddle for Jim and Jesse McReynolds for five years. The 1972 recording Will the Circle Be Unbroken introduced him to a new generation, and his career as a soloist and group leader has continued to grow.

Vassar helped Bill Monroe record his classic rendition of Jimmie Rodgers's "Mule Skinner Blues" in 1950 and 23 years later we played it together in Old and In the Way (released on Breakdown, ACD-28). This duet rendition of the tune is a stripped-down version, yet it still conveys the Monroe feel. Vassar's impassioned, bluesy playing has never been equaled and has always been—and continues to be—an inspiration to me. Today, at age 71, Vassar is showing no sign of slowing down and has recently rededicated himself to exploring all the facets of playing bluegrass, western swing, jazz and beyond.

Julian Lage - guitar

Julian Lage began playing guitar at age five; by seven he was performing with jazz and blues artists throughout the San Francisco Bay Area. He has studied classical guitar and theory at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, jazz theory and improvisation at Sonoma State University and performs with his own quartet. He is the subject of the 1997 Academy Award-nominated documentary "Jules at Eight."

Ultimately the fate of all art is up to the artists of the future. Meeting Julian Lage (now age 11) has been a wonderful experience and guarantees to me that the future of the art of jazz guitar is in great hands. Unlike other prodigies that I've encountered, Julian seems to be as highly evolved in every other area of his life as he is musically. He is also quite possibly the happiest human being I've ever met. When I invited Jules to participate in this project I didn't realize that it would be his recording debut. I'm honored to have provided him with what will surely be the first of many settings to display his prodigious and soulful talent. Remember, you heard him here first.

