



## Chiem's Corner

### MUSIC REVIEWS & EVENTS

## Ross Goldberg shares his continuing musical journey

### Mostly in practice mode

Ross Goldberg, a Mass. native currently of Scarborough, ME, will be sharing his music and musings at the Somerville Poetry and Music Series August 13 at The Sherman Café.

A veteran musician, Goldberg said, "My musical journey has been happening for over 40 years and the time has been woven together by threads of frustration, the day-to-day and joy." For example, Goldberg said, "Sometimes I pick up the guitar and I feel like I have completely forgotten how to play and my musical message is meaningless. Other times I gather my instrument in my arms and we join in the blending of music and thought, action and idea, message and melody."

Goldberg considers himself to be mostly in practice mode. He said, "I recently began taping my practice sessions because the moments that become most joyous are usually surrounded by the mundane."

### Having a Taylor and an amazing place to play

When Goldberg and his wife, Rorie Lee ("Rorie"), moved to Maine, Rorie bought him a Taylor guitar as a gift. This guitar and the beautiful surroundings have had an impact on Goldberg's music. He said, "Having a Taylor with its rich sound and an amazing place to play has gone a long way to helping me practice every day, even if it is just to open the case and touch the strings." Also, he said, "Taylor Guitars (<http://www.taylorguitars.com>) offers guitar clinics all over the country. We have been going to the clinics locally which have brought the Taylor clinicians to Maine and practically around the corner. Each time we attend a clinic I learn something new about my craft."



Ross Goldberg plays a tune for his devoted fans.

Everything is an instrument

"Everything is an instrument," said Goldberg. He said, "I walk around in stores picking things up and striking them to hear the sound they make. I once bought a metal bowl because it resounded so beautifully. I play it like a bell." Also, "A walking stick, held at various places up and down the shaft resonates in multiple tones when you strike the pavement."

In addition, "The grooves cut into the side of the highway to wake you up if you drift off the road make a sound using your car as a bow. You could actually tune the bumps if you wanted by cutting them closer together or further apart in the roadway or varying your speed."

Goldberg said, "Music is choreographed surprise. — You generally know where it is going but now and again you hear something that causes you to pay attention in a new way. Paying attention is how we learn. You never know what is going to inspire you."

The Scarborough Open Circle

"I play to quiet my mind," said Goldberg, "and my songs are

about the things that come in and make me smile warmly inside or contemplate simple truths. I also play to have fun!"

Goldberg has 4 guitars, three of which are playable (one, a handmade guitar requires its neck to be reset from time to time). Goldberg keeps one for open tuning and tends to play his Taylor 810 CE or his wife's nylon string Alvarez cut-away. He said,

"The Taylor has amazing tone quality and can sustain a note practically forever. The Alvarez in a small format guitar and is quieter but still plays with presence and a bright character."

Goldberg participated in what was called an "Open Circle" for musicians, when he was in PA. It gave him the idea for starting one in Scarborough this past Spring. At the PA Circle, he said,

"Many area musicians, poets, story tellers and singer/songwriters come and blend in with the local amateurs giving everyone an opportunity to engage in a blending of many levels of experiences; from the seasoned professional to the timid beginner. It is a great experience in spite of the smoke and noise."

The Scarborough Open Circle

my mind to my performance."

"Sound is part of nature," said Goldberg. He said, "[M]usic is the shaping of that natural resource into a natural expression. He said, "When playing for an audience my most cherished moments are when I can play the way I play when I am alone — to be able to bring the full quiet in