

GUITAR WORLD

International Guitar Night's Fiery Acoustic Extravaganza — Show Review

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by Laura B. Whitmore

This year I moved from California to Massachusetts.

Many folks have expressed how I must be crazy to leave the mild and sunny weather to venture to the snowbound north.



And it's true, there are some days (and nights) when it seems just too cold to go anywhere. Saturday was one of those nights.

But somehow I mustered the energy to wrap myself in layers and scarves and venture forth to check out the International Guitar Night performance in Natick, MA at the wonderful TCAN performance center.

Totally worth it!

The show, put together by guitarist and master performer Brian Gore, was delightful and surprising and fun.

The performance is built around four acoustic guitarists — Gore, classical innovator Andrew York, Brazilian jazz icon Diego Figueirido, and contemporary Iranian-Canadian steel string wizard Maneli Jamal. It was love at first note.

Gore opened the show with selections from his album, *Wine Country Tales*. Each song has its own backstory and is translated with passionate taps, rhythmic slaps and some really gorgeous fingerstyle playing. From lovely, melodic subtleties to boomy body slaps, Gore grabbed the audience's attention from the first note to the last.

Next up was the comical and incredibly talented Maneli Jamal. Wow. With stories from his upbringing translated to innovative guitar delivery, Jamal stunned with his intense frenetic ethnic flare, and even his artfully placed pauses. His story delivery was also spot on and so fun to hear.

Following Jamal was a true virtuoso, jazz guitarist Diego Figueirido. Yes, we were all mesmerized by his amazing head of hair. But it was his incredibly fluid and natural performance style, his sense of true enjoyment as he dazzled us and his good-natured entertaining approach that truly grabbed us. Wow. I don't even know what else to say. Seemingly effortless and thoroughly fabulous.



Rounding out the lineup was Grammy Award-winning classical guitarist Andrew York. While a more traditional player than some of the others that evening, York's tone, subtle emotion and nuanced expression ranged from mellow to spritely. Simply gorgeous.

After a short break the real fun began as the performers played together in a variety of configurations. My favorite came as the quartet of performers all played together on the innovative train ride of a song "On The Run," by Manelia Jamal. Each performer contributed to the sonic story, with his own piece of the puzzle summing to a roller coaster ride of a song. I think I fell in love.

Another super fun moment came as Jamal and Figueirido paired up for the latter's original composition, "Bee." Some super speedy fingerwork ensued, with both players diving in for a flighty rush.

Overall the evening was exhilarating, with each player's unique performance style contributing to a whole that was refreshing and well rounded.

The quartet has lots more dates coming up in the U.S. Don't hesitate to check them out if they're in your neck of the woods.