

HEALING OUR WORLD

TRUTH

***It's never
too late to
get it back.***

Truth: Reclaimed

ALSO: POP Campaign Update, Genetically Modified Foods,

Raising Children's Consciousness, Cancerous Protein Powder,

Raw Food in High School, The Linda Morin Interview AND MORE!

THE FIRST LADY OF THE GUITAR

The Liona Boyd Interview

by Alissa Helene



Liona Boyd, “The First Lady of the Guitar,” gave her first “concert” at age eight in a talent competition. At age thirteen she asked her parents for a guitar as a Christmas present. After hearing a concert by the great English guitarist, Julian Bream, Liona was determined to master the instrument. She has since introduced millions of people around the world to classical guitar, releasing twenty recordings, many of which have gone gold and platinum. Recently, Liona graduated from the Life Change Program at Hippocrates Health Institute.

Tell us about your stay here at Hippocrates Health Institute (HHI).

Ever since subscribing to “Healing Our World” magazine I’ve wanted to find two or three weeks in my busy schedule to treat myself to a stay at HHI. When I saw an opening this past February, I jumped at the opportunity. It was truly a life changing experience—and one that enabled me to finally let go of my sugar and caffeine dependencies.

Staying at HHI felt akin to being back in university, always so many fascinating lectures and workshops to attend, and with like minded people. Drs. Brian and Anna Maria Clement’s talks were particularly enlightening and I treasure meeting them and their smiling children. I was one of the fortunate guests who had come seeking to prevent rather than to heal disease, and when I heard other visitors recounting their struggles, it made me more grateful than ever for the good health I’ve always enjoyed. The staff were incredibly kind, and the living food banquets were scrumptious. Eating sprouted food so full of life and nutrition made me wonder why humans feel the need to eat and abuse living creatures—and slowly destroy our once beautiful planet in the process.

The Hippocrates Life Change Program involves examination of blood samples through a high-powered microscope. The magnified image is displayed in real time on a large video screen. When I arrived, my blood cells were clumped together from too much sugar. After just two weeks at HHI, the cells were floating freely. What more graphic evidence could there be that my health was improving?

As a lifelong vegetarian, I had always believed my diet was healthy. It has certainly been better than most, but harsh Connecticut winters had me accustomed to my “comfort drink” of hot chocolate, not to mention my three or four daily cups of British tea with almond milk and honey. After my stay at Hippocrates Health Institute, I’m thrilled to have kicked my sugar and caffeine habit and I shall now be keeping warm with herbal teas, and enjoying the best drink of all...water!

Where do you draw inspiration for writing romantic music, outside the realm of personal relationships?

I find inspiration in many places; something that deeply touches my heart, an ephemeral vision, a memory of a beautiful place I’ve visited, a haunting rhythm or melody that suddenly comes to me when I least expect it. Most of my music over the years has been purely instrumental and I’ve composed in many styles: Classical; Baroque; Spanish; Orchestral; Latin; film scores and most recently, *Seven Journeys, Music for the Soul and the Imagination*, which was a mystical and “guided” project from start to finish. I’ve worked with many sound studios in many countries, but this time the producer and orchestrator, Peter Bond, made my guitar sound as close to heavenly as a guitar ever will.

Universal Music described it as “Vangelis meets Enya meets Morricone.” I know this particular music has a spiritual dimension, unlike anything I’ve ever done before, and I’m delighted that HHI will be carrying it in their store and using it for their healing therapies. **CONT’D ON P. 37**

THE FIRST LADY OF THE GUITAR, CONT'D FROM P. 35

Only your recent music has featured your voice. Would you like to talk about that?

About ten years ago I noticed that when I played guitar, the fingers on my right hand were not as agile as they used to be. Naturally, I practiced more and more to remedy the problem. In hindsight, this was the worst thing I could have done. After a few years of consulting every imaginable doctor, therapist and quack, the National Institutes of Health in Washington, DC, diagnosed me as having the “incurable neurological disease” of Task Specific Focal Dystonia, and tried unsuccessfully to treat me with Botox injections. I was absolutely devastated. There was nothing wrong with my fingers, but through over-practice, the neuro-receptors in my brain that handled guitar-specific movements had been overtaxed and the brain maps had become “smudged.” This happens to many concert performers on every instrument. It’s a tragic irony that doing the thing you most love can lead to this condition. Knowing I still had so much music to share with the world, I decided it was time for a fresh start. I left Los Angeles, divorced my husband who could not understand my artistic obsession, and set off on a journey to find a way to keep the guitar in my life.

In a moment of epiphany, I decided to simplify my technique and to write songs with lyrics. I realized I needed to sing to make my music flow again, so I began writing and recording songs. While I could still play certain classical guitar techniques perfectly, my fingers no longer flew around the strings on auto-pilot. Focal Dystonia forced me to put my career on hold for several years, and now I’m trying to rebuild the success I once had (I’d sold millions of CDs in my “virtuoso” days) and I’m excited to be performing again.

Was there a hesitation early in your career to sing?

Yes. It actually goes back to my childhood. I was thrown out of my English school choir in London when I was seven and told I couldn’t sing. I was so insecure about my voice, I used to lip synch “Happy Birthday”! I wrote many songs thinking I’d never sing them and used to be envious of singers, believing singing just wasn’t in my cards in this lifetime. Those judgmental words from my teacher and from others made me unable to even attempt singing. Even my own family seemed to confirm that opinion. It was very difficult to let go of this false belief and I tried everything from Hypnosis to Emotional Freedom Technique. Now that I’ve worked through those insecurities, I find I love singing and I’ll be performing on stage in two months time. I’m very excited—a bit apprehensive, of course, but I’m glad I improved my diet in time to get into fighting form!

How has this newfound love for singing shaped your life beyond the recording studio?

Reinventing myself as a singer at this stage in my life took an enormous amount of effort and strength and blind faith. I had to overcome not just external negative forces, but my own insecurities about whether I could really make it happen as I was plagued by doubt. Now that I’ve been able to conquer this and last year recorded “Liona Boyd Sings Songs of Love”, a collection of seventeen beautiful love songs (distributed by Universal Music), I have learned to truly appreciate my own voice and I’ve discovered my own singing style. I’ve written poetry since I was five years old, so writing the lyrics came naturally and was a real joy.

As I relaunch my career as a singer/songwriter/guitarist, I am realizing how Focal Dystonia, which I had thought of as a curse, is turning out to be the biggest blessing in my life and an exciting new challenge. This ostensible setback has presented me with possibilities I had never dreamed of. My goal is to prove, by example, to other middle aged women and men that if you are truly determined enough you can make a seemingly impossible dream come true, whatever your biological age.

Performing at my Hippocrates graduation ceremony was a real pleasure. It was also the very first time I’d sung alone before a live audience. I chose a song I’d written about the struggles of a lonely little seabird bravely fighting storms, cold winds and other forces before finding the warm land and the welcome of other flocks. The challenges my seabird faced parallel those many of the guests at the institute have had to deal with. I’m sure we all feel like the “warm winds” have eventually blown us to a safe haven when we arrive at HHI!

You’re also a painter and a poet. Can you tell us more about these creative outlets?

I’ve always been a very creative person. My parents encouraged individuality in all their children. I suppose I inherited their artistic talents as I love to dance and paint, although music has always been my biggest passion. Of all the arts, I believe music touches our souls at the most profound level. It can be stimulating, annoying, joyful, painful, nostalgic, exuberant or haunting. The right music can inspire, soothe, relax and heal us—even under the insane conditions of modern life.

I’ve always enjoyed writing and I love coming up with words, music and rhymes that magically fit together. In order to give my fans a glimpse behind the scenes in a concert artist’s life, I wrote an autobiography in 1998, *In My Own Key*, my Life in Love and Music. I also write poetry and there are a few samples along with some paintings posted on www.LionaBoyd.com. **CONT'D ON P. 48**

What was the most rewarding moment in your musical career?

Ah, there have been so many! Once a man's dying wish was to hear me play Malagueña and his children in Quebec managed to track me down. They had a camera by his hospital bed and filmed his reaction as I spoke to him and played the song over the telephone. He died soon after and his children later sent me the video. My phone call and song had put a big smile on his face. What a great gift he gave me.

I've performed for native children in remote outposts in Northern Canada, for the people in mother Teresa's hospice in Calcutta and for many charities in various countries. Giving private recitals for the Queen and my friend Prince Philip, and being a house guest at their Windsor castle home...well that was a thrill!

When people are given talents, I now realize more than ever how important it is to live with tremendous humility and appreciation, and to not take any of it for granted. I'm so privileged that for the last 30 years my music has touched people all over the world.

All the places you've lived, most recently Miami and Connecticut, have been near water. What role does that sacred element play in your music—and in your life?

I'm a water sign, specifically a "moonchild" (Cancer), born in July, and have always found solace and inspiration in both the moon and closeness to water. I take any opportunity to be near water—whether it's a lake, a river, an ocean, or bathing in a lovely warm mineral pool like I found at HHI! My producer and I used real water effects to enhance the music on *Seven Journeys* as it's very peace-inducing. You can hear waves, rain and lapping lake sounds that were recorded live. My houses in Miami and Toronto were both right on the water. I installed a waterfall in my LA home and lived one glorious year in a Malibu beach house.

Whenever I eventually find my soul mate, I'd love for us to have a home that looks out to water. I also rhapsodize over great sunrises and sunsets over the water, as Mother Nature is the very best artist of all! Our bodies are mostly composed of water, and I try to drink it throughout the day.

Can you tell us what it's like as a woman in a male-dominated profession?

It has not always been easy to be a woman in the guitar world. I'm a sensitive romantic dreamer, and I have often wished I didn't have to deal so much with the business side of things. In my autobiography I recount many situations where I was not taken as seriously as my male counterparts,

even though I could often play circles around them. In the 1980s, while renegotiating a deal with a prominent record label, their lawyer asked me why "a woman like me" would need royalties. He said, "You have a rich boyfriend. So why do you even care about your royalty rate?" The big labels were notorious for neglecting to pay classical artists their due royalties. Other managers and agents in LA employed the old "casting couch system" which cost me—and surely many other women of integrity—untold career opportunities. In spite of these chauvinistic industry politics, I managed to appear three times on *The Tonight Show with Johnny Carson*. In all fairness, I probably had more opportunities for magazine covers and TV specials precisely because of being a woman. Being an independent woman with my own label, I was in some ways a pioneer. Women composers and performers can bring sensitivities and energies to music that men just can't offer. We are the healers, after all, and have a very special role to play.

Would you like to share some insights into your creative process?

When I compose a classical piece or a song, my best work materializes when I'm expressing a true feeling. When I don't feel that natural, God-given inspiration flowing and it starts to feel like work instead of fun, I've learned to hang it up, because I know it won't be my best work. So there's a degree of honesty there—honesty with myself.

As a composer, I'm aware that I tap into some other dimension in the process. In some of my best concert performances I've had what felt like an "out of body" experience—as though the music was effortlessly flowing through me. And now it's interesting that many of my best lyrics were written while flying on planes. Maybe being freed from the earth's gravity lets go of something deeper inside us. Perhaps escaping the distractions of modern life triggers a creative release—while high above the clouds!

Your music is very emotive. Can you talk about how human emotion affects great music—and the effect music can have on the human condition?

Art, and particularly classical music, always finds a way to enrich our days and refine our emotions. One cannot write phony music or it simply will not ring true in people's hearts. A great melody is not something a computer can spit out—it needs a human emotion to create it. Maurice Jarre told me how he came up with "Lara's Theme" after many failed attempts. The director, David Lean, desperate for the love theme of his epic film, *Dr. Zhivago*, finally asked Jarre to take his new girlfriend up into the mountains for the weekend and not even think about music.

Miraculously, Jarre came back with that incredible theme. One of my best melodies ever, "Lullaby For My Love," was inspired by falling in love. When you write something holding love in your heart, it seems to flow effortlessly, as though one has tapped into a divine well of creativity. Ironically, when suffering heartbreak and anguish some of the most profound music also comes forth. Great examples of this are Beethoven's great symphonies and Rodrigo's *Aranjuez Concierto*, the slow movement of which was written after the death of his infant son. Experiencing either end of the emotional spectrum seems to draw the best music out composers.

So much of today's pop music has a plastic, disposable sameness. Much of it is not healing to our souls and indeed has quite the opposite effect. Although I'm obviously prejudiced, I sometimes think there's nothing more evocative than a simple voice and an acoustic guitar!

At HHI, music plays a subtle role in healing. The wind chimes, drum circles and ambient massage music are all highly therapeutic. The peaceful surroundings at the institute also lets one hear the voices of nature: the splashing water in the Oasis therapy center's fountain; the early morning birdsongs; the evening crickets. It's a lovely tapestry of sounds indeed. As you can see I'm already missing Hippocrates! 🍵



We deliver and ship the most savory + life-giving sprouts!

Alberto Zizzi grows the freshest mineral + nutrient rich wheatgrass, sunflower, pea green and buckwheat sprouts for over 30 years now.

UNIVERSAL LIVING SPROUTS, INC.
 561-795-2554
 alberto@ulsprouts.com
 www.ulsprouts.com
 6238 Royal Palm Beach Blvd.
 Royal Palm Beach, FL 33412



PEDDLER'S WAGON®



Solar Ovens • Garden Tools
 Stainless Steel Water Bottles
 Canning & Preservation Wares
 and More!

Low Impact Green Goods
 for the Urban Homesteader

PeddlersWagon.com



Homegrown Revolution®

The Film that Seeded
 the Urban Homesteading
 Movement Worldwide
 -- by *Path to Freedom*

**DVD available at
 HomegrownRevolution.com**

Got Sprouts?


Quality
 Wheatgrass,
 Sprouts, Juicers
 and Seed.

"We Ship & Deliver"



561-689-9464

www.GotSprouts.com



FOOD WE CAN ALL LIVE WITH

Vegan
 Raw
 Bistro

Innovative specials daily

8020 S. Dixie Highway
 West Palm Beach, FL 33405
 Open for lunch & dinner W-Sat
 Phone: 561-586-2622
 Fax: 561-586-2259
 website: www.darbster.com