

Seeing Double!

An Introduction to the Double Strung Harp

Presenter: Lee Timer

Email: harplayer55@gmail.com

Intro: Little Welsh Home of Elenor Plunkett

Quick/brief introduction of the Presenter:

Welcome to Harp Gathering 2022! My name is Lee Timer, and I'm so happy to be here with you! Today I am here at the HG to facilitate some introductions. To have an opportunity for you and I to meet each other, but more importantly for you to meet and greet a beautiful instrument: an instrument with a very interesting history, and a BEAUTIFUL voice: The Double Strung Harp! I am also hoping to connect you to the many talented builders of these beautiful harps...and to the teachers and composers who help us bring this instrument to life!

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank a few important people:

Gary and Eve Stone at Stoney End Harps for sponsoring our time together

Denise and Mike Grupp-Verbon for inviting me to be here with you today.

And all the wonderful double strung harp players and teachers on whose shoulders I am standing here today: Laurie Riley, Liz Cifani, (who in 1990 facilitated the resurgence and renaissance of the modern double strung harp), Carolyn Deal, Cindy Shelhart, Anne Crosby Gaudet, Karen Peterson, Jesse Autumn, Tracie Lin, Mark Foster, Beth Kolle, Nancy Beachley Beal and ALL the Members of the Double Strung Harp FaceBook Group! THANK YOU ALL!

A SPECIAL THANKS TO MY TEACHER CHRISTA GRIX

Let's Meet and Greet each other....Harp to Hands!

Today I am playing a walnut 29x2 Stoney End Lorraine double strung harp with full Camac levers. Range G to G.

"When your hands and Heart touch a Harp...there is Beauty" (Lee Timer, 2022)

What is a double strung harp, and why all the fuss?

“You know, people often feel that the double strung harp is intimidating, complicated, even a bit scary...but I’m here to challenge those perceptions, and stereotypes. The double strung harp is an enchanting and welcoming instrument, that brings beautiful, delightful sounds into the harp world.”

What exactly is the double strung harp, and why all the recent interest in this instrument?

A harp that has two parallel rows of strings, most often tuned identically.

Complimentary tunings are possible (different, but musically complimentary tunings existing on the harp simultaneously).

How many strings does a double strung harp have?

This depends on the size of the harp, what a harp builder is able to engineer, and personal preferences.

Triplett Harps and Stoney End Harps were the pioneers in building the modern day double strung harps that we know and love. Laurie Riley and Liz Cifani 1990

- What can we do with a double strung harp that is additional to a single strung harp?

- **Resonance/harmonics**
- **Sonority:** Producing sound when struck or plucked, a full sound impressive in effect and style. All harps have sonority, but double strung harps have twice as much!
- **Harmonics:** All musical instruments have harmonics , which are overtones of the fundamental frequency of a pitch/note and are the components that give an instrument its timbre. Harmonics most often produce a shimmering and somewhat fragile sound resulting in a light, magical tone.
- **Resonance:** the vibration of a musical instrument: including the string, the sound box, the wood and all parts of the harp.
- **Extra real estate** for hands to move (no more hands running into each other!)
- **Complimentary tuning**
- **Preset levers for accidentals**
- **Complex melodies can be carried by both hands**

- **Alternative fingerings abound**

- If you currently play single strung harp, you carry your technique, hand positions and hand shapes with you to the double strung harp. Good harp technique is always good harp technique....and is always welcome and useful when playing the double strung harp. Your current lever harp repertoire is easily transferred to the double harp...but you can add so much additional interest and beauty, easily.

Some of the many techniques unique to the double strung harp:

- **Cascades (and demo)**
- **Echoes (and demo)**
- **Basketweave (and demo)**
- **Playing both hands in the same octave/overlaps (and demo)**
- **Arpeggios and glissandos are lovely and fun**

How do you deal visually with all those strings?

Time....2-4 weeks, but everyone is different

Sitting with the harp: strumming/plucking/hand shapes, becoming friends with the rich sound of this beautiful instrument. Bring your fingers into your palm and listen to the sustain...the beauty and richness of the sympathetic vibration of the matched strings. The magic of the extra resonance a double strung harp brings additionally to the tonal color of its single strung cousin.

As with any harp, as kinesthetic memory develops visual challenges are lessened

Carolyn Deal YouTube Videos (Eyeball Bouncing, etc.)

Laurie Riley YouTube Videos

Learn your hand shapes!

How did I start?

Simple 1-5-8 and 1-3-5-8 arpeggiated chords, blocked chords, rolled chords and echoed chords (Demo)

Colored strings are our friends! (Demo)

Demonstrate chord progressions

Coming to the Double Strung Harp from another instrument?

Pluses musicians bring to the Party: If you play/played another musical instrument in the past you have great skills to bring with you! Your ability to read music, your familiarity with clefs, a musical ear, and your understanding of rhythm are a great starting point! And...Let's not forget the importance of tuning any musical instrument and playing in tune!

Pianists: familiarity with 2 clefs and 2 hands playing different patterns at the same time. Your ability to read 2 clefs simultaneously, and your innate understanding of how hands and parts work together to create melody and harmony are big plusses here!

Fretted string instrument players: comfort with chords, chord structure and chord progressions (you will LOVE Lead Sheets...see: **Robbin Gordon Cartier's workshop on the HG website about the use of Lead Sheets and their groovy possibilities!**

Non-Fretted String Instrument players: Your kinesthetic memory is second to none! You possess a deep understanding of using hands, fingers, arms and body position to hit that specific note, at that specific place on the neck, in that specific position!

All instruments benefit from, and become much easier to play when kinesthetic memory develops. Kinesthetic Memory is the ability to know where your hands, fingers, arms, body are without constant visual connection to the instrument you are playing.

Coming to the Harp as a FIRST instrument: Congratulations! You are beginning an amazing journey! You will make beautiful music as soon as you place your hands on the Double Strung Harp!

Demonstrate the resonance, the feel of the instrument, the positioning of the harp and taking the time to place fingers correctly.

You are given total permission to EXPERIMENT! What sounds good to you? What sounds less than? Don't be afraid to try!

Some of the things I love to play the most are what Double Strung Harp Teacher Carolyn Deal calls "Happy Accidents". An oops...a stray finger...or a planned fingering change can sound amazing!

Can I play single strung harp music on a double strung harp? ABSOLUTELY!

Are compositions available that are written specifically for double strung harp? ABSOLUTELY!

Excellent harps for therapeutic musicians/portability/sound/harmonics

Excellent instruments for improvisation and creative exploration

Double Strung Resources:

Harp Builders

Fireside Harps: www.backyardmusic.com PO Box 561 Willimantic, CT 06226 860.771.0820 Entry level cardboard body harp (levers available).

Waring Harps: www.waringmusic.com Email: waringinstruments@waringmusic.com

Dr. Dennis Waring. 82 Country Dr. Guilford, VT 05301. 860.347.5354 Entry level cardboard body harp (levers available).

***Stoney End Harps:** www.stoneyend.com Eve and Gary Stone.Email: eve@stoneyend.com 920 Hwy 19 Blvd, Red Wing, MN 55066. 651.388.8400. Toll Free: 877.866.3936

***Lewis Creek Instruments:** www.lewiscreek.net. Jeff Lewis 1285 Maple Dr. Chelsea, MI 48118 517.223.4884

Marini Made Harps: www.marinimadeharps.com.

Email: susan@marinimadeharps.com alexander@marinimadeharps.com

Harp Builders (con't):

Hayden Harps: www.haydenharps.com 519.886.1366

Blevins Harps: www.blevinsharps.com Email: blevinsharps@gmail.com. 2479
Riverside Pkwy Unit B, Grand Junction CO 970.260.4417

Rees Harps: www.reesharps.com Email: us@reesharps.com 222 Main Street,
Rising Sun IN 47040 812.438.3032

Dusty Strings: www.dustystings.com Email: handcrafted@dustystings.com
3406 Freemont Ave N, Seattle, WA. 98103 206.634.1656

***Heartland Harps:** www.heartlandharps.com Zirconia, NC. 828.708.3151

***Wind River Harps:** www.windriverharps.com Email: dave@windriverhaps.com
Dave Boling. 1413 Wind River Dr. Huntsville, AL 35802

** Indicates a double strung sharp builder available here in the Vendor's Hall at
Harp Gathering*

Double Strung Harp Retailer: Carolyn Deal: www.southeasternharps.com. Email:
smilingharp@gmail.com 828.649.1983 (Specializes in Stoney End Double Strung
Harps)

Double Strung Harp Teachers:

Carolyn Deal: www.southeasternharps.com Email: smilingharp@gmail.com
828.649.1983

Cindy Shelhart: cynthiashelhart.com

Karen Peterson: www.enjoytheharp.com Email: enjoytheharp@gmail.com
201.344.7728

Jesse Autumn: www.jesseautumnmusic.com

Anne Crosby Gaudet: www.musicdiscoveries.shop

Susan Zevenbergen: www.myharpsdelight.com

Deette Bunn: Email: harpladymama@gmail.com

Double Strung Harp YouTube Resources

Carolyn Deal: Smilingharp

Cindy Shelhart: Cindy Shelhart-Double Strung Harp

Mark Foster: Mark Foster-Harp

Laurie Riley: Laurie Riley

Jesse Autumn: Jesse Autumn Music

Anne Crosby Gaudet: Music Discoveries

Deette Bunn: Deette Bunn

Tracie Lin: Tracie Lin

Patreon Pages

Carolyn Deal

Double Strung Print Music

Carolyn Deal [_www.southeasternharps.com](http://www.southeasternharps.com)

Cindy Shelhart [_www.cynthiashelhart.com](http://www.cynthiashelhart.com)

Laurie Riley [_www.laurierileymusic.com](http://www.laurierileymusic.com)

Anne Crosby Gaudet: www.musicdiscoveries.shop

[Don't forget to check out the Facebook Double Strung Harp Group page!](#)