



Submitted photo by Paul vanPeenen

Hemme Luttjeboer's work as a guitar music transcriber has earned him praise from some of rock's guitar legends.

Musician striking a chord with world's guitar greats

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Sometimes, when someone picks up a guitar, destiny is at play.

Some will find that destiny on stage, while others will make their mark elsewhere.

For Brockville native Hemme Luttjeboer, a love affair with the guitar led to the publishing industry, where he has more than left a mark.

The Abbotsford, B.C. resident has transcribed more than 250 guitar music books, and has four royalty books now in publication, including his latest, *The Complete Idiot's Guide To Guitar Exercises*, released by Alpha/Penguin more than a month ago.

His latest effort has earned praise from such guitar greats as Randy Bachman, Peter Frampton, Steve Howe of Yes fame and Alex Lifeson of Rush.

"It's my hobby that's turned into a vocation," Luttjeboer said in a telephone interview.

The 1973 Brockville Collegiate Institute graduate has been transcribing guitar music since 1989.

The job essentially involves listening to music on CD, playing along on the guitar and transcribing what you hear into tangible form.

"It's note-by-note, bar-by-bar,

page-by-page, book-by-book," he said.

Luttjeboer started playing guitar in his BCI days, teaching himself almost entirely, and took that interest to the professional level in the 1980s.

He lived in Edmonton from 1982 to 1985, where he taught guitar and played in a country band.

In 1985, he moved to Los Angeles to attend the Guitar Institute of Technology in Hollywood for one year, where he was a runner-up for the Lenny Breau Memorial Scholarship.

In 1986, after graduating, he moved to Vancouver to be with family and taught at three music stores, as well as night school classes for the Vancouver School Board.

In 1989, he transcribed jazz guitarist Mike Stern's first two albums for the Hal Leonard Corporation. He also transcribed the Friday Night In San Francisco album featuring Al DiMeola, John McLaughlin and Paco DeLucia, and later that year got his first transcription project for Warner Brothers Publications: heavy metal band Whitesnake's *Slip of the Tongue*.

Since then, he has transcribed music for some of the legends of the business, including Eric Clapton, Jeff Beck and Jimmy Page in the world of rock; blues

giant B.B. King; country star Vince Gill and pop artists as varied as Sarah McLachlan, Alanis Morissette and Joni Mitchell.

Luttjeboer likes to meet the artists whose work he transcribes and he even had one book signed by the three surviving Beatles at the time.

Through a contact in the transcription world, he was hired on by Penguin to contribute a guitar book to its *Complete Idiot's Guide* series.

His latest book, which includes graphics by his wife, Wanda McDonald, has 264 pages of warm-ups and exercises, as well as a CD. The project took him 10 weeks to finish.

"It's for the novice or the person that's played before ... and wants to pick it up again," said Luttjeboer.

His contract with Penguin involves one more book, which will be his next project.

Luttjeboer's massive body of work is a testament to initiative, since he is self-taught on the guitar other than that one year at the Guitar Institute.

In fact, notes Luttjeboer, he only took music appreciation at BCI in Grade 13, which he describes as "a great class, since all you did was listen to music."

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