

# Boston's Larget-Caplan picked in Paris

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By Lily Pillsbury  
Advocate staff



BOSTON – Local classical guitarist Aaron Larget-Caplan received the Médaille d'Étain from the Société Académique Arts– Sciences–Lettres of Paris on June 22. This medal is awarded to those who have achieved excellence in the arts, and Larget-Caplan was selected last fall by U.S. Representative of the Arts-Sciences- Lettres and French painter Dominique Boutaud.

Larget-Caplan connected with The Jewish Advocate to discuss where his passion for music comes from.

“Music followed me as I tripped and tumbled as a child through clarinet and electric guitar,” he noted.

“Celebrity rock star temptation kept my attention as a young teen, but the depth and purity of acoustic sound where one is hypnotized by the dots on the page searching for a

wordless higher meaning was an allure and addiction that transformed me.”

“I remember the great feeling of joy while playing clarinet in my elementary school band, and later trading my clarinet for an electric guitar and sitting in my basement bedroom trying to figure out Zeppelin and Hendrix licks,” Larget-Caplan noted. “My transformation to classical music came when I became bored with rock music and saw a video of the late Spanish artists Alicia de Larrocha, Victoria de los Ángeles and Andrés Segovia in my high school Spanish class.”



“I became obsessed with Spanish poetry and music,” he continued. “I read books on classical music and composers, began attending concerts, and practicing before school and after sports.”

Larget-Caplan noted that being awarded this medal was a process that required hard work and came with difficult realizations.

“I felt elated, grateful and a bit surprised. First though, being selected to apply by French artist Dominique Boutaud, American representative of ASL, was such a great honor in itself,” he continued, “I remember telling my wife, ‘Someone has been paying attention!’”

“I spent the month of January preparing a physical portfolio of my work, which turned out to be quite difficult as what I do is not visual of course, and no digital entries were allowed,” he noted. “My feeling of surprise came with a tinge of sadness to the fact it is not every day that a Jewish artist receives recognition in France, especially now with the politics of the world and the rise of anit-Semitism and anti-Israel,” he noted.

Larget-Caplan went on to explain the complex world of classical music.

"The classical music world has a massive amount of hero worship, tribalism, backstabbing, scavenging, living in the past, sense of limited funds, and elitism," Larget-Caplan noted. "Musicians of all genders and ages will be tested by a teacher, a friend or colleague, and each of us will need to decide how we live up with or stand up to the system." "I believe that the system can be more inclusive and fair, without lowering standards or watering it down, if we want it to be," he added. "We must be moral and elite artists, different than elitist, while being fearless musical citizens of the world."

Larget-Caplan expressed the effect that music can have on people.

"I decided to give my time to music, rather than to a law firm or medical practice," he said. "I took, what many consider the risky road, and that has made all the difference."

"Though I was shy and didn't realize it until I was 15, music pursued me," he noted. "Ironically, as my commitments increased, my grades actually improved as life acquired more meaning; maybe music pursues all of us, and we just need to let it catch us."

Larget-Caplan has performed solo and chamber music in Russia, Europe, Taiwan and across the U.S. Since his debut at the age of 16, Larget-Caplan has premiered more than 80 solo and chamber compositions. He is currently on the faculty at the University of Massachusetts Boston and previously, worked at the Boston Conservatory.

Larget-Caplan expressed gratitude for his support system, including his teachers and family.

"Without a doubt my wife Catherine and her sister Caroline, they believed in me when I didn't, and pushed and prodded me to stay true to my life in music," he noted. "Dmitry Goryachev, my Russian guitar teacher, also holds a special place in my life as well; he gave me a trade as a father should."

"I also felt a great sense of gratitude to those around me who were a part of the process," he continued, "each of the composers who have trusted me with their music, each of the venues who hosted me in sharing my music with their audiences, the many schools that brought me in to share history and life lessons with their students, each of my teachers, my record label, and most of all to the countless people who took time to come to concerts."

*For more information, go to [artssciences.lettres.fr](http://artssciences.lettres.fr).*

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