

## Barboza-Zanon Recital

As the climax of a very busy and successful season, the West Sussex Guitar Club presented a recital by the Brazilian flute and guitar duo, Marcelo Barboza and Fabio Zanon. This South American recital, coinciding appropriately with Bognor's tropical heatwave and symbolised by the delicate arrangement of Brazilian lilies on stage, attracted an unusually wide audience of music-lovers from West Sussex and neighbouring counties.

From the entrancing opening bars of Diabelli's *Variations on Beethoven's Themes*, the duo led the audience through a refreshing classical and modern repertoire. It seemed clear to those listening that the confidence and empathy of their ensemble came from their shared musical background in Brazil and longstanding friendship.

The fluid and vibrant *Sonatina* by Radames Gnattali displayed some of the most sensitive writing for both instruments, and none of the subtlety of its three contrasting movements was lost in the interpretation. The familiarity of the first movement of *Sonatina* by Castelnuovo-Tedesco, which must have inspired John Williams' theme for Star Wars, took many members of the audience by



Fabio Zanon (L) and Marcelo Barboza (R) who played at our 'bonus' recital on 31st July

surprise and ensured close critical attention to the composition, which ended the first half of the programme.

In spite of the unexpected heat, the excellence of the playing sustained the same level of dedicated concentration throughout the second half. Barboza's selection of solo - Mercadante's *Variations on 'La ci darem la mano'* from Mozart's opera *Don Giovanni* - paralleled the classical opening of the concert, followed by a rapid transition into

contemporary idiom with Zanon's choice - Brouwer's frantic and explosive *Elogio de la Danza*.

The simplicity of Villa-Lobos's *Distribution of Flowers* did not diminish the artistry of the two musicians - one of whom is regarded as the composer's supreme exponent. This provided a colourful interlude before a challenging musical duel, Vasconcelas Correa's *Desafio*. The performers had a special affinity with this unusual piece,

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## Ramirez & Kalamuniak - 26th June

This was a wonderful evening for music lovers. Not only because of the heartfelt quality of the performance, but that it happened at all. After a concertising hiatus of nine years for this husband and wife duo and their two super transcriptions, I felt somewhat privileged to have been at this West Sussex Guitar Club concert.

If it is unusual for a guitar (thought not symphonic) concert to

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## New Members

We extend a warm welcome to the following new members:

Sydney Rapley,  
Rustington

Jill Watt,  
Rustington

John White,  
Rustington

We hope you will spend many enjoyable evenings with us!

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## 'Return to the Alhambra'

Driving home at midnight after the Guitar Club's annual Summer celebrations my high spirits were tempered by the thought of those members who had missed what had proved to be a peak in the Club's six year history. For an exuberant display of colour, light, music and dance it would have been hard to beat. Add to this an exciting selection of food, including barbequed delicacies, and you have the recipe for a perfect end of season party. Contrary to previous years it was a warm, dry evening and so Graham was able to tempt us with the aroma of cooked food wafting in through open doors.

A Spanish theme was certain to delight us with a wealth of beautiful music created for the guitar and the evening began when Alex Iles evoked the spirit of the Alhambra with the exquisite *Recuerdos de la Alhambra* by Tarrega, a piece which surely deserves its popularity. Throughout the evening the audience listened in quiet concentration to each performance before expressing their enthusiasm. Perhaps the calming influence of the little Alhambra fountain contributed to this, its musical sound enhancing the nostalgic atmosphere.

Two examples of early Spanish music took us back in time, a Pavane played by Regis Guitars and a second, stately, Pavane performed by Peter Russell. A dramatic piece, simply called *Spain* (Regis guitars) and *Asturias* played by Jack Enticott came next, and Regis Guitars ended their performance with the exciting rhythms of *Farruca*. The evening continued with a Tarrega *Prelude* and a Bolero played by Luigi Caste and Sally Paice respectively, followed by Linda Kelsall-Barnett and little Tamzin playing and singing a charming folk song. At this point the Gala Quartet, suitably attired for the occasion, took to the stage. Debbie Burford and Ian Burt played a traditional duet and Kit Crowhurst and John Mason played two waltzes by Granados. Jennifer Burt, clad in spectacular Spanish red, joined the Quartet to sing a mysterious piece arranged for four guitars and voice by Debbie. Slowly it dawned on us that we were listening to the pop tune *Viva España!* This part of the entertainment concluded with a performance by Mitch Callow of *Mallorca* by Albeniz.

A quick transformation of the stage from carpet to resonant wood heralded the highlight of the evening. In spite of the limited space Helena Bengé and Patti Tudor gave us a brilliant performance of powerful and elegant Flamenco dances. They were accompanied on guitar by Fergus Paton who both played and sang in authentic Flamenco style. Enhanced by the colourful Moorish patterns projected on the curved ceiling of the stage, this vivid experience is certainly one we shall remember. A brief pause during the dancing



*The Spirit of Flamenco - from Patti (L) and Helena (R)*

gave us a pleasing opportunity to listen to Linda playing *Madroños* by Torroba.

In the quietness which followed the excitement of the Flamenco dances Graham Bengé read two very evocative poems by Garcia Lorca, repeated in the original Spanish by David Tudor, while Fergus reflected their spirit with gentle, improvised guitar accompaniment. Finally our thoughts returned to the Alhambra as Alex ended with a second performance of *Recuerdos*.

Sasha's informative introductions and overhead projected scenes and patterns relating to the music being played, conjured up a sense of time and place as well as creating smooth continuity through all the performances. The light and colour gave an added dimension to their presentation.

However we organize the buffet style tables, glorious chaos in true WSGC tradition is bound to follow once this important part of the celebrations begins! Relishing the food and socializing is a great part of the evening and we all enjoy it. There was time to read Helena's attractive programme with its brief history of Flamenco, to meet old and new friends and to eat, drink and be merry!

As members drifted away after a few strong men had returned the piano to its usual position on the stage, we were given a final treat when Nina played to us. It was a wonderful way to end such an enjoyable evening.

Pam Davis

### Congratulations!

to Debbie & Robin Burford on the birth of Alexander Peter on 9th August, weighing 6lbs 7oz.

and

to Claudia and John Edwards on the birth of Winona, on 11th September, weighing 8lbs 4oz.

## West Dean Memories

The 9th International Guitar Festival of Great Britain took place at West Dean college in August this year. The Festival started sadly with the news both of Chris Kilvington's sudden death and that there will be no Festival next year. The good news is that tutors and performers for 2001 are already booked.

From then on it was as if everyone was determined that this year should be special, and it was. Last year not a great deal happened before morning coffee break and the long afternoons were taken up with interminable master classes. This year my mornings consisted of Ensemble, with Lorraine Eastwood, an Options session - 'Grade v-viii Repertoire' with Paul Gregory and Choir (a Tallis Anthem) with Glenda Simpson. Immediately after lunch was a lesson (or free) and then choices of Masterclasses, Concerts and workshops until at 5.30pm a daily performance workshop with Alfonso Montes.

So the working day was 9.15 - 6.30pm with evening concerts in the church. Some complained that the course was too busy and left no time for practice. Personally I felt that with such an opportunity for learning it was a waste of time to lock myself away and practice. The tutors may well feel the week was too demanding. They were constantly in demand - including during breaks, meals and in the bar.

My half hour lesson was with Simon Dinnigan. I am quite sure the best way to get value from a one-off lesson is to go along with a very specific idea of what you want to get out of it. I gave Simon the other half of a duet and sought his advice on interpretation, in which he was very useful.

The 'staff' this year were: Barry Mason, Nikita Koshkin, Andrew York, Carlos Bonell, Simon Dinnigan, Paul Gregory, Alfonso Montes, Irina Kircher, John Mills, Glenda Simpson and Lorraine Eastwood. Concert Artists were Andrew York, Jonathan Leathwood, Fabio Zanon, Montes-Kircher duo, Shuko Shibata, Francisco Antonio, Sinead Pratsche and Brad Richter, Vincea McClelland and Raymond Couste. Koshkin, York, Montes and Richter all compose, and talked about their work.

Last year was my first year and I felt slightly dismayed that everyone seemed to know everyone else. Indeed many people have been every year since 1991. This year I was able to renew acquaintances and make new friends. The sheer variety of people enriched the Festival greatly. They came from the USA, Russia, Japan, Venezuela and most of the European nations. Ages ranged from young Will (12 years) to people well in their seventies. Beginners mixed with serious students and older people indulging their hobby. One sixteen year old played a Walton Bagatelle for Carlos Bonell and La Frescobalda for John Mills whilst waiting for his 'O' level results (seven A's and two B's!). I met a consultant paediatrician from Spain and a Research Director from Geneva. Our common interest broke down barriers of age, nationality, ability, whatever.

I think the concerts were better this year. Highlights for me were the Montes-Kircher duo who produced a lovely warm sound and impeccable timing. Jonathan Leathwood was definitely the quirkiest, a very self-centred approach culminating in a half speed Dowland encore as the bats wheeled over our heads. However I forgive him all for a magical Bach Chaconne.

But undoubtedly the star was Fabio Zanon. His programme was huge in scope, ranging from Frescobaldi via several Scarlatti sonatas and an awesome Paganini Grand Sonata to Brouwer's El Decameron Negro and Ronaldo Miranda's Apassionata. The range of the music, the power, authority and sheer musicality of his playing were stunning. In the bar after the concert I watched as one international concert artist after another came to pay their respects to one they were clearly acknowledging as master.

So, West Dean is not a cheap week but we still have until 2001 to save up. In the meantime I will deposit in the Club Library notes made in the workshops of Montes, Gregory and Mills in an effort to share something of the learning I gained from the week.

*Geoff Lunn*

## Treasurer's Topics

Each season we attempt to raise sufficient funds through subscriptions, door receipts, grant aid and sponsorship to balance the cost of concerts, young professionals, lectures and club evenings. Once again we have to thank our members and visitors for their patronage and local sponsors The Regis School of Music, Town Flowers and Mike's Music Warehouse for their support. By Christmas we will know whether the grants from South East Arts and Arun District Council will continue. This season we start with a healthy balance which will provide us with a reserve fund should either grant fail to materialise or we have unforeseen expenses.

This season also presents us with the opportunity to strengthen and enlarge the club's own musical base as we are in receipt of a grant from the Music Sound Foundation. The

aim of the foundation, established by EMI Records in 1997, is "to create and provide funds which will support projects that encourage education, in particular for young people, in all aspects of music". Although the funding was not sufficient to purchase beginners instruments, which was our initial hope, we have agreed upon the following projects:

- to subsidise junior admission to concerts and club evenings by removing admission charges for children under 16; full-time students can still claim a 50% reduction.
- to subsidise a junior workshop, probably in May next year
- to purchase some much needed equipment for the orchestras

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## Barboza-Zanon...

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originally written for their respective teachers of music in Brazil.

The concert ended with a musical exploration of city barrios in Pujol's *Suite Buenos Aires* - the jauntiness of Pompeya, where the tango was born; the atmosphere of nostalgic yearning in

Palermo; the rich multicultural heritage of San Telmo; and the meaningless mechanistic bustling of the Microcentro, overlaid with the harsh screaming of traffic and ambulance.

The performance added to Marcelo Barboza and Fabio Zanon's reputation as a world-class flute and guitar

duo. The full house presaged another successful season for the Guitar Club and its friends in the autumn, when the series of professional concerts opens with a return performance by the outstanding British guitarist Mark Ashford on 25 September.

*A Levto & A MacTavish*

## Ramirez Duo...

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consist of only two items, it was nevertheless the most effective and transporting of programmes. I felt lifted up and carried along by close to an hour of Bach's *Goldberg Variations*. I would normally reckon this long enough to listen to a single work, but conversely even as the approaching ending was signalled by the da capo of the opening Aria, I wanted to hear it played all over again. Written for the harpsichord to be played to a sickly nobleman during his sleepless nights, I was utterly convinced that had he heard it instead on these two guitars he would have leapt from his bed miraculously cured and lived to well past one hundred. I have heard no more convincing argument for guitar transcriptions, and I cannot but think that JS himself would have approved.

This performance of the Bach was not flashy; it was not romanticised. If one wanted to nit pick, which would hardly be appropriate on this occasion, one would say it contained occasional

imperfections and a lack of balance between the guitars, although the ensemble was to a very high standard. Yet most crucially Ramirez and Kalamuniak really touched their audience. They seemed to enjoy the occasion as much as we. The playing seemed to me to be full of affection, not just for this remarkable composer against which many musicians measure themselves, but also for each other. So what ever the imperfections, they were very secondary because I don't think there are many pairings which could have achieved quite this - they know each other so well. You might describe the lifting quality of Bach's music as having religiosity, or perhaps that overused word spirituality. Whatever it is, it was in full flow right through this performance. Alternatively you might have a preference for monastic contemplation - the effect is similar.

The de Falla was utterly contrasting. Full of worldly rhythms, intriguing textures, dramatic rasgueados, seductive melodies and arching climaxes,

Ramirez' successful transcription captured many of the orchestral elements of *El Amor Brujo* by this guitar inspired Spanish composer. As the couple returned to the stage four times to receive our warm applause, it was clear that the usual brief encore would have been inappropriate. In fact, without wishing to belittle it, for me the de Falla served as such to the Bach.

I hope that Charles and Helen decide to perform this enchanting programme more often; evidently Segovia was so impressed with the Bach that he requested private performances of it during his last few visits to London. But this was a special night partly because of its rarity. Here thanks are due to a certain resident Russian impresario and his nine years of asking them to play it again. "We wouldn't have done it for anybody else" said Helen afterwards.

*Graham Cleaver*

## From the Treasurer...

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- to start and promote a junior ensemble (see article by Sasha)

The grant is to be paid in two parts the second half being subject to a satisfactory project report in the new year. If we are successful in our endeavours there is no reason why we should not be able to look forward to a long and mutually beneficial

association with the Music Sound Foundation.

Please remember that your membership card should entitle you to the following negotiated benefits:

- discount at Mike's Music Warehouse
- reduced entry at concerts hosted by Bognor Concert Club, Friends of the Regis School of Music and

Southampton Guitar Society

- a discount card for use at Bern's Music, Chichester

Any information or assistance with contacts for sponsors or advertising or new sites for posters or concert brochures will always be gratefully received - ring me on 01243 528573.

*Jonathan Parrott*

