

Pavel Steidl Concert

The Concert:

Pavel made an immediate impact on me as I entered the Regis School of Music for the concert event. We both entered the foyer from different directions but had immediate eye contact and radiant smiles all round. Pavel Steidl is a very friendly and affable artist the likes of which I have not encountered before, not even in my early days (1972/3) of visiting the Wavendon All Music Plan run by the Dankworths near Woburn Abbey.

The first part of the concert was largely of pieces from C.J.Mertz a Slovakian who played and composed for the guitar (1806-1856) and himself played on a Johan Georg Staufer guitar made in Venice where Mertz lived for many years. For the concert Pavel played on an 1820 Staufer replica guitar made by the Austrian luthier Bern Kresse. The guitar is quite distinctive with its unusual machine head shape and small instrument body. In Pavel's hands the instrument had good volume and timbre. In the second half we were treated to J S



Theme Op.9. All of these pieces were played in a very animated manner with ever changing facial expressions and gentle vocalisations. The right hand showed an occasional wafting movement to seemingly assist the guitar's sound to be further projected on the long notes.

The Workshop:

Sunday the 9th of April saw an early start to a well attended workshop event. First there was an

ensemble in which Handel's *Sarabande* scored for three guitars was rehearsed along with Morley's *Now is the Month of Maying* and Reichardt's *Allegro all'inglese*. In exploring these pieces Pavel showed how important it is to understand the music and what the composer intended or might have intended.

Following the ensemble playing, six individual Master Classes were held on stage with the participant and Pavel. The audience had the benefit of listening in and gaining from the interactions between Master and pupil.

Finally there was an informal chat with interactions between Pavel and all of the attendees which was a very pleasant experience. The event was highlighted with a mobile phone call to Pavel's brother in Czechoslovakia to transmit an

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New Members

We extend a very warm welcome to the following new members:

Stewart & Larissa
Adamsen Selsey

Victoria Walker
Gosport

We hope you enjoy
many happy evenings
at the Club!

Bach's *Ciaccona* and Mauro Giuliani's *Rossiana No.1 op 119*. Pavel gave an impressive encore of Sor's *Variations on a*

Stop Press Derek Hasted has made a cd recording of our recent joint concert with Amanda & hago at St. Paul's Chichester. If you would like a copy (cost £3) please contact either Derek on 023 9247 9200 or Sasha on 01243 866462. If there is sufficient interest, Sasha may make a DVD of the WSGC part of the concert.



Under Starters Orders



Pavel oversees Linda and Tamzin



Vickie and Pavel



Patrick and Pavel share a joke



Tamzin and Zoe with the Maestro



Paul and Pavel

Pavel Steidl Workshop 9th April 2006

Pavel Steidl ...

(Continued from page 1)

Elias Sibley and Terry Woodgate banjo/guitar duet. Pavel's brother is apparently 'mad' for the banjo hence the impromptu broadcast!

Patrick Butcher

Many thanks Patrick. I must add that we have had many fine guitarist play at the club, but in my opinion Pavel is truly exceptional and well deserving of that over-used accolade 'Maestro'. When I saw the programme had many pieces by Mertz, I was a little apprehensive – not that I dislike Mertz, but that leaves little time for other worthy composers. However, I should not have worried since Pavel breathed new life into these pieces the like of which I have never heard before. And what amazing smooth legato runs he effortlessly accomplishes at high speed. The Bach Chaconne and Variations on the Magic Flute were hypnotic – I sat on the edge of my seat waiting for each variation whereas in lesser hands, the pieces can tend to drag. Pavel played his own composition Eugenie as an encore. Wonderful stuff just made for his silky smooth technique.

The workshop was a similar revelation. Pavel makes the guitar sing the music, taking breaths and conveying all the emotion of the voice through the instrument.

Rather like a doctor prescribing pills, Pavel knew what exercises to prescribe for each pupil.

He prescribed mostly from an Italian exercise book, but also recommended exercises in 'Pumping Nylon'. When I enquired about how to play as well in public as at home, he said the key was 'Concentrate, Concentrate, Concentrate!' He then proceeded to play an exercise in 4/4 time on the high strings while simultaneously playing in 5/4 time on the bass strings – now that is concentration! Exercises are everything and he did not think much to my 10 mins of exercise a week! He is obviously correct. My playing probably hangs by a thread which is just ok in the comfort of my own home, but fails miserably when under any stress such as in front of an audience where the fingers tense up.

Pavel is a great advocate of avoiding barres since these stress the hand while playing and presumably may lead to long term damage. He suggested a number of exercises to avoid them.

Despite playing like some super-being Pavel is a very approachable and amusing character. He is very popular and says he is only at home for 3 weeks in the year. After the workshop he was off to Mexico. Later he was playing in Prague and then the following day to Sao Paulo. He explained he had not learnt how to say 'No!' I sincerely hope it is not too long before Pavel returns again and that he still cannot say 'No!'

Terry

The Complete Works of Villa Lobos

Paul Gregory has recently given two concerts in Sussex of the complete works of Villa-Lobos for the classical guitar. These consist of the 5 *Preludes*, *The Suite Populaire Brezillienne*, *Choros no 1*, *The 12 Etudes* and the *Valsa Concierta no 2 Op 8*. The latter work was written when Villa Lobos was just 17 years old, but was never finished. Paul completed the work and the join was quite seamless! This was the first time the piece had ever been performed.

We learnt a lot about the life of Villa-Lobos for example he was an extremely small child and his parents encouraged him to play the cello, but because he was too small to play the real instrument, he played a viola as a cello.

Paul has visited the Villa-Lobos museum in Brazil and was very fortunate in obtaining the

original manuscripts of the Studies in addition to the unfinished Waltz. He discovered that the original music was different to the published studies. Maybe to make them easier to play, perhaps to make them more tuneful or maybe there were just typos. Anyway, Paul played the studies as originally written.

I had not heard some of the studies before. I must say that not all of them are immediately likeable and this may explain their absence from the performer's repertoire, but then they are studies! Possibly like medicine their intention is to do you some good and as such they do not have to be palatable. It was very brave of Paul to undertake such a concert, and it was a very useful and unique experience for any classical guitarist.

And Now for Something Completely Different

What a wonderful entertaining evening the young professional concert given by Elias Sibley proved to be. It was certainly something different and you never knew what was coming next. Instead of ending with 'lollipops' as a reward for listening attentively to the recital, the concert started with two popular tunes of the 1930s played with much maturity on the classical guitar. Following this we were treated to Walton's *Bagatelle*. I then fully expected a concert of mostly classical guitar music, but no! A very diminutive guitar – the ukulele was produced. A short selection of Bach and Chopin and then more music of the 30's was presented. My particular favourite was *Lulu's Back in Town*. We learnt that the ukulele originates from Hawaii and that the name means 'jumping flea'. What a sweet sound the ukulele has. However, as with all instruments, they do not make that sound autonomously; so much depends upon the player who has to tease the right timbre from the instrument.

Subsequently, Terry rejoined Elias for

some numbers played on the classical banjo. I knew Whistling Rufus (but had no idea that it dated from as early as 1898), but the other pieces were unknown to me but really got the feet tapping – and what a cracking pace! (*They were Cute an' Catchy and Syncopating Shuffle, both by Frank Lawes - Ed*).

I would have liked some more classical guitar but the programme was obviously limited in time. There are many talented guitarists around and in order to make any headway, a new performer is going to need something special. Perhaps Elias has found that with the banjo and the ukulele. How many classical guitarists can provide such a rounded performance and cover a range of fretted instruments with such aplomb? And do not assume that because there are fewer strings they are any easier to play. Elias demonstrated that as much skill is required with these 'lesser instruments' as with the classical guitar. Good luck for the future.

Brian Bennett

Editor's Piece

Although barely 3 months since our last Newsletter, it has been a very busy and active time for the WSGC. We have had two professional concerts – Pavel Steidl and John Mills – both well attended, a workshop with Pavel Steidl, a combined evening of music with Amanda Cook and hago at Chichester, a young musician's concert given by Elias Sibley and of course our club evenings.

The rest of the summer looks to continue as a very busy time for both the committee and members. After the Tomas Jimenez concert on 17th June and the summer party (Una Bella Notte – with an Italian theme) on the 8th July, the club goes a-roving away from our usual venue. Watch out for St Paul's Chichester on July 15th, The Bognor Festivities at Hotham Park Bandstand on July 29th The Selsey Carnival on Aug 25th and the Bognor Birdman on Sept 9/10th which also coincides with our AGM. Please try to support these events and encourage our players.

With regard to the AGM, you will be aware that after many years of sterling service to the club, our treasurer Jonathan Parrot and librarian Pam Davis are standing down. Please give some thought to offering your services here, since without these posts being filled, the club cannot function properly. Help will be given by other committee members and the outgoing incumbents will also advise what is required. The jobs are not too onerous.

You may have noticed that the quality of this newsletter print is substantially improved. That is because we have finally purchased a colour laser printer. This will substantially ease the burden on poor Sasha who was printing over 100 newsletter copies and many fliers on his old inkjet printer. This had to be constantly watched over and would frequently fail. Now he can fill and forget and the speed is considerably faster.

Finally a sincere thank you to all who have contributed to this edition, it certainly makes my life easier. Please send in more articles for the next edition.

Ringing the Changes

After eleven years in post as Treasurer (plus assorted other roles) Jonathan has decided to leave the committee and will not be standing for re-election at the AGM in September. He states that with the increased pressure from the day job and the desire to spend more time with his family especially his two young grandchildren he can no longer fulfil his role at the Club to the level he would like to. He will be maintaining a non-committee role as press officer. Pam Davis, again eleven years in post, is also looking to hand on her roles as Club photographer (position filled) and Librarian.

As a result of the above the Committee is urgently seeking help from members who can dedicate some time to the running of this exceptional Club. Some of the roles will require attending Committee but others may be filled by non-attending officers. If you can help PLEASE contact the Committee as soon as possible. The following roles have to be filled:

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|-----------------|---|
| Treasurer | – managing the Club’s accounts |
| Club Secretary | – taking the minutes and communicating with Club members and external organisations |
| Fundraising | – grant aid applications, contacting sponsors and other fundraising events |
| Door steward(s) | – taking monies at Club evenings and/or concerts |
| Librarian | – managing the Club’s library of audio, video and sheet music |

For more information contact Richard (01903 521676), Sasha (01243 866462) or Jonathan (01243 528573) or email information@westsussexguitar.com

Flamenco, Spirit of Spain

We are delighted to welcome back to our stage Flamenco guitarist Tomás Jimenez who will be accompanied by dancer Maria José Garcia. Tomás has played for us several times, first performing in 1995, and continues to produce sell-out audiences anticipating the sounds and spirit of Spain whose expectations he never fails to fulfil.



Tomás was taught the guitar by his father and attended masterclasses with Gerardo Núñez and Paco Cruz, but it is his father’s influence that directs him with well-remembered advice “Don’t make the playing flowery because Flamenco by itself communicates every emotion and every human sentiment and you don’t have to add or take anything away from it”. Tomás started his career teaching at The Spanish Guitar Centre, founded by Len Williams father of John, where he embraced the Centre’s ethos of providing lessons of authentic uncommercialised Flamenco guitar and was soon

invited to write a monthly column for *Guitar International Magazine*. He has performed all over the country notably at the Queen Elizabeth Hall and the Purcell Room (South Bank) either as a soloist or as part of a Flamenco company. More recently he has been accompanied on stage by Maria José Garcia.

Maria was born in Cartagena and studied Flamenco and classical Spanish dance gaining the title of Bailarina Professional from the Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia, Madrid. She is elegant and tasteful, capable of producing fast powerful Zapateado (the Flamenco footwork) but does not overdo this, using her dance to express the true sentiment of each Flamenco form. Tomás states “In many of our concerts our work is primarily guitar and castanets. Rather than simply accompanying my compositions Maria José creates a dialogue with me, playing on the beat, off the beat and in the pauses or not at all. The result is a new composition that interweaves the sound of guitar and castanet”.

John Mills ...

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the surface of contemporary idiom.

After a lively Paraguayan polka, John Mills continued his recital with four melodic pieces from early twentieth century Argentina, each in its own unique way drawing gentle nostalgia from the audience; and the programme ended on a high note with a lively return to the streets of Paraguay, through the percussive music of Barrios – a dynamic conclusion to a creative exploration of the dimensions of folk music in time and space, under the leadership of the most accomplished and inspiring guide!

Recognition must also be given to the superb instrument John played, crafted by the Dutch guitar-maker Bert Kwakkel, with a wonderfully balanced tonal range across the whole sound spectrum. However, only such an attuned ear as John's could realise the full potential of such a responsive guitar.

Angela Mactavish and Sasha

Many thanks Angela and what a superb encore – the Danza Brazilienne by Jorge Morel – a real rhythmic foot-tapper.

WSGC, Amanda & hago play at St. Paul's

On Saturday 13th May, we presented the second joint venture with the hago Guitar Orchestra at St Paul's Church Chichester. The evening essentially consisted of three sections – the WSGC, Amanda Cook and then the hago orchestra.

The WSGC commenced the proceedings with an orchestra of 25 players. Members of the orchestra then took centre stage and played either as solo, duet, trio or quartet. The performances were all excellent and many thanks are due to all those who participated since this will clearly enhance the reputation of the club. All of the performances were obviously well rehearsed and a lot of time and effort clearly went into the evening. I think we were able to demonstrate what the WSGC is about. It clearly came across that we are a family club, catering for all ages of players and that the guitar need not be a lonely instrument since it can be combined with other guitars and voice. All the pieces played were immediately accessible to a non-playing public and we clearly demonstrated that the classical guitar is not some esoteric stuffy instrument. Many thanks to Sasha who introduced the players and who gave so much time and encouragement to the orchestra. It gave the novices amongst us an opportunity to play in front of a large audience without being too intimidated since if we missed a note or two, there were many players to cover for us.

Amanda Cook gave an amazing short recital of pieces by Rodrigo and Verdery. The latter required the guitar to be retuned. To save time on retuning, she borrowed member Tony Poulett's Cashimira guitar which was already retuned. I find

this very impressive since I know if I attempt to play a different guitar, even though the difference in the string spacing and action can probably only be measured in angstroms, it makes all the difference when trying to find the notes. Many thanks to Amanda for supporting us again despite her very busy schedule.

Finally we were treated to a supremely polished performance by hago. Derek Hasted does a wonderful job arranging a whole spectrum of music for the orchestra (over 260 pieces). Having four different sizes of guitar (alto, bass and contra bass in addition to the usual guitar) gives a much greater range to their music. I would be hard pushed to pick out a favourite because they were all gems. There were many long forgotten tunes which we rarely hear now – the exciting Dick Barton theme, the Elizabethan Serenade and Plink Plank Plunk! We must not forget The Shadows either which started so many of us older players on the guitar so many years ago. In addition to being a brilliant player and arranger, Derek is also a wonderful compere. If you have never seen hago before, visit their website on www.derek-hasted.co.uk to find their forthcoming events. You will not be disappointed

It was a truly unforgettable evening of wonderful entertainment. The WSGC is playing at St Paul's with Amanda Cook again on July 15th (no hago this time). Please come along and support your club. In addition to raising our profile and hopefully attracting new members, any profits from the evening will help with our club finances.

Terry



The Dynamic Duo—Elias and Terry



That Bonsai Guitar



Ian Murphy and Tom Emery



The Gala Quartet



Amanda Plays 2 Guitars



The hago Orchestra

St. Paul's Guitar Concert 13th May 2006

A Welcome Return

Our season's penultimate concert was given by one of the most distinguished contemporary exponents of the guitar, John Mills, whose programme was meticulously designed to draw together different strands of folkloric tradition from around the world, guiding the audience on a unique journey of musical discovery.

John Mills' mastery of the instrument was immediately evident in his performance of the opening collection of spirited Spanish dances by Gaspar Sanz, which inspired Rodriguez to write his famous *Fantasia para un Gentilhombre*. In contrast, the following set of Irish pieces explored a wider range of emotions, bringing an enriching Celtic dimension to the evening. The pieces included John Mills' own arrangement of *She Moved through the Fair*, which he described as 'haunting' and 'eerie'.

The suite by Duarte which followed was a tapestry of folk melodies set in their context of English land- and seascapes. There is little doubt



that John Mills' rendition of these pieces, which Duarte dedicated to Segovia – John's own Master – was one of the best ever heard on our stage.

The first half of the programme returned to the music of Spain and to pieces by Albeniz and Granados well-loved by Segovia himself. It concluded with Turina's kaleidoscope of images of Granada, brilliantly animated by John Mills' cascading

rasgueados, which evoked the all-pervading spirit of flamenco.

The second half of the programme was devoted to South American music, with its multifaceted folk tradition. The opening *Variations on a Venezuelan Children's Song* charmed the audience with its portrayal of innocence and joy – which was counterbalanced by the throbbing sensuality of Leo Brower's *Danza Antigua*, with distantly-remembered rhythms of Africa breaking through

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Dates for your Diary

| | | | |
|-----------|---|-------------|---|
| June 17th | Tomas Jimenez Concert | July 29th | WSGC at Hotham Park Bandstand |
| July 8th | Summer Party (Una Bella Noite) | August 25th | WSGC at Selsey Carnival |
| July 15th | Amanda Cook/WSGC concert at St Pauls Chichester | Sept 9th | WSGC at Bognor Birdman/Club Evening and AGM |

Most events take place on Saturdays at 7.30pm in the Regis School of Music, 46 Sudley Road, Bognor Regis. For details phone 01243 866462. For concert tickets phone 01243 528573 or visit the **Ticket Hotline** at www.westsussexguitar.com

West Sussex Guitar Club is grateful for the continued support of:

Please send copy for the next edition of *Good Vibrations* by **15th July** to Terry Woodgate, 3, East Ave., Middleton on Sea, West Sussex PO22 6EG
Tel: 01243 583355 or e-mail to: terry_woodgate@btinternet.com

