

Chairman's Welcome

Since our last Newsletter in January, we have held a successful Chichester Festival in February, with our Junior and Senior guitar sections (adjudicated by Mark Ashford) and have had four Club Evenings with the usual 'All-Join-In' orchestras, improving our sight-reading. Our professional recitals began with our Patron, the Brazilian guitarist Fabio Zanon in March, then the young British-Chilean guitarist Emmanuel Sowitz played in May, and in June, we had a recital by Mark Eden and Christopher Stell.

On 23 June, the WSGC took part in the Festival of Chichester, giving an evening performance "Purcell to Piazzolla" at St John's Chapel, Chichester, in which many of our club members played, and including a guest appearance by Zoe Barnett. The West Sussex Guitar Orchestra under the baton of Linda Kelsall-Barnett played nine pieces, and altogether, the concert raised over £300 for club funds.

In July, Linda, also in the Festival of Chichester, gave a joint concert at St John's Chapel, with local poet Barry Smith. They both performed solos, and Barry recited some excellent poems whilst Linda accompanied him on guitar, with well-chosen pieces.

Between the various heatwaves, we held our Summer Party in July, with the theme "Fiesta Latina". It was well attended with many dressed appropriately in sombreros and Latin American accoutrements. The Hall was well decorated with a backdrop of the Andes and cacti - the highlight being a condor made to 'fly' above the proscenium.

Also in July, four members of the WSGC Committee attended a garden party at Oakwood School, Chichester, to celebrate the 70th year of the Chichester Festival of Music, Dance and Speech. Those present in the open air marquee included the Mayor and Mayoress of Chichester, the Mayor of Bognor and the author Kate Moss, together with numerous wasps! Our club has had, and continues to have, an important role in the CFMDS.



Please do come and support our exciting professional concerts in the next season, and bring family and friends. The players are often world-famous and are always well worth seeing. Also, do borrow sheet music from our extensive library, newly organised with music marked for Beginners, Intermediate and general, with boxes labelled by composer.

I very much look forward to seeing you all in the coming season.

Julian Bobak Chairman

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Fabio Zanon 8 Mar 25

The Regis Recital Hall was full to capacity with the enthusiastic audience anticipating a fabulous treat. An evening of the highest level of guitar mastery to nourish our musical souls. On Fabio's previous visit we were mesmerised by his performances of two full sets of Etudes by fellow countrymen Villa-Lobos and Mignone. This time we had a recital of two halves. The first of keyboard-derived repertoire from two European baroque masters - Scarlatti and Bach; the second, 20th century original works for guitar.



The Allegro from Scarlatti's Sonata in Cm K.11 was an energetic opening piece full of typical baroque rhythms and awe-inspiring counterpoint. I recognised the work from duet versions and was impressed by the clarity given to all the parts in Fabio's own transcription. It sounded like several guitars projecting from the one instrument each with an equally engaging voice. Fabio's second piece was another Scarlatti sonata movement. A well chosen contrasting Pastoral from K.446 allowed the artist to demonstrate the more reflective aspects of his playing. I believe that Kirkpatrick catalogued the sonatas in chronological order so we can assume these pieces were from both ends of Scarlatti's creative life.

Fabio's introduction to the Bach Lute Suite (No.2) was very educational. Firstly the explanation of the current thinking that the four lute suites were written for the lautenwerk, a keyboard instrument that tried to imitate the sound of a lute; a softer sounding harpsichord. Secondly we were given a theological description of the fugue subject. The ascending scale to the perfect 5th ('man is perfect'); the drop of a major 7th (the fall from grace); and the slow chromatic climb back up (signifying that pleasing God is difficult). There were many moments of sensitivity in Fabio's realisation; of timbre, dynamics and well judged rubato. The sarabande was very recognisable with its memorable motifs and sequences. Here we could feel that incredible sense of long phrases which contain and make sense of the motifs that form them. The Gigue and Double rounded off the suite with a stunning sense of rhythm. The variation (double) was quite a feat and took us back to the energy of the opening Scarlatti but arguably on a more intense and higher plane.

Following the interval we hear about two Spanish composers and how their style varied despite being contemporaries. Torroba with his more elegant court music style from Madrid and Turina's more flamboyant and raw style from Andalusia. In the former's Piezas Caracteristicas we can hear that Torroba may have been exposed to a greater variety of European music. There is still the character of Spain throughout and this mix was brought out in perfect balance. Torroba wrote many great sets of pieces for guitar in a distinctive style. As a non-guitarist he did an amazing job of making them work so well on the instrument. We were given such a fine reading of this set this evening. Such variety brought to life with some incredible tones and stylistic interpretations. During the finale 'Panorama' we are left wondering where the other guitarists are. The canonical treatment of the theme makes it sound like there should at least two!

Turina's Fandanguillo Op.36 was pure Spanish dance style but full of the most refined and exquisite colour changes. From a tinkling delicate ponticello to the warmest of pizzicato sounds. Such sensitive and subtle tambora and harmonics completed the set which elevated the music. A perfect contrast and match for the Torroba.

The final composer on the programme was Francisco Mignone - a Brazilian composer ten years younger than Villa-Lobos. The 3 Etudes were from a set of 12. Doze Etudes. No4 full of fire with its

ascending motifs flying all over the fingerboard. No5 with its Latin dance rhythms was a lovely contrast. The 12312312 milonga style rhythms continued through into No9 but at a quicker tempo. With Mignone we were yet again shown a fine range of exquisitely nuanced colour to round off an evening of impeccably stylish performances.



As an encore we were treated to a beautiful lullaby 'Nana' written by Maria Esteban de Valera, on this occasion dedicated to International Women's Day. With great encouragement from the enthusiastic audience we had a second encore, this time by Armando Neves - Choro No2 from 18 Choros. Neves started out as a professional footballer in Brazil before turning to the guitar. Written in 1959 this was a richly melodic piece flowing lyrically to the close of the concert.

Andrew Richardson

Amanda Cook and the Concierto de Aranjuez

On a sunny May evening, I was lucky enough to attend the 'Great Classics' concert, conducted by Jonathan Willcocks, in the magnificent setting of St Paul's Church in Chichester. The musicians of the Southern Pro Musica Orchestra looked splendid - ladies in black dresses, the men in tailcoats with white bow ties - so we knew we were in for a treat. But even in a professional orchestra there is always a "character". The musicians



were all seated at 7.30 and ready to play when in rushed the trumpet player, laces undone on his patent shoes and his bow tie still dangling untied round his neck. He didn't have time to rectify this until later as he had to blow the first notes of the first piece! This was Felix Mendelssohn's Italian Symphony, described in the programme by the composer himself as 'the jolliest piece I have written so far', and the orchestra did not disappoint. However, for the guitarists in the audience, we were looking forward to the next item - Joaquin Rodrigo's *Concierto de Aranjuez*.

Amanda Cook was welcomed to the stage by the orchestra and took her seat in the centre next to the conductor. There was a breathless hush of anticipation as the large audience eagerly awaited the first notes. Amanda looked serenely confident throughout the three movements of this concerto. Remark-

ably, Amanda had returned to the country only days before, following a concert series in the United States with the Vida Quartet. The guitar was amplified, of course, but the orchestra, which had just been playing loudly and energetically in the Mendelssohn, somehow managed to play so delicately and sensitively that they did not overpower Amanda's guitar. The opening *Allegro con spirito* lived up to all our expectations but it was the *Adagio* that created a truly magical atmosphere in the church. As the last notes of the final movement, the *Allegro gentile*, died away, Amanda received a huge round of applause, not just from the audience, but from the conductor and the orchestra too. She was presented with a well-deserved bouquet of flowers.

I've always thought this piece was rather special, ever since first hearing the haunting *Adagio* played on a flugelhorn in the film "Brassed Off" where Rodrigo's masterpiece is affectionately known by the brass band players as the "Concierto d'Orange Juice". I was extremely fortunate to attend West Dean in 2014 when Rodrigo's daughter, Cecilia, was a special guest. The composer was further brought to life for me in a talk at West Dean given by Raymond Calcraft. He had translated the writings of Rodrigo, and a few extracts from his book 'Joaquin Rodrigo - Voice and Vision' (Calfcraft & Matthews) follow:

Joaquin Rodrigo (1901-1999) was blind from the age of three, yet he received many honours for his services to Spanish music and became the leading Spanish composer of the 20th century. He completed 175 compositions, written on his Braille typewriter, each one transcribed to a copyist. His works include one of the best-loved of all pieces of classical music, the *Concierto de Aranjuez* for guitar and orchestra. In 1938 Rodrigo was on his way to France when he happened to have lunch with the Spanish guitarist Regino Sainz de la Maza who said to him, "My friend, you must come back with a concerto for guitar and orchestra. It's been my lifelong dream! You are the one destined to do this, like a 'chosen one'!" Rodrigo immediately drank down two glasses of the best Rioja and exclaimed "My friend, it's done". Two months later in his studio in Paris he was thinking vaguely about the difficulty of such an undertaking when, "I heard within me the entire theme of the *Adagio*, suddenly without hesitation, and almost as you now hear it. And then immediately, with hardly a pause, the theme of the third movement, exactly as it appears in the work. If something akin to inspiration brought me to the *Adagio* and the final *Allegro*, I came to the first movement through reflection, calculation and will-power". A few months later with the orchestration complete only one thing remained to be known, which often kept him awake at night. Could it be played? And would the guitar be heard? The conclusive answer would be given in the spring of 1939 in the hands of guitarist Regino. The *Concierto de Aranjuez* evokes a vast array of colourful imagery of the palace and beautiful gardens of Aranjuez but

when Rodrigo was asked what he was thinking when he created it, he said "The only thing I was thinking was that the Concerto should turn out as well as possible, that it should give pleasure, and that it should be played a great deal". Thank you Amanda for playing it so beautifully and giving us all such pleasure.



Emmanuel Sowicz recital 10 May

The West Sussex Guitar Club enjoys inviting previous performers back to the stage but also welcomes new artists who bring with them a different interpretation of well-known guitar works but also perform compositions less acquainted to us. WSGC were delighted that prize-winning British-Chilean guitarist Emmanuel Sowicz accepted our invitation. His programme comprised pieces with a deeply spiritual connection in the first half, juxtaposed perfectly with pieces emanating from traditional folk and song music from Europe and South America in the second. The opening work of J.S Bach's 'Prelude, Fugue and Allegro' BWV 998 set a precedent for the entire concert, whereby intense focus, purity of tone production and clarity of musical ideas were to flow seemingly with little effort by virtue of a flawless technique. The subject in the Prelude oscillated between joy and doubt and ended in a harmonious peace. The subject and answer in the Fugue were to start as two separate threads on a spinning wheel but to unite as one, ending with a cascade of scales almost in free fall in the final Allegro.



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The programme continued with another work with a religious theme inspired by J.S. Bach - 'La Catedral' by Agustin Barrios. Barrios is regarded as one of the greatest performers of the 20th century, and arguably the most prolific composer for the guitar. La Catedral was originally composed in 1921 in two movements, starting with the sound of the bells of the cathedral of San Jose in the 'Andante Religioso' and reappearing as a repeated note in the 'Allegro Solemne'. The 'Preludio Saudade' was added a decade later during his difficult times in Havana as he looked back with nostalgia to the happiness of his past. Emmanuel captured the conflicting emotions of an aching wistfulness with subtle undercurrents of resentment and anger on looking back at a life once well-lived but now lost.

The first half ended with two pieces by Ferdinand Sor, often cited as the 'Beethoven of the guitar'. Lecon Op. 31 No. 23 'Mouvement de prière religieuse' is one of Emmanuel's favourite Sor studies because of its simplicity and spiritual inspiration. This was followed by the better known Etude Op.6 No. 11 'Allegro moderato' which was almost like an aria from an opera. The applause came as a delayed reaction as the audience emerged spell-bound from a deep trance and made their way to the refreshments in the interval.

The second half of the recital followed a French theme, and opened with 'Quatre Pièces' by British composer Sir Lennox Berkeley. Emmanuel explained the French connection - Berkeley studied under Nadia Boulanger and was acquainted with Ravel, Poulenc and Roussel, giving his compositions a French quality about them. Berkeley also graduated with a fourth class honours degree in French from Oxford! 'Quatre Pièces' was composed in 1927 for Segovia but was not published until 2001 and is not so much unknown as underplayed, compared to his popular 'Sonatina'. Julian Berkeley, Lennox's son, and his partner Tony Scotland, gifted Emmanuel a copy of the music. This work was possibly unknown and unusual in sound to many in the audience but Emmanuel's performance somehow concisely separated each musical idea clearly so that the voices never blurred, but also united the four movements such that they felt as one. Emmanuel impressively performed these four demanding movements as a continuum with no break in atmosphere nor concentration.

With barely a pause to regain energy, Emmanuel continued with Poulenc's 'Sarabande', FP 179. This was composed at the end of Poulenc's life when his high-spirited works moved towards something more serious. The beautiful melody, often played *tasto*, was almost chant-like, and ended with a gentle plucking of the open strings upwards as if ascending to heaven. The French section of the recital ended with 'Segovia' Op.29, composed by Albert Roussel, and this lilting sun-infused piece was his only work for the guitar.

Emmanuel then spoke of how honoured he was to perform with David Russell after winning the London International Guitar Festival and that it had inspired him to do something special. He commissioned renowned Chilean guitarist/composer Juan Antonio Sánchez to write a work for him that would reflect his musical journey and also celebrate his British-Chilean heritage. Sánchez wrote an delightful 'Chilean Fantasy on Traditional English Melodies' illustrating his compositional skills in both the classical and folk genres. Beneath the surface of tonal colours and rhythms of Chile we could hear the well-known folk songs 'Scarborough Fair' and 'Greensleeves' and all answers for the opening and closing tune to be sent to Sasha!

The programme ended with three short pieces by the iconic Venezuelan composer Antonio Lauro who, like Sánchez, possessed compositional skills in both the classical and folk domains. The audience were again privy to the fusion of South American and European styles with two waltzes, 'Maria Carolina' and 'La Negra' with a lullaby 'Ana Florencia' lying between the two. There was no question about an encore and this magical recital closed with Emmanuel's arrangement of Violeta Parra's soulful song 'Gracias a la Vida' whose words contrast so starkly with the melancholy of the melody. As the last notes held suspended in the air the thunderous applause broke the calm.



Emmanuel graciously spoke of the joy of playing in a building dedicated to music and especially guitar-playing and thanked Sasha for all his work and generosity and to Teresa, whose good fortune to hear Emmanuel perform in Brighton in 2023 sparked the invitation. Everyone at WSGC would like to thank Emmanuel for such a wonderful concert and we look forward to seeing him again as adjudicator at our festival on 1st and 2nd November 2025.

Teresa Henley

Eden Stell Duo

There could not have been a more fitting end to the WSGC's concert season than the welcomed return of the Eden Stell duo. Mark Eden and Chris Stell gave their debut performance in 1996 at the club's first home at the Old School in Bersted. In the five recitals given from 1996 to 2018 their innovative programmes, insightful arrangements and vivid performances have captured the hearts and souls of the audience. The programme for this concert paralleled their CD recordings and encompassed compositions from different musical periods and parts of Europe and Asia and often by composers whose music was written for other instruments but works equally well on the guitar.

The concert opened with Mozart's Sonata No.4 (K282) arranged by Mark. Eden Stell captured the lightness and delicacy of this piece: the highly ornamented serene melody floating above an equally expressive supporting series of arpeggios in the Adagio movement, two playful Minuets and an energetically babbling Allegro.

Bach's keyboard concerto in D minor BWV 974 is a transcription of Alessandro Marcello's concert for oboe with three string parts and a bass continuo and arranged by Chris, but transposed to B minor. The duo completely captured the poignancy and sadness of the Adagio.



The mystical sounds of Armenian folklore and dance were heard in 'Prelude', 'Impromptu' and 'Elegy', composed by Arno Babajanyan and arranged by Chris. Eden Stell embraced the quirky syncopated rhythms and the tetrachord based harmonies to convey the feel of the East. The inclusion of this composer reflects the duo's commitment to nurturing the growth and appreciation of the classical guitar amongst young Armenian music students through the charity Play2.

Much of the concert was dedicated to the music composed by and written for Ida Presti, primarily as a soloist but also, with Alexander Lagoya as a duo. Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco was a prolific composer of guitar music. 'Les Guitares bien Tempérées' was based on J.S. Bach's 'The Well-Tempered Clavier' but inspired by and dedicated to the Presti-Lagoya duo. Eden Stell performed the first six of these twenty four preludes and fugues, leaving the audience praying for a further two recitals to complete the set! They are all technically demanding in their own way, and not for the faint-hearted guitarist. The rapidly ascending scale passages in intervals in the B minor Prelude No.5 conveyed an urgency without ever being rushed. The Prelude No.1 in G minor conveyed a sense of agitation without ever losing control. The rippling tremolo, dotted with harmonics in the E major Prelude No.4 was played with lightness, conveying the interplay of sunlight on water. The joyous Fugue was a test of dexterity for both hands where the subject was heard along the entire length of the fret board whilst being played at varying distances from the bridge to create varying degrees of dryness in sound.

Andr  Jolivet composed 'Serenade' for the Presti-Lagoya duo and is a piece which fully demonstrates their 'commitment to pushing the boundaries of the guitar duo repertoire into new territories'. Jolivet studied and understood the full tonal palette of the guitar and how and when to utilise it to almost orchestrate his guitar compositions. In the opening 'Preludio e canzona' a sultry melody was played against a backdrop of listless chords too tired to go anywhere. The percussive elements of the guitar were utilised in the 'Allegro Trepidante' whereby driving rhythmical chords play, as if in argument, against a taut melody which recedes and then resurfaces all the more fierce. The oppressive languor returns in the 'Andante Malinconico' where even the harmonics seem weary but the final 'Con Allegria' is frenzied, almost primeval with Stravinsky-like chords pounding in a ritual.

'Etude Fantasque' was composed by Ida and is a piece which demonstrates 'her great understanding of the ensemble duo where there is no primo and secondo, just an integrated piece'. The applause was as fierce and demanding as the playing and the duo responded by performing 'Fuga Elegiaca' by Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco as an encore. Known as the twenty fifth prelude and fugue, the piece was composed in memory of the incredibly gifted Ida Presti who, with her husband Alex Lagoya paved a new path for the guitar duo.

Eden Stell's performance was interspersed with entertaining stories, the most notable being their recent re-watching of the video of their first duo recital for the WSGC in 1996. Chris remarked on his 'truly awful mop of hair' and Mark made the comment that 'At least I had hair then'. Both thanked Sasha for his encouragement and support shown to them as young performers and for his contribution to the guitar community, a sentiment reflected by the audience's applause.

For those that were unable to attend, Eden Stell's recently released CD 'Homage to Ida Presti' encapsulates the vision of this legendary guitarist and her duo partner and makes for compulsive listening. For those that did, we eagerly await the return of Eden Stell and their ever-evolving repertoire.

Teresa Henley

WSGO at Portsmouth Festival

On a cold damp day in February, six members of the West Sussex Guitar Orchestra headed to Portsmouth Central Library's Menuhin Room to take part in the Portsmouth Festival of Performing Arts. Our orchestra, which followed the only other competitor in our class (a ladies' guitar trio called 'Aurora Borealis'), performed Prelude, Rondeau and Chaconne from Purcell's 'Fairy Queen' (arr. Raymond Burley), Ketèlbey's 'In a Persian Market' (arr. Debbie Burford) and Vincent Lindsey-Clark's 'Danza Venezuela'. There was a small but appreciative audience as conductor Linda Kelsall-Barnett and the orchestra took a bow.

The adjudicator, Vincent Lindsey-Clark, said he had very much enjoyed our orchestra's playing and commented that "A good deal of preparation had gone into this performance, the ensemble playing was tight and the music was well-shaped with clearly defined dynamics." We must thank Linda for this,



as director and conductor of the WSGO, for all the hard work she puts into our rehearsals and for all the thought that goes into selecting the programme for each performance.

We were all amazed when Vincent told us that the Persian Market brought back memories of the 'Sand Dance' of 'Wilson, Keppel and Betty' adding that his mother (who was in a sing-

ing group called 'The Three Herons') played on the same bill as them and later shared the stage with a young 'Morecambe and Wise'. Anyway, Vincent must have been excited by our orchestra's rendition of the piece because he also wrote "Sorry about the coffee stain on the certificate!"

Finally, a special thank you must go to Andrew Richardson who has taken on the role of Head of Guitar Section for the Portsmouth Festival and who also organised a delicious curry in Port Solent afterwards for the competitors, adjudicator and festival helpers.

Debbie Burford

Club evening January 18th 2025

The first club evening of the year drew eighteen members out of their winter hibernation with many using the occasion as a practice run through for the Chichester Festival. Thirteen opted for the

All-Join-In orchestra, including two junior members Robbie Cartwright and Lucy Carson, and Sasha introduced the orchestra to Shostakovich's Waltz from the Jazz Suite no.1. This was written for a 'Variety Orchestra' including instruments commonly found in a dance band ie saxophone, accordion and guitars to create a casual circus-like atmosphere at a time when Stalin was committing great atrocities to the Russian people. The opening phrase, offering a request to dance, was followed by a second more insistent plea and floated above a slightly sinister 'oompah-pa, oompah-pa' lurking below. Robbie and Lucy then joined as a duet and played 'Chorinho' by Celso Machado and 'Romanze' (anon.) and then separated to play Tarrega's 'Malaguena' and 'El Negrita' respectively. Vakaris Silaikis performed Tarrega's beautifully wistful 'Capriccio Arabe' and mostly from memory apart from the the opening motif which, according to him, 'Went straight out of my head!' Sasha reassured him that although now deleted from his memory there were still fifteen days before the festival to replace it. His sterling efforts were followed by a solid performance of Villa Lobos' 'Mazurka Choro'.

Peter Watkins, who has been with the club since its beginning and is no longer able to see music, and David Alexander, who is new to the club and is unable to read music, demonstrated that music can be deciphered and then performed by the sense of hearing alone. Peter played his own arrangement of Bach's 'Fugue and Fuguetta' in D minor and David, accompanied by his friend 'Tyrone the Rat', performed two of his own evocative compositions 'Summer Rain' and 'Regrets'. Teresa Henley then played Carcassi's Study in A major no.3 op.60 and, having forgotten to bring her music, played the piece from memory with Sasha fulfilling her request for help by calling out the forgotten last chord of A major.

In Linda's absence, Jay Huff led the West Sussex Guitar Orchestra to play three movements of Purcell's 'Fairly Queen.' Elaine Foakes, Baz Boxall, Yvonne Scott, Debbie Burford and Teresa Henley were joined on this occasion by Conor Miles. Jay, Conor and Yvonne, aka 'The Tatum Trio' then played the Minuet movement from Mozart's Symphony no.29 and a Fugue by Handel originally composed for piano and organ. Their performance came to an abrupt halt as Jay's foot pedal stopped working. The obstinate foot pedal refused to co-operate requiring Jay to play either by memory, improvisation, or possibly both. Trio moved to duo with Jay on the guitar and Conor on the clarinet performing Conor's arrangements of 'Sicilienne' from Faure's 'Pelleas and Melisande' and a Bossa Nova by Brazilian guitarist Laurindo Almeida.

Sasha concluded the evening by congratulating Jay on his sight-reading and transpositional skills, the hall was cleared away in record time and the evening ended spot on 10pm, well before we all turned into pumpkins.

Teresa Henley

Club Evening 7 June

The rain may have stopped summer fetes and garden parties but eighteen members armed with umbrellas and raincoats attended the club evening in June. Sasha launched the All-Join-In orchestra into a sweetly melodic 'Swedish Folk Song' written as a lullaby. Those in the audience who had possibly drifted into a slumber were abruptly woken by the sun-laden Israeli National Anthem which followed. And those in the orchestra were woken up by having to move their fingers swiftly up into the unknown territory of the thirteenth fret.

The WSGO, reunited with Linda Kelsall-Barnett, performed three pieces from the repertoire programmed for the forthcoming concert at St. John's Chapel. They started with 'Prelude' and 'Rondeau' from Purcell's 'The Fairy Queen', ended with Thierry Tisserand's 'Coeur Milonga' and sandwiched in the middle was 'Ninotchka' by Olga Amelkina-Vera. To pronounce the title and the composer was almost as difficult as it was to play the intricate, syncopated rhythms. Sasha demonstrated which syllable to emphasise which sent a ripple of 'Ninotchkas' through the orchestra, almost as if everyone was sneezing. Sasha informed us that the name of the piece is derived from Nina, which translates to 'grace', and that his mother was named Olga. Linda said a prayer to Olga to help them get the rhythm right, which worked, and they gave a spirited performance of this piece, with both women in the forefront of their minds. Sasha announced that he had nothing to criticise, the bowing was beautiful but that everyone should smile at each other and, more importantly, at those members of the audience who clapped the loudest. Andrew Richardson gave an impromptu performance of Villa-Lobos's Prelude no.1 whilst the orchestra were still seated. Played from memory and with barely a note out of place, it was his best yet and to celebrate, everyone headed towards the table laden with food and wine.

The second half of the evening started with Vakaris Silaikis and 'Capricio Arabe' by Tarrega. He played with great sensitivity and by memory but Sasha asked us if we could all encourage him to grow his fingernails! David Alexander, returning from Greece unblemished from the ash spewed by Mount Etna, performed two of his own compositions; 'Salamander' samba and 'Amelia' waltz. Baz Boxall was gently encouraged, and partly bribed, back onto the stage to play Sor's study in A minor and received Sasha's words of encouragement that Sor is always welcome on the stage and that there are another twenty four studies for him to perform.

Teresa Henley played Tarrega's beautiful but fiendishly difficult 'Adelita'. The request for feedback was granted and with the music stand whisked away she played the piece again by memory, taking on board the words of advice offered. David Clarke announced that he was due to play in a twelve hour fund-raising event in support of New Forest for Ukraine at the Selsey Folk Club. Organised by Julian Lindsey-Clark, David chose to support the charity and the organiser by performing 'Rio by Night' by Julian's brother Vincent Lindsey-Clark. Everyone fell under the spell of this gently bubbling bossa nova and many of the audience voted it as their favourite piece.

Linda Kelsall-Barnett played 'Cantabile' and 'Vivo' by Milan Tesar and 'Paseo' by Eduardo Sainz de la Maza from suite 'Plateso y yo' which translates as 'Donkey and me'. Peter Watkins was asked to the stage and his gasped reply of 'What, you want me to play after Linda, are you trying to destroy the club?' succinctly summarised the quality of her performance. Peter then played 'Trains and Boats and Planes' and apologised for the number of wrong notes, not that he was alone on that score! Jay Huff played a selection of short English folk songs by John Duarte and finished with the beautiful 'Gracias a la vida' by Chilean composer Violeta Para, an exquisite lament tinged with bitterness.

The evening ended with the New Gala Quartet performing Brian Bonsor's 'Three into Five' arranged by Debbie Burford and a delightful arrangement of Vincent Lindsey-Clark's 'Tango esta Noche' by Frank Lamm.

Sasha announced that, with a small number of attendees 'there is so much joy in intimacy'. The evening drew to a close and thanks must go to the end of night washer-uppers Diana Green and Teresa Henley.

Three club evenings have been held this year; two have attracted sixteen members, the other only nine but as this was held on the night before the London marathon it is possible that other club members were preparing for the race! The All-Join-In orchestra has proven to be immensely popular and has helped enormously with our sight-reading. The standard of guitar playing is continuously improving and we are delighted that these solo sessions appeal to both long-standing club members and to new. The younger club members (Aaron Butters, Sofia and Lucy Carson, Robbie Cartwright, Evelina Kisliak and Varkaris Silaikis) continue to inspire us with their confidence and competence on the stage. WSGO wishes to thank Elaine Foakes for deputising whilst Linda Kelsall-Barnett recuperated, allowing them to continue preparing for the Festival of Chichester concert. And to Linda for curating and organising the programme and concert and making a swift return to rehearsals.

We must thank Julian Bobak for tempting us to part with our money at his music stall, Evelina Kisliak for travelling from Guildford, where she is a student, to arrange the food table, Christopher Small and Barbara Westmore for taking some truly memorable photos and to all who help with the clearing away and washing up at the end of the evenings. Final thanks must go to Sasha for hosting these enjoyable club evenings which are always imbued with warmth, conviviality and some great guitar playing.

Teresa Henley

West Sussex Guitar Club at the Festival of Chichester

What a fabulous evening we had for our West Sussex Guitar Club at the Festival of Chichester - titled 'Purcell to Piazzolla' on Monday 23rd June. The concert was held at the beautiful St John's Chapel, Chichester. Once a proprietary chapel built to meet the spiritual needs of an 18th and 19th century growing urban population, the chapel now serves the community as a concert hall and theatre. The light and airy interior, with big windows, a gallery running around all sides and an impressive and distinctive three decker pulpit all added to this special occasion where the orchestra, ensembles and soloists all gave their personal best performances.

The concert was directed by Linda Kelsall-Barnett and compèred by Sasha. West Sussex Guitar Orchestra (WSGO) opened the concert by performing music from Purcell's 'The Fairy Queen' and ended it with Astor Piazzolla's 'Libertango'. In between lay an interesting and engaging programme of many differing musical genres and from many different countries. Peter Maxwell-Davies' atmospheric and poignant 'Farewell to Stromness' ended with a chord mimicking the sound of a fog horn, almost marking the success of the local people in quashing the building of a uranium mine. Albert Ketèlbey's 'In a Persian Market', arranged by Debbie Burford, introduced us to snake charmers, caliphs and beautiful princesses. The audience were privy to the dance music of Spain and Thierry Tisserand's sultry 'Couleur Milonga', a faster but more relaxed type of tango. The challenging and yet most rewarding piece was Olga Amelkina-Vera's 'Ninotchka'; a pleasantly ambling melody interspersed with some really tricky but colourful rhythmical syncopated chords. 'Ninotchka' is a tender variation of "Nina" in Russian and translates to 'grace' and Linda Kelsall-Barnett dedicated our performance to Sasha's wife Nina for all that she does for the club. The ensembles also gave their finest performances yet. New Gala Quartet played Brian Bonsor's captivating 'Three into five' (arranged by Debbie Burford) where the sense of the rhythm and beat was unfaltering. Tatum Trio opened with 'Minuet' from Mozart's Symphony 29 and finished with 'Manhã de Carnaval' from 'Black Orpheus' by Luis Bonfá, both pieces having been arranged by Conor Miles. In Brazil, the word 'bossa' is old-fashioned slang for something done with particular charm and innate ability. This



phrase was a perfect description for the lilting catchy melody played by Yvonne Scott on harmonica and Conor Miles on clarinet, which gently bobbed over the calm syncopated chords played by Jay Huff, much as a seagull rides on the thermal currents above the sea. The Brazilian theme continued with Jay and Conor performing 'Aqua e Vinho' by Gismonti

(arranged by Sergio Assad) and the duo perfectly captured the defining characteristic of this Brazilian *saudade*; sadness blended with sweet nostalgia.



The final duo was a new and inspirational mix of words and guitar. Barry Smith, local poet and director of the South Downs Poetry Festival read his poem 'Willows' accompanied by Linda Kelsall-Barnett play-



ing Etude No.6 by Leo Brouwer. The descending arpeggios rippled from major to minor like the supple branches of the willow tree bending gently in a summer breeze. This was a delightful taster of Barry and Linda's forthcoming Chichester Festival concert 'Sussex Serendipity'.



The soloists performed in chronological order, starting with A level students - Aaron Butters playing the 'Earl of Essex, His Galliard' by John Dowland, followed by Vakaris Silaikis with Tarrega's 'Capricho Arabe'. These were fine performances of two very demanding pieces and the two youngsters were rewarded with a resounding round of applause. The WSGC were delighted that Zoe Barnett was able to join us to perform 'Cancion Y Danza' by Antonio Ruiz-Pipo. Ruiz-Pipo was a virtuoso pianist and composer and 'Cancion Y Danza' is his main legacy for the guitar. The 'Cancion', a ballad of possible unrequited or lost love was sung sorrowfully by Zoe's guitar but the subsequent 'Danza' was as joyous and uplifting as love found or reunited. Elaine Foakes ended the soloist section with 'Elegy for Dipa' by Vincent Lindsey-Clark. This was commissioned by one of Vincent Lindsey-Clark's guitar students in memory of the student's late mother who sadly passed away at the age of forty eight years. The opening harmonics cast an image of the Ganges, from which came a beautifully





Kelsall-Barnett's baton. This with an applause that re- was gratefully answered by Manuel Penella.



played melody that oscillated between the happy memories of a life well lived but of the sadness felt as it came to an untimely end.

The concert ended with the WSGO playing Astor Piazzolla's most memorable piece 'Libertango' and arranged by Alfonso Montes. The piece just naturally unfolded from a series of single syncopated notes that then merged with a series of of unassuming inquisitive chords which finally exploded into a melody with the sound and passion of a bandoneon and all kept tightly under control by Linda who performed ex-

This was a memorable concert where all celled themselves. A big thank you to Linda Kelsall interesting and colourful programme for the WSGO and for all her hard work and energy in preparing us for our performance. Also to Sasha Lev- tov for so effortlessly compèring the occasion and to Elaine Foakes who helped us remain focused and on track when Linda needed time out. Grati- tude must be given to Ian Barnett for taking the monies at the door and providing interval refreshments, to Debbie and Robin Burford who transport- ed numerous chairs for the occasion, to St. John's Church, Chichester for hosting us and to the very special appreciative audience who supported us all the way.

Teresa Henley



-Barnett for curating an



Fiesta Latino

This year's Summer Party was themed 'Fiesta Latino', and certainly brought the heat and the passion of South America to Bognor Regis. The slight rain shower in the morning was pushed aside by the returning sun which shone as vibrantly as the appropriately decorated Regis School of Music. Guests walked into a hall decked with flags of all the countries of Latin America, kindly loaned by David Alexander; suddenly Bognor Regis was hosting the Pan American Games! On the stage, the lofty Andes, desert cacti, and cumulonimbus were all set against a blue sky, brilliantly constructed only that morning by Sasha, Debbie Burford and David Clarke. Mexican-patterned tiles adorned the front of the stage and hovering over the landscape was a "condor" (aka Debbie's son's soft toy eagle!) which would miraculously flap its wings from time to time as it soared on the thermal currents. Guests wore brightly coloured skirts, dresses, trousers and ponchos and there were an abundance of sombreros, bought as an item with matching black moustaches, from Amazon.

The music was as colourful as the décor, starting with the two orchestras and ending with the soloists. Guitar Harmony, led by Andrew Richardson and joined by Jay Huff took us 'Sailing' to the Caribbean with 'YellowBird', then to Mexico with 'La Bamba' and finally to Argentina for a Tango. West Sussex Guitar Orchestra conducted by Linda Kelsall-Barnett followed on with the furiously fast 'Tico Tico', 'Couleur Calypso' and the sultry 'Libertango'.



In the interval, guests enjoyed a huge table of delicious buffet food that had been temptingly arranged by Nina, while Sasha not only hosted the party but also found time to serve his delicious sangria punch.



Next came ensemble performances mingled with solos starting with the New Gala Quartet playing a delightful arrangement of 'Tango Esta Noche' and a 'Serenata' whose country of origin could be found amongst all the flags (Mexico). Tatum Triio played 'Adeus' and the firm favourite 'Manhã de Carnaval'



from 'Black Orpheus' where guitars were magically transformed into other instruments. Baz Boxall and Teresa Henley gave their debut performance as a duo under the temporary title 'Barrios and





Tarrega'. After a slight delay, precipitated by Baz's I-pad failing to recognise him with his newly-acquired moustache, they serenaded the audience with the Brazilian 'Morenita'. Jay Huff and Conor Miles (who also have no official title!) performed another Astor Piazzolla composition, 'Milonga Del Angel'.

Conor Miles, minus his two accomplices, then played 'Choro Repose' by the Brazilian composer João Pernambuco. David Alexander entertained us with a poem called 'Johnny Crocodile' while his puppet crocodile 'Johnny' probably

terrified Yvonne Scott as it chomped into her shoulder! He redeemed himself by performing his own compositions 'Samba Salamander' and 'Marionettes at Play'.



Brazilian composers scored two more points with Elaine Foakes playing Villa Lobos' Prelude No.1 and Linda Kelsall-



Barnett playing his Prelude No.4. The final goal was scored by Paraguay with Linda performing 'Danza Paraguaya' by Agustin Barrios as the hovering condor flapped its final farewell, gently assisted by some string-pulling by Juliet Robinson.

Latin America hosts some fine composers, many of whom were represented at the party by

those who performed. There were many people involved in making this a special occasion.

WSGC would like to thank Bognor's Mayor, Councillor Gillian Yeates, for attending our party despite a diary packed with other



duties and commitments. Thanks must also go to Julian Bobak, his sister Binny, and their American friends for keeping Gill company. No party is complete without the stage designers who risk life and limb climbing up step ladders and so we thank Sasha and David Clarke, and also those who stayed firmly on the ground (Debbie and Robin). And we must applaud the elves who come at the end of the evening to clear away the dirty glasses; Elaine Foakes, Joanna Wellwood-Froud, Rachel Boxall





and Barbara Westmore. Well, only two more people to thank - Sasha and Nina Levtoy for being "the hosts with the mosts"!

Teresa Henley

Librarian's notes: AGUSTÍN BARRIOS MANGORÉ



A Paraguayan composer, Agustín Barrios Mangoré (1885-1944) was one of the most prolific composers for guitar, as well as being a virtuoso performer. Barrios was part of the indigenous Guaraní people, and therefore drew heavily upon folk music in his compositions. For a period of several years, beginning in 1932, he occasionally dressed in Guaraní garments for performances. During this time, he occasionally used the pseudonym Nitsuga (ie Agustín spelled backwards) Mangoré, and Mangoré' being a folkloric chief hero of the Guaraní people. Composer of more than 300 songs, he was famed for his phenomenal performances. His works were largely late-Romantic in character.

Widely considered his magnum opus, the J.S.Bach inspired La Catedral was much praised by Andrés Segovia. Some scholars like to divide Barrios's prolific music into three categories: Folkloric, Imitative, and Religious. From bold luscious chords with swooping melodies, to lightening fast melodic runs with complex rhythmic structures, his music has something to offer to everyone. Barrios is still revered in to this day, where he is seen as one of the greatest guitarists of all time by many. John Williams said of Barrios : "As a guitarist/composer, Barrios is the best of the lot, regardless of era. His music is better formed, it's more poetic. It's more everything! And it's more of all those things in a timeless way".

Julian Bobak

From the Editor

A huge thank you to all the contributors to this vibrant News Letter! To our most prolific writer Teresa, Debbie for her articles and photos, Andrew for his excellent recollection of Fabio's recital and to Barbara Westmore and Chris Small for additional photos. Finally, a very special thank you to Julie Insull for her many years of contributing to the Club's art work and keeping the Club's profile active on Facebook!

The West Sussex Guitar Club is grateful for the continued support given by:

