

Mediterranean Reflections

If or November's recital Eleftheria Kotzia offered an excellent programme suffused with the colour and atmosphere of the Mediterranean. Her usual sensitivity and wide tonal range were well to the fore throughout the evening. Miss Kotzia knows how to exploit the full range of the guitar to excellent effect.

Notable moments came during John Tavener's "Chant" in which the performer is instructed to hum in unison with the guitar, and during the four Greek Dances. In both cases Miss Kotzia drew forth sounds and colours from the instrument which were totally unlike the standard guitar repertoire. The evening was all the better for it.

All the original works in the programme were written in the 20th century, giving the recital a very focussed, contemporary feel and again offering an alternative to the more common pattern of recital amongst professional



Eleftheria Kotzia at the Old School Concert Hall

guitarists.

Eleftheria Kotzia is a performer who combines technique with great sensitivity in interpreting the music

she performs. We look forward to her return to the Club in coming seasons.

Simon Burnham

Inside This Issue

Guitar-making in the 21st century	page 2
A surprise package from Versailles	page 3
Simon Dinnigan - Sat 13 January 1996	page 3
Chichester Festival	page 4
Worthing Festival Winners	page 4
Librarian's Corner	page 4

**A Happy and Prosperous
New Year to you all!**

Snowman punch drunk at Christmas!

A lifesize snowman, the creation of Pam Davis, greeted an unprecedented number of members and guests to this year's Christmas Party. Judging by his expression he had consumed a large quantity of the hot punch, magically brewed and dispensed by Michael Royall, which warmed our spirits throughout the evening.

The proceedings commenced with solo and ensemble performances in a festive vein, including the first performance by the Felice Ensemble, and culminating in a rendition of several of Spike Milligan's animal poems, set to music by John Duarte, and performed with great style and wit by John and Claudia Edwards.

Next came food and, to the excitement of younger members, the raffle, with a range of prizes donated by one and all. The evening concluded with carols sung around the piano, to Nina's accompaniment. These included a virtuoso performance of the Twelve Days of Christmas, led by Pam and accompanied by assorted pops, bangs,

(Continued on page 2 col 4)

Guitar-making in the 21st century

At a well-attended club evening on 25th November, a fascinated audience heard Stewart Adamson explain the theories behind the latest developments in guitar-making. Taking as his starting points the statement that as a mechanical system the guitar is only 5% efficient, and John Williams' assertion that the guitar is due for a re-think, Stewart identified the main strands of contemporary development. He contrasted those makers using ultra-thin soundboards, such as Smallman in Australia, with others such as Kascha and Schneider in the States and himself in the UK who are experimenting with much thicker soundboards. One practical advantage Stewart claims for the thicker soundboard is that it has a working lifetime upwards of ten times that of a thin soundboard.

Re-positioning of the soundhole is another fea-

ture of the Kascha-Schneider school. Stewart explained that its traditional place in the centre weakens the soundboard, requiring a large central strut which reduces the vibrating area of the soundboard by almost half. Moving the soundhole to one side adjacent to the neck, and using radial instead of fan strutting, dramatically increases the vibrating area. This helps to achieve one of Stewart's main goals, that of increasing the sustain and penetration of the instrument. These features were amply demonstrated later in the evening when members had the chance to play two of his guitars.

Stewart paid tribute to the encouragement he has received from Stepan Rak, who has been playing his instruments for some time now and giving useful feedback on their performance in concert conditions. Stewart told of how, after a recital in a



Stewart demonstrates his vacuum table

venue notorious for its poor acoustic, one well known critic asked Stepan what amplification he had been using!

Under construction is a new instrument for Stepan which Stewart hopes to complete in the spring. This will incorporate several new features including strings tied through the soundboard, rather than on the bridge, thus reducing the strain on the bridge; a fan-shaped base for the bridge which will improve the transmission of the bass notes to the soundboard; and a floating back to reinforce the resonance of the soundboard.

After the talk, members were interested to see Stewart demonstrate some of his guitar-making equipment, which bore ingenious testimony to his background as an engineer and tool-maker. Of great interest was a vacuum table which enables

enormous, yet even, pressure to be applied when gluing struts to the soundboard, and has the added advantage that it sucks all the moisture out of the adhesive, thus ensuring a better and longer-lasting bond.

Our thanks are due to Stewart for giving us a truly fascinating insight into the latest developments in guitar design, the moreso as he was suffering from a severe attack of 'flu at the time.

We look forward to a return visit, and to seeing his new guitars in action in the hands of Stepan Rak in due course.

Richard Prior

(Continued from page 1 col 4)

squeaks and rattles from a variety of impromptu musical instruments.

Our thanks, as always, go to all who contributed to the enjoyment of the evening, whether by performance, prizes or catering. All in all the party was a great success.



Stewart looks on as Richard tries out one of his guitars

A surprise package from Versailles

A large wintry moon and hard frosty night marked the return of the Quatuor de Guitares de Versailles to the West Sussex Guitar Club on Saturday 9th December. Inside, the crisp notes of a Boccherini quintet rang through the Old School Concert Hall with crystal clarity.

In a programme selected to surprise, stimulate, entrance and amuse, items were chosen with the greatest care, with Leo Brouwer's impressionistic Cuban Landscape con Rumba following the opening quintet. The insistent clang of the church bell sounded over the corrugated iron roofs of the shanty towns with their dulled cacophony of noise, contrasting with the freshness and fluidity of the natural landscape.

The following haunting swing rhythms of Astor Piazzolla's Invierno Porteño were similarly juxtaposed with the more intellectualised exploration of the dimensionality of sound in Leonardo Balada's Apuntes. The barred staccato Verticals contrasted with the scalar Planes; the multi-layered Strata with the delicacy of Heights as the audience strained to catch the tiniest droplet of sound; and all variations were recapitulated in the final Insistencias.

The post-interval programme opened with the first-ever perfor-



Quatuor de Guitares de Versailles

mance of Franz Constant's Caractères, comprising bright optimistic sketches completed shortly before the arrangements for the concert. John Duarte's lyrical Concerto Democratico preceded an arrangement of the capti-

vating pianola-style theme tune of Fellini's Eight and a Half; the players, like clowns, deserted the stage in a final joke shared by the audience.

The Quartet gave two performances on this tour, in Bognor and the

Chapel Royal, Brighton. Each member of the Quartet, founded in 1987, has won national and international prizes and the Quartet has made several TV broadcasts.

Angela MacTavish

Don't miss Simon Dinnigan: 7.30pm Saturday 13th January at the Old School Concert Hall



For our first recital in the New Year we are fortunate to have Simon Dinnigan, an artist of international standing and now Professor of Guitar at the Conservatoire of Music in Birmingham.

The January '96 edition of Classical Guitar magazine says of Simon: *"..now a seasoned performer of some 12 years standing, but still young enough to be called promising. A fine tone, a seamless tremolo, loads of expression and a nifty turn of speed all make Simon a major talent"*.

Tickets £5.50 (members), £7.00 (non-members), under 14 half price.

Don't miss it!

Chichester Music Festival - February 1996

Moving the Guitar section of the Chichester Music Festival to the Old School Concert Hall has proved to be very successful. The hospitable atmosphere of the Hall, together with the close involvement of Guitar Club members have helped both the participants and the audience to benefit from and enjoy this annual event.

The most encouraging sign of the Festival's popularity is no doubt the number of entries, which is up 50% on last year! As a result, the schedule this year will see the events spread evenly over two days.

The guitar classes will be as follows:

Saturday 10th (up to 18yrs)

Solo novice
Solo beginners (<grade 4)
Solo intermediate (grade 4+)
Solo Bach
Duet (under 14)
Duet (14+)
Trio/quartet
Orchestra
Junior recital

Sunday 11th (18yrs+)

Solo novice
Solo intermediate
Duet
Trio/quartet
Ensemble with any other instrument
Orchestra
Solo (open)
Solo Bach (open)
Solo recital (open)

Both days commence

at 11:00am. Times of individual classes can be obtained from Sasha on 01243 866162.

The adjudicator on the first day will be the superb musician and very interesting teacher, **Nicola Hall**. Adjudicating on the second day will be a guitarist of no lesser standing than **Charles Ramirez**, Professor of Guitar at the

Royal College of Music, London. The memories of his two brilliant performances for our club must surely continue to be an inspiration.

Most of the classes have a good number of entries and this will be both encouraging for the participants and interesting for the audience.

Please do come along to support all the players

and exercise your judgement in spotting the emerging talents of today and stars of tomorrow.

And please, if you can help in any way during the two days, your efforts will add to the success of one of the most stimulating events in the guitar life of our county.

Sasha Levto

Worthing Festival Winners

The Club had considerable success at the Worthing Festival held on 11th November. Regis Guitars made their first appearance and gained first place in the ensemble class, playing Pantomime by Mozart

and a Gavotte by Bach.

Other placings were:

Novice (under 16)

1st: Robert Verheul

Solo (under 13)

1st: Jack Enticott

2nd: Alexander Iles;

Bach class

1st: Jack Enticott

2nd: Alexander Iles;
Duet/Trio

2nd: Tim Smithen and
Jack Enticott;

Solo (under 15)

1st: Tim Smithen.

Our congratulations to all the above on their splendid performances!

Library News

New to the video library is "The Seville Concert" - In the first part John Williams plays at the Alcazar Palace; the second part profiles John at home in England and Australia including a discussion with Paco Peña.

Also new is an audio cassette of the performances given by club members on our first Club Evening of the current season.

I am sure both will prove to be very popular.

Pam Davis

For Sale

Pablo de la Cruz guitar, c.1990, cedar top, good condition, lovely tone, strong sound. £1600 o.n.o.
Tel. Alison 01903 241080 (evenings).



1996 Diary



SOUTH-EAST ARTS

Jan 13 Simon Dinnigan - Concert

Feb 10/11 Chichester Festival

Mar 2 Fabio Zanon - Concert

23 An Evening with Southampton
Classical Guitar Society

Apr 20 Club Evening - All Can Play!

May 11 Tomas Jimenez - Concert

Jun 1 Villa-Lobos' Brazilian Soul - a
lecture by Fabio Zanon

Jul 6 Eden-Stell Duo - Concert

20 Club Party