

The Bonfanti Duo Concert

Italian transport strikes caused some nail-biting for the WSGC committee awaiting the Bonfanti Duo's arrival for their recital.

Happily Marco and Stefano landed safely with their prized Bernhard Kresse guitars – replicas of Stauffer-Legnani 19th century instruments with small bodies, compressed frets, and narrow necks ending in elegant scrolls.

Their programme presented a panorama of 18th - 19th century guitar music featuring Sor, Carulli and Gragnani, based in the 'musical capital' Paris; and the Italian Giuliani and younger Hungarian Mertz, who settled in Vienna. Echoes in musical composition sometimes reflected their close associations.

The concert opened unobtrusively with

Sor's *Fantasie*; Julian Bream's comment on the 'beautiful

understatement of Sor's style' is relevant. The audience listened carefully, adjusting simultaneously to the instruments' subtler tones and less sustained notes. They responded

appreciatively to the vibrant interpretation of Carulli and crisp chords characterizing Mertz's *Tarantelle*.

Gragnani's *Duo 11 in La Minore* opened the second half with greater verve and resonance; the audience's enthusiasm was palpable and the

applause rapturous by the end of Giuliani's *Grandi Variazione Concertanti* – only exceeded by the response to the duo's humorous Dowland encore – *My Lord Chamberlain's Galliard* - played with four hands on a single instrument. Stefano disclosed that, according to received wisdom, the piece had originally been written for two performers and a single lute to enable Dowland to gain closer proximity to a particularly attractive female pupil; the performance certainly concluded the concert on a high note.

Grazie Marco and Stefano – an unforgettable evening!

Angela MacTavish

New Members

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

Philip Chapman from Fareham

Barry & Vi Beckett from Selsey

Christina Piercy & Ken Hales from Rustington

We hope you enjoy many happy evenings at the Club!

This was truly a fascinating concert which went right back to the roots of the modern classical guitar. The balance between the matched guitars was so exact, they sounded as one instrument. I think the club was honoured when one read the scrolling tickertape on the Bonfanti website announcing their forthcoming concerts. Bognor Regis mentioned among such lovely exotic sounding places as Cinisello Balsamo, Rivoli, Torino and Lugano! TW



The Duo arrive



As the credit crunch bites, the duo have to share a guitar



Angela MacTavish meets the duo



The Duo with Patrick & Philip Sowden



The Duo with Irina



The Bonfanti-Barnett Guitar Quintet

The Bonfanti Duo visit Bognor Regis

Offstage: The Bonfanti Duo

Stefano Bonfanti kindly gave this slightly edited interview with Angela MacTavish before he performed with his brother Marco on Saturday 11th October 2008.

Thanks very much for agreeing to be interviewed! Now my first question is : do you feel that because you and Marco are family, you have an empathy – you understand each other very well – when you’re playing?

Yes, I think this is a very important thing because historically the most famous duos have always been brothers, or husband and wife, or twins –

And you aren’t twins? –

No, just brothers! because there’s a deeper link between the two people; and, in our particular case, right through our lives we’ve had the same teachers, the same lessons, the same courses, the same experiences and all this has been an important factor in creating the same way of thinking about music.

So do you think it’s very unusual that the two of you should choose the guitar as an instrument? – often in a family you find one member chooses one instrument and someone else another. Can you explain that a bit?

Well, actually Marco started playing the guitar four years before me and he chose the guitar because he wanted to form a band with his friends as he had the idea of playing that fantastic instrument the electric guitar, the ‘modern’ guitar! After a year his teachers told him to start playing classical guitar because he’d practised a lot and was already able to play the instrument so well. Over these four years I’d heard a lot about his studies, so I copied him and started playing the classical guitar too. Creating a duo was very simple because our teacher encouraged us to play as a duo right from the start.

Now you seem to have a fascination with the period 1750-1850 approximately.

Actually we don’t have a particular period which we like to specialise in. We love all good music but at this particular moment we’re particularly drawn to the original instruments so the choice of playing 18th-19th century music was natural. We recorded our CD four years ago with modern instruments and then when we actually bought an original instrument our passion grew. Usually in our

concerts we perform the first half on our replica instruments, playing original 18th-19th century music for two guitars; and the second half is contemporary music and music of the 20th century.

How do you feel that the old style of instrument enhances your performance?

Well, it is of course easy to play because you can feel the real sound of the music; and once you’ve played on this kind of instrument it’s difficult to come back to playing the same music on modern instruments because the sound doesn’t sound real somehow - and also technically you can use different fingering with these instruments because the tension is lower and the frets are smaller.

Are all the instruments you play replicas or do you play some original instruments as well?

Now we’re playing on Kresse’s copies of an instrument originally made in 1830 by Stauffer-Legnani – but we’re looking around to see if we can find two original instruments. The problem is that it’s very, very difficult to find two *identical* original instruments.

Yes, I can imagine. So which item on tonight’s programme is the most challenging for you both?

There’s no particular piece but the whole programme demands very high concentration and is difficult technically. I think the second half of the programme challenges us more so it’s hard in some ways to keep our concentration high right till the end -

Maybe whichever is last is the most challenging!Then I just wanted to ask you about publishing. It seems you’re very well organised in publishing; is this a great support to your work?

Yes, we’ve started to cooperate with a number of young Italian composers for two important reasons: on the one hand, we’d like to have new works for duos to play in concerts and recitals; and on the other hand we’d like to have compositions and studies for our work as teachers, to enable our young students to come to love contemporary music.....We’ve published two original compositions, Giorgio Spriano and another by Gerard Drozd; now we’re working on other compositions that we’re fingering, and we’ve also

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Offstage: The Bonfanti Duo...

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published two collections of studies.

And how did you first hear about Bognor?

We like to do Internet searches on classical guitar festivals, so we knew about your guitar club and then were very happy indeed to be invited here by Sasha LevtoV!

Well, thank you very much for sparing the time to be interviewed before the performance.

It's a pleasure!

Angela MacTavish

The Duo's website is www.duobonfanti.com

Bernhard Kresse's Cologne workshop for construction of modern concert guitars and historical guitars is www.Kresse-gitarren.de

It is interesting to see that designs of modern guitars like Fender owe their origins to these early guitars. They have the single sided machine heads and the fingerboard bolted onto the body. The angle of the fingerboard can be adjusted by tightening or slackening this bolt—a Legnani innovation. Apparently the guitar plays better with a summer and winter tension on this bolt.

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Library News

Over the last few months we have been cataloguing all the items in the library and entering them into the computer, thanks to a wonderful program organized and created by Jez.

We have a large collection of sheet music, CDs, LPs, cassettes, videos and periodicals. The Solo and Ensemble sheet music is located on the shelves in alphabetical order of Composer. Collections are in order of catalogue number, except for Grade Albums which are in order of grades; - Initial - Grade 8. CDs are in the cupboard on the right of the window and are arranged in alphabetical order of performer (or composer where applicable). We have a large number of Classic Guitar Magazines dating back many years. These are for reference only and are kept in files on the shelves at the back of the room.

The library catalogue can be perused at your leisure by going to our website at www.westsussexguitar.com/library. It is not yet complete but please bear with us.

We have simple rules as follows:-

- Your Membership Card is also your Library Ticket.
- 3 items may be borrowed at any one time but only 1 CD.
- To enable us to keep all items circulating and available for all members we have introduced a time limit on all loans.
- Items borrowed must be returned after four weeks unless a separate arrangement has been made with the Librarians. Items may be renewed but a fine of £1 will be made for any item returned late. Items returned must be placed in the Red Box marked "Library Returns Only" or handed to the librarian. Please do not place items directly onto shelves as we will not be aware that they have been returned and you may be fined.

The Library is open at each Club Event and on Monday Evenings (Term-time) from 6.30-7.30pm and 8.30-9.00pm. We hope you will find the Library a useful source of guitar music for both enjoyable listening and playing.

Alison & David

Practice Partners Wanted

Is there anyone in the Northern part of West Sussex who would be interested in getting together with an adult novice to practise duets and/or ensemble playing? I am a member of West Sussex Guitar Club but don't make it down to Bognor all that often because of the time it takes me

to get there. I have grade 3 and am working towards grade 4 and would like to find someone in the Cowfold, Billingshurst, Steyning, or Horsham area. Please contact Mig Cutbush on 01403 865190 or email migcutbush@btinternet.com

The Guitar Foundation of America

The “Guitar Foundation of America” hosts the most prestigious world guitar convention and competition, which every year launches the career of a world class guitarist. I could never imagine to witness the event myself, as it is held in the United States and every year in a different location. So when on the first day of our short holiday in San Francisco the car stopped at the traffic lights and I spotted a big banner with a very stylish silhouette of the guitar, I hardly registered it at first. Yet, throughout the fabulous sunny day, travelling among Californian hills, rhythmically covered with rows upon rows of vines, and stopping at numerous wineries, my thoughts were returning to this strangely familiar avant-garde image of the guitar. My head was spinning after hopeless attempts to compare different types of Californian wine and in this elated state I decided, I could lose nothing by having a quick look at the banner on the way home. When I approached the magnificent building and read the poster, I realised that fortune generously offered me a special birthday present: the finals of the GFA were to be held the next evening in the very building in front of which I was standing, and fifteen minutes walk from where we were staying!

Xuefei Yang was to play an afternoon concert on the same day too! Regrettably, she could not get her visa in time, so Marcin Dylla gave the recital instead. The first person I saw in the foyer next day was Pavel Steidl. We hugged and went together to listen to Marcin. The splendid Herbst Theatre was nearly full of guitarists from all over the world. Marcin played a beautiful *Sonata Romantica* by Ponce and finished with *Music of Memory* by Nicholas Maw. I asked Pavel if he would like to play this work, his yes slowly rose up to the chandeliers in the ceiling and he made some moaning sounds, probably in Czech. I guessed he was not in an immediate hurry to include it in his repertoire.

Shortly afterwards, the stage was transformed for a presentation of prizes for a junior section. There were two categories: 14 and under division and 15 - 18. There were four prize winners in each category with the prizes from \$100 to \$1,000, and each of the finalists received a huge box of strings! A Japanese student *Saki Kato*

was the winner of the 14 and under class and Molly Monarchy from Detroit in the 15 - 18 class. I spoke to Molly after the ceremony and asked if she would be interested to play in the UK one day. She blushed and said that it would be her dream! I gave her the Club's website address.

In the evening the theatre was full and bustling. Each of four finalists performed a 25 minute programme of their own choice and a set piece by Sergio Assad, who sat surrounded by his entourage in the prominent seats. One after another finalist demonstrated what a splendid competition the GFA is - the standard was exceptional and I could not give preference to any of them - Otto Tolonen from Finland opened the final round; Austin Moorhead from Arizona played second; listening to the next performer - Pablo Garibay from Mexico nearly tipped the scales of my judgment in his favour, but as soon as the last performer, Gabriel Bianco (from France) finished his first piece - *Adagio & Fugue* from 3d violin Sonata by Bach, I knew he would be the winner. Passionate applause from the audience proved that I was not alone in my choice. But still, there were 7 judges, who may well have different views... It took a remarkably short time before the finalists were called to the quickly transformed stage and after naming the winners of 4th, the 3rd, the 2nd places, Gabriel Bianco was announced as the winner of the 2008 GFA competition to the accompaniment of thunderous applause! Looking at Gabriel's glowing eyes and inspired expression on his face I thought to myself: he was not thinking of his new fortune: \$7,500 (unfortunately, less 30% federal tax!), tour of America (60 - 70 concerts!), GFA DVD recording and at least half a dozen other benefits so generously provided by this top world cultural event. He was just on top of the world having won the world's most prestigious competition: the Guitar Foundation of America. A few days later I too was on top of the world: for my birthday I was given a flying lesson in a Cessna 182 and flew the small plane just above the Herbst Theatre...

I wrote to Gabriel few weeks ago with an invitation to play for us this season, and here is his reply:

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Regis Guitar Ensemble begins the concert



New Member Phil Chapman



Sasha accompanies Patrick Sowden

The Chichester Oxmarket Concert 28th Sept 2008



The Barnett Trio



Sam Brown



The Gala Quartet



Victor Smith



Karim Bedda and Sasha



Paul Thomas

Guitar Foundation of America 2008...

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Dear Sasha,

Thank you very much! I am very glad that you contact me to play a concert for your guitar society.

I am now planning some concerts in France in this period, and then it's difficult for me to give you an answer right now. I need to have more information about another performance to be sure that I'll be free for this recital.

Anyway, I send now email to the organiser, and I will call him if he doesn't answer when I am back to France (about one week).

I will write you soon.

Best regards,

Gabriel BIANCO

I am very optimistic, that we will enjoy a performance by this wonderful musician on our stage before too long! If you would you like to see Gabriel playing Bach when he was only 12! - just paste this in the address window:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8yVwE9Xcio4>

Sasha

Many thanks for that interesting article Sasha. Our club has been very privileged to have many past GFA winners come to play for us—Fabio Zanon, Margarita Escarpa, Lorenzo Micheli and recently Jeremy Jouve. We can see at first hand the very high standard required to win such a prestigious prize. I wonder, would there be any interest in our younger players competing in the under 14 or under 18 junior sections. The 2009 competition will be held in New York from June 16th –21st. Details will be announced soon - see <http://www.guitarfoundation.org/drupal/> Although entry may seem expensive—for this year \$260 entry, \$120 for a 3 day pass and \$50 for membership of GFA, it is no more than charged for a festival in this country. However, there is in addition the cost of the air fare and accommodation. Nevertheless, there are many prizes to be won and this year the first prizes were \$1000 for under 18 and \$600 for under 14.

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GFA adults Gabriel Bianco on left



GFA under 18s Molly Monarchy on right

Editor's Piece

Welcome to the new glossy format of the magazine. This is a little more expensive to produce, but saves us many man hours of double sided printing, collating, folding and stapling 100 copies of the magazine.

And so the new season has got off to a flying start. We have had two wonderful concerts given by internationally renowned guitarists who

have travelled from abroad especially for us – Jérémy Jouve from Paris and the Bonfanti Duo – Stefano and Marco from Milan. Both brought with them their continental weather and such sunny days will all help to make the winter shorter. Both visits were not uneventful – Jérémy came on the Euro train which was running late because of a tunnel fire a week earlier and the

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Editor's Piece...

(Continued from page 8)

Bonfanti Duo with Patrizia had to endure an Italian transport strike to get here. However, all was well in the end and we were treated to some really wonderful music.

We are only two months into the new season and in addition to the two concerts, we have had an AGM where the existing committee were all re-elected. This was followed by the club giving a very successful concert at the Oxmarket in Chichester which was well attended. Then we had an enjoyable club evening run by Linda Kelsall-Barnett (- many thanks Linda).

Considering that the guitar surely must be the most popular instrument for some 40 years now, it seems to get very little exposure on radio and television. Then suddenly over the past few weeks we have a three part series of the Story of the Guitar introduced by Alan Yentob, an hour long programme on Julian Bream and a number of programmes entitled Guitar Heroes (although I have to confess to not having heard of many of these heroes!)

Our next main event is the West Sussex Guitar Festival which hopefully you have all entered. Paul Gregory is the adjudicator for the juniors (15-16th Nov) and Graham Devine is the adjudicator for the seniors (22-23rd Nov). Graham will also be giving the festival concert on Friday

21st November. Playing on stage before an audience is so different to playing at home and you are all encouraged to abandon your closet playing and share your music with the rest of us. Please come and support this event even if you are not playing. For a mere £1.50 (children free) you can see some great playing and listen to the pearls of wisdom from the adjudicators whose remarks will help us all to become better players. Any helpers who can spare some time will be most welcome.

Looking further ahead, we then have the fun Christmas Party on 13th Dec. For the first concert of the New Year on 17th Jan 2009 we bid a most welcome return to the amazing guitarist Richard Smith from Nashville. He will be playing some solos and some duets with his wife Julie Adams on cello. This is the concert not to be missed. The whole spectrum of the guitar will be covered with superb arrangements of the classics, evergreens, light music, pop and jazz. At the very least there will be something for everyone if not everything for everyone. Please tell all your friends and neighbours and invite them to this concert.

Many thanks to Sasha and Angela MacTavish who have kindly written interesting articles for this magazine. If you wish to review a concert or write about anything guitary, please send me your contributions – address details are on the back page.

WSGC at the Oxmarket Chichester

As one of the Sunday afternoon concert series, the WSGC was privileged to perform at the Oxmarket Centre of Arts in Chichester on 28th September. The enthusiastic audience was full to capacity and were very encouraging towards the performers. As usual Sasha proved to be a master, Master of Ceremonies, introducing the acts and explaining about the club. In fact we recruited two new family members at the event.

The club ably demonstrated what we are all about – a group of guitar enthusiasts of all ages playing a wide range of wonderful music on the classical guitar. We heard solo performances together with duet, trio and ensemble playing. The Regis Guitar Ensemble numbering some 15 players started both the first and second halves. The audience were regaled with Bossa Nova, Blues,

Bach, Handel, Spanish and South American favourites and popular seasonal numbers. The Gala Quartet treated us to the Archers Theme (*Barwick Green*), Ketelby's *Bells Across the Meadow* and Leroy Anderson's *Syncopated Clock*. In addition they paired off to play two duets. The concert finished with a superb encore from Sam Brown – *Tico Tico* ably accompanied by Sasha.

All the performers gave a very good account of themselves. Well done the Barnett family, Victor Smith, Patrick Sowden, Roy Barron, the Gala Quartet, Philip Chapman, Alison Stonestreet, Patrick Butcher, Karim Bedda, Jez Rogers, Paul Thomas, Sam Brown and Terry Woodgate. Also, we must not forget Sasha who also gave superb accompaniment to many of the exciting pieces played.

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Jeremy Jouve...

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raindrops strung on a line, demanding an emotional response from each listener and reminiscent of Brouwer; and features such as variations in rhythm and pitch held up for scrutiny above an insistent baseline. Many members of the audience were deeply engaged with the music as the last notes faded from consciousness and the profound silence returned.

The first half of the programme ended with the original version of the *Capricio Diabolico* (Homage a N. Paganini), composed for Segovia by Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco. It is more usual to hear the version which Segovia modified, so this was a rare treat. Rather than being an analysis of the elements of the musician's genius, this homage took the form of a fusion of some familiar melodies from Paganini in a multi-faceted composition, with some very elegant playing by the soloist.

After the interval, Jérémy's versatility was further tested by Benjamin Britten's *Nocturnal Op.70* after John Dowland – and not found wanting. Britten envisaged the ways in which insomniacs might try to escape their misery, a plight which Dowland had earlier portrayed in his own composition *Come Heavy Sleep*. They might approach their problem musingly or in a very agitated or restless frame of mind, Britten concluded; they might be uneasy or find a march-like solution, or might alternately indulge in dreaming or rocking themselves; each possibility was interpreted with clarity and conviction by Jérémy, from the most disturbed option to the most

comforting. The audience clearly shared the relief of being gently lowered into sleep as the reassuring Renaissance harmonies of Dowland's original piece filled the final bars.

In his introduction to the *Jazz Sonata* by Ducan Bogdanovic, Jérémy spoke of the former Yugoslavian now teaching and composing in San Francisco as being inspired by jazz and ethnic music. Club members attuned to Brazilian compositions such as *Jongo* therefore anticipated a similar explosion of sound and colour in the final work; but the sonata was of an entirely different order. The opening of the first movement was bright and clear, later suggesting rather than depicting the improvisations of jazz bands at a distance above a steady rhythmic background; the voice of the more lyrical second movement seemed to share a certain affinity with the blues but not a closely identifiable relationship; and although the ethnicity of the third also appeared to be filtered through the eyes of an empathetic but distant spectator, Jérémy's presentation of the sonata was nevertheless warmly appreciated by the audience, whose enthusiasm for the whole recital was palpable.

Jérémy swiftly responded with a brilliant rendering of Julian Arcas's *Fantasia on a Theme of La Traviata* – a 'generous encore', in the words of the Artistic Director of the Club Sasha Levtov; and so the first concert of the new season ended on a highly pleasurable note to everyone's great satisfaction.

Angela MacTavish

How Good is Your Memory?

As we all get older we do tend to be forgetful so I am going to remind you of a couple of things.

Membership Renewals: There are still quite a few members who have not renewed. Maybe you put the renewal reminder (which came in August with the thick AGM bumf) behind the clock and have forgotten all about it. Renewals were due on 1st October. I hope that you will continue to be a member, because if not this may well be your last newsletter and of course you will not be entitled to any club concessions at concerts or club evenings. Maybe you could let us know if you do not intend to renew (and if possible why this is.)

Overdue library items: There are many items that have not been returned to the library. Miscreants will be getting a letter soon if items are not returned. Please have a look around your cd collection and music collection. You may have had something out for so long that you think it is actually yours! Although for the future there will be a fine for overdue items, we are declaring an amnesty for past overdue items. Please have a look around and return any items belonging to the library ASAP since other members may well wish to borrow them.

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Jeremy meets new graduate Elias Sibley B Mus



Jeremy meets Daphne Snocken



Jeremy Jouve



Terry Congratulates Jeremy

Jeremy Jouve After the Concert

New Season Concert by Jeremy Jouve

A rare sunlit day just the right side of the equinox, a carefully and creatively structured programme of music, and an acclaimed young French guitarist of international stature - so what better way to spend the evening of Saturday 20th September than in the company of Jérémy Jouve, at the West Sussex Guitar Club's opening concert of the season?

Jérémy, currently working for Naxos on a multi-disc set of the complete works of Joaquin Rodrigo, opened with two cameo compositions suggesting the range of the composer's artistic achievements. The moonlit cadences of the first, *Tiento Antigo*, endowed the Moorish heritage of the Spanish guitar with an air of mystery and wonder, finely captured in Jérémy's sensitive interpretation. In contrast the second - an exploration of the theme of joyfulness and mirth -



made full use of the resonance of Jérémy's recently acquired Australian guitar, crafted by Simon Marty. The robust first movement was superseded by a retrospective look at the formal pleasures of the courtly dance in the second, and the more relaxed folk theme of the third. Jérémy's brilliant technical skills in bringing such a variety of musical experiences to life were immediately evident and much appreciated by the audience.

Jérémy next introduced *Hommage a Manuel de Falla* by a young Polish composer Marec Pasieczny, who was awarded first prize in a Colombian competition in 2004. This composition concentrated on the elements of De Falla's work - the immense power of silence capturing the audience's attention; an isolated call then breaking through the void; incidental sounds suspended like

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Dates for your Diary

Nov 8th	Club Evening	Nov 29th	Club Evening
Nov 15-16	WSGC Festival Juniors	Dec 13th	Christmas Party
Nov 21st	Graham Devine Concert (Fri)	Jan 17th	Richard Smith /Julie Adams Concert
Nov 22-23	WSGC Festival Seniors	Jan 24th	Club Evening

Most events take place on Saturdays at 7.30pm in the Regis School of Music, 46 Sudley Road, Bognor Regis. PO21 1ER. For details phone 01243 866462. For concert tickets phone 01243 822965 or visit the

Ticket Hotline at www.westsussexguitar.com

Please send contributions for the next edition of *Good Vibrations* by **20th December** to Terry Woodgate, 3, East Ave., Middleton on Sea, West Sussex PO22 6EG
Tel: 01243 583355 or e-mail to: terry_woodgate@btinternet.com



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

