

Amanda Cook Recital



Amanda is a very good friend of the club and no stranger to our stage. She began playing the guitar at the age of seven under the tutelage of Sasha. She continued her studies at the Royal College of Music under Charles Ramirez and Gary Ryan and later in New York with Ben Verdery. She has given concerts in the USA, South America and throughout Europe. In addition to solo concerts Amanda is a member of the critically acclaimed Vida Guitar Quartet. She has sat on the jury for several International Competitions including the 2015 GFA in Oklahoma. She also kindly adjudicated for our under 18 guitar section at the recent Chichester Festival.

Amanda demonstrated her versatility on the instrument by playing a wide range of music – some unfamiliar but immediately likeable. The concert began with two short early pieces –

A Fancy by John Dowland and a *Fantasia* by Weiss - both superbly executed. This was followed by a *Habanera Alba Nera* and *Songe Capricorne* by Roland Dyens. Amanda explained that this was originally written for 100 voices which she had condensed onto the solo guitar. We then heard *Lisa Lan* by the Welsh composer/guitarist Gerard Cousins. This was based on an old Welsh folk song and we could clearly hear harp like sounds radiating from Amanda's Bert Kwakkel guitar. The tempo then changed as we heard Lovelady's *Incantation no.6* – a tribute to African trumpet player Hugh Masekela. The first half finished on more familiar ground with three movements from Torroba's popular *Suite Castellana*.

The second half began with *Ananda* written by Johannes Moller. The piece means Utter Bliss and the guitar was tuned to sound like a sitar. An unusual but very engaging piece. We then heard two popular melodies from yesteryear – Dyen's arrangements of *Over the Rainbow* and *All of Me*. Amanda explained that *Over the Rainbow* had many instructions on precisely how to play the piece. It was transcribed to Eb (quite a challenging key to play on a guitar!) *All of Me* was a very enjoyable up-beat bouncy arrangement of this

New Members

We extend a very warm welcome to:

Rebecca Cartwright *Bognor Regis*

Barbara Westmore *Middleton on Sea*

We hope you enjoy many happy
evenings at the Club!

usually slower romantic piece. We then heard some exciting Latin American pieces beginning with Baden Powell's *Valsa Sem Nom (Waltz with no Name)* and *Samba em Preludio*. Amanda then played what must be the definitive version of Villa-Lobos's *Prelude No.2* and an Argentine tango *Gallo Ciego* by Agustin Bardi. Enthusiastic applause was rewarded with a wonderful encore *Capitola* by Ben Verdery. Capitola is a town in California and a 'cowboy' lilt definitely featured in the piece.

Many thanks to Amanda for such a wonderful concert. We were not fully aware of the full ramifications of Coronavirus at the time of the concert. So this was to be the last live concert we

will see for some considerable time. We will all retain a lasting memory of it. Please take care and take no risks whatsoever and we all look forward to the time when we can meet up again as before.

For those of you who missed the concert or those who would like to see some highlights from the recital, Amanda has kindly agreed that Sasha can make public some of the pieces on Youtube. See:

<https://youtu.be/SBsDlaYur-Y>

https://youtu.be/2ZUVR3_moCw

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=75TRXA0oPSo>

[v=75TRXA0oPSo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=75TRXA0oPSo)

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Amanda & Diana perform a Corona greeting



With her early guitar teacher Sasha



Amanda with Editor Terry



Amanda meets Emilia & Tjeed Vonk

Vincent Lindsey-Clark Recital



Our first recital of 2020 saw the very welcome return of composer, teacher and guitarist Vincent Lindsey-Clark. Vincent is renowned for his compositions which have been written for both professionals and students – some being adopted by examination boards. He has written for solo guitar, ensembles and he has written two concertos. His programme included many of these compositions.

His first piece was *Pulsar* which Vincent explained he had written for the Beatty Classical Guitar Competition in 2009. This was a fast slick piece inspired by his discoveries as an amateur astronomer. By way of contrast, we then moved on to John Dowland's renaissance piece, *My Lady Hundson's Puffe* - a Melancholy Galliard. We then heard three popular Spanish pieces – Tarrega's *Capriccio Arabe*, *Granada* by Albeniz and finally Turina's *Rafaga* where Vincent was able to demonstrate his superb Flamenco technique.

Vincent then left the stage as he gave a brilliant Power Point presentation of the rare and endangered birds of New Zealand which featured in his composition *Whenua a te Manu – Land of the Birds*. The composition was commissioned by John Crouch for the 2018 New Zealand Taraniki Guitar Summer School. Sasha had set up a screen and scrolled through pictures of the birds while Vincent told us about them. Not all the compositions imitated the bird calls, some emulated their characteristics. The seven birds

featured included the *Fantail* which has a habit of flicking out its tail feathers like a fan. The *Tui* which has a wide range of calls and is an accomplished mimic. The *Ruru* which is a small owl with a two note descending call. A cacophony of *Penguins* squawking and squabbling. A lonely *Kakapo* — a highly endangered flightless parrot who makes a bass boom call which is not returned. The well known comical *Kiwi* which scampers around searching for worms. Finally, the *Toutouwai* a highly endangered grey robin with slow staccato to rapid trill calls. Vincent then played the pieces while Sasha scrolled through the pictures of the birds. The suite was extremely well received.

The second half of the concert began with the very popular *Choros No 1* by Villa Lobos. This was followed by three of Vincent's own compositions – *Mirage*, an Arabic sounding piece which was written for a student, *Celia by my Side* which was commissioned by David Thompson of the Southampton Guitar Society and finally *Altitude* which Vincent wrote on an aeroplane whilst returning from New Zealand. We then heard the *Winter Dreams Suite* by Thomas Hartman. This was based on Russian Folk Songs and was originally written for six instruments for a ballet. Vincent had subsequently reduced the music to just one solo guitar. The official concert finished with Vincent's *Rumba for Hayley* which he wrote in celebration of the life of a friend's daughter. Very enthusiastic applause produced a lovely encore – Vincent's very fine and moving arrangement of the *Mountains of Mourne*.

This was certainly quite a different concert to what we are used to. We had a presentation on New Zealand birds and Vincent gave us an insight into all the pieces he played – many of which were his own compositions. Vincent is a wonderful performer, arranger and composer and we look forward to his return. In fact he returned just one week later in the guise of adjudicator of the Adult Guitar section of the Chichester Festival of Music, Dance and Speech.

It was suggested to Sasha that it would be appropriate to have a collection for the unfortunate wildlife in Australia that was suffering in the savage bush fires. I am pleased to report that on the night £100 was raised from the generous donations of the audience.

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Vincent with Phil Woodhall, Mayor of BTC



Vincent with his brother Julian



Vincent meets Angela MacTavish



With Terry, Debbie & Sasha

Bognor Regis Music Club

Every February Sasha and Nina present a wonderful Young Musicians Concert at the Bognor Regis Music Club, just down the road in the Regency surroundings of 2, Sudley Rd. These are very popular concerts given by pupils and friends of the Regis School of Music. A range of ages on different instruments are featured – piano, violin, cello, trombone, tuba and of course guitar.

We heard from guitarists who are now familiar to the WSGC. James Connolly played a

Country Etude by Stachak and *El Panuelo de Pepa* (Saumeli) where he was accompanied by Sasha. Evelina Kisliak played and sang *The Castle on a Cloud* from *Les Miserables* and played the romantic *Maria-Luisa Mazurka* by Sagreras. Laurence Pettit (who is currently studying for his Performance Certificate) played the Villa-Lobos *Mazurka Choro*. All performances were well played and earned rapturous applause from the very full audience.

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Chichester Festival for Music, Dance and Speech

	Chi Fest 2020 Under 18	1st
650	<i>Novice under 9</i>	Lucy Coles
650a	<i>Beginner under 9</i>	Cody Dunning
651	<i>Solo age 10-12 to grade IV</i>	Leo Mulan
653	<i>Solo under 12 to grade IV</i>	Seth Morgan
653a	<i>Solo under 12 grade IV+</i>	Ben Ward
654	<i>Family Ensemble</i>	Dunning Trio
654a	<i>Parent & Child Duet</i>	The Vonk Duo
655	<i>Solo I age 12-15</i>	Seth Swain
656	<i>Bach under 12</i>	Robert Cartwright
657	<i>Bach under 18</i>	Evelina Kisliak
658	<i>Solo under 18</i>	Josh Reeves
659	<i>Duet under 12</i>	Lucy & Sophia Carson
660	<i>Duet 13 -15</i>	Toby Greatorex & Emma Turner
665a	<i>Guitar + song 14 & under</i>	Evelina Kisliak
666	<i>Junior Recital under 12</i>	James Connolly
667	<i>Advance Recital under 18</i>	Bethany Cooper
668	<i>Tech Perf under 12</i>	Ben Ward
668a	<i>Tech Perf 12-15</i>	Hazel Swain
668b	<i>Tech Perf under 18</i>	Maya Solly

	Chi Fest 2020 18+	1st
670	<i>Solo Novice</i>	David Carson
671	<i>Solo Int I</i>	Leigh Boyle
671a	<i>Solo Int II</i>	Simon Kay
674	<i>Guitar with other Instrument</i>	Quintessential Quintet
674a	<i>Fretted Instrument</i>	Pam Fereday
675	<i>Trio/Quartet</i>	Tatum Trio
676	<i>Guitar Orchestra</i>	WSGC Orchestra
677	<i>Advanced Solo Open</i>	Andres Mareno
678	<i>Bach Open</i>	Zoe Barnett
679	<i>Recital Open</i>	Zoe Barnett
682	<i>Arrangers Class</i>	Debbie Burford
684	<i>Ukulele Ensemble</i>	Regis Ukes & Guitars
685	<i>Composer's Class</i>	Pam Fereday

Chichester Festival for Music, Dance and Speech

This was the 65th Chichester Festival (established in 1955) and the guitar section was held once again at the Regis School of Music. The adjudicator for the juniors was Amanda Cook and the adjudicator for the adults was Vincent Lindsey-Clark. There were 19 classes with 65 entries for the juniors and 13 classes with 32 entries for the adults. There were significantly more entries compared with last year and this year the event was held over a very full weekend of the 1st and 2nd of February.

Amanda Cook under 18s:

Amanda has been playing the guitar since the age of seven. She originally studied with Sasha and her name is engraved on a number of the junior trophies. She graduated from the Royal College of Music twenty two years ago and has travelled the world as both a soloist and as a member of the very popular ensemble the Vida Guitar Quartet.

Amanda was very appreciative of all the preparation work behind the scenes that the young musicians had put in, even if to perform for only a short time. For a number of young players this was their first time performing in front of an audience. In order to relax these players, Sasha arranged that they sat on the stage two at a time – this being less stressful than being on the stage alone.

As far as technique is concerned, Amanda advised to be wary of the left hand thumb creeping up over the fingerboard. This makes it difficult for the left hand fingers to reach the bass strings. Also rather than sliding the left hand short distances over the fingerboard it is often better to hold a set position and to stretch the fingers in order to reach the nearby notes. She suggested rotating the guitar to a steeper angle as this will make for easier playing with the right hand.

She advised not rushing into pieces. By giving a few moments thought of the first few notes before playing, false starts can be avoided. She said that singing along while practising will help with the phrasing of the piece. Also a metronome will help with timing. Beware of your own internal metronome, ie your heart, which beats faster when under pressure and this can lead to you playing faster than usual with sometimes disastrous consequences.

Some dynamics were present in the playing, but Amanda would like these to be more pronounced. The only way is to really exaggerate the forte and piano parts. If possible, you can tell how the dynamics are coming over by recording yourself playing. Amanda said she was very impressed with everyone's performances which

ranged from absolute beginners through to the more advanced older players.

Vincent Lindsey-Clark Adults:

Vincent made his debut at the Wigmore Hall in 1983. He has travelled extensively around the world playing his own compositions. He currently holds a number of teaching posts and plays with the Modern Guitar Trio.

Vincent and Sasha gave a few rules of etiquette whilst on stage. Adjust the footstool, get comfortable, if necessary tune your instrument, adjust your music stand, open your music to the correct page and only then finally announce what you will be playing. At the end of your performance, bow to acknowledge and thank the audience and only then collect and remove your clutter of tuner, music, footstool etc.

Vincent was aware of tension and nerves in some players. He advised everyone to practise their pieces very slowly so that they become second nature. In order to avoid false starts, it is important to get the first few notes of a piece correct. Practise these more than the rest of the piece. Then you should become more relaxed and can proceed more or less on autopilot. Do not rush to perform as soon as you sit down.

There were a number of ensembles all giving a good account of themselves. Vincent said that it is important that everyone comes in at the same time after a pause in the music. This is very difficult with a guitar where the sound is heard immediately. It is far easier say with a violin or cello where the sound can start very quietly. The problem can be helped with more practice and the use of a metronome.

Vincent advised on varying the way accompaniment is played. For example the use of pizzicato can make for more interest to the listener. Accompaniment on bass strings can sound quite muddled if played *tasto*, but comes across much clearer if played *ponticello*.

During the afternoon session, we were privileged to be joined by Jenifer and John Pressdee, the chairman and treasurer of the Chichester Festival. They were very impressed with the standards of performance and the adjudication. Jenifer said the adjudicators are the Jewels in the Crown of the Festival.

Many of the performances were superbly executed and they get better with each successive festival. For example, all three players for the Guitar Solo Recital Class were deservedly awarded Outstanding certificates. It was a shame that the audience had dwindled somewhat by then as we all

witnessed professional concert standards of performance.

Thanks:

A successful Festival depends on a number of things all coming together. Many thanks to our two adjudicators who successfully multitasked for very long hours. They hand wrote many miles of copperplate writing. Furthermore they had to be listening while writing and had to keep a watchful eye on the performers at the same time. After a class, they also had to advise each performer on how they can improve. Adjudicating is a tiring and

demanding job so we were very fortunate to have such good judges. Many thanks are also due to Sasha and Nina who carry out many tasks on the day, but also do so much work behind the scenes – timetabling, printing certificates, collecting trophies, preparing the hall etc. Thanks also to our team of helpers – Debbie Burford, David Clark, Julian Bobak, Moyria and Terry Woodgate. Thanks also to all our teachers and of course to our encouraging parents and the performers without whom there would be no Festival. TW



Amanda with a Junior Class



The Dunning Trio



The Family Ensemble Class



Guitar Harmony & the WSGC Orchestras



David Carson with the Solo Novice Trophy



Regis Ukes



The Tatum Trio



Vincent & Jenifer Pressdee with the Recital Class

Editor's Piece

Sadly our season of activities had to be suddenly curtailed because of the Coronavirus. We had two most excellent recitals from Amanda Cook and Vincent Lindsey-Clark who also did a most splendid job adjudicating in the junior and adult guitar sections of the Chichester Festival for Music, Dance and Speech. Then came the lockdown and sadly the remaining events we had planned have had to be postponed. These included a visit from the Dorset Guitar Society (DGS), a recital by Fabio Zanon, and our Summer Party.

All is not lost however, I am pleased to report that members of both the WSGC and the DGS have sent in clips of their playing to Sasha who has edited these into a 72 minute Virtual Guitar Friendly

Meeting on Youtube. You can join the meeting on <https://youtu.be/HFoF-csLNvG> This will really cheer you up. Many thanks to Sasha for coordinating it all. Sasha is also hoping to organise a similar Virtual Summer Party. The theme of the party was *A Life on the Ocean Wave*. More details on this will soon be forthcoming – watch out in your e-mails.

Sasha and Linda continue to teach guitar using Internet programmes like Skype and Zoom. Plans are afoot to update the guitar website. Although quite restricting, the lockdown is an ideal opportunity to not only tidy the garden and house but also to catch up on all those pieces you were going to play, but never had time. Please take care and avoid taking any risks.

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

