

## Triumphant Return for Lorenzo

The October recital by Lorenzo Micheli was much anticipated. His performance for us last year was acknowledged by everyone as a sheer delight, but the recent one was little short of a triumph!

The *Prelude, Fugue and Allegro* by Bach was Lorenzo's superb choice to open the recital. He played it in his very distinct way - articulate, passionate, yet very convincing. Despite a challenging speed, - hardly any of the world's guitarists could match it! - Lorenzo sustained a wonderful pulse throughout the whole three movements, very skilfully building to the culmination of the whole piece in the brilliant *Allegro*. However challenging the speed of the *Allegro* was, he found the way to decorate the ending of it with two wonderful trills and was rewarded by cries of delight and rapturous applause. Lorenzo gracefully bowed and smiled and everyone knew the evening was going to be a real treat!

Lorenzo's next piece was the *Grand Overture* by Giuliani. This was full



*Lorenzo Micheli—his charm, his brilliance, his smile!*

of operatic passion, energy and drama, and despite the speed, technically immaculate. A few witty biographical remarks about Giuliani's life made everyone smile and helped us to enjoy the music still more. Lorenzo concluded the first half with the *Capriccio Diabolico* by Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco. This most challenging piece in the repertoire was again preceded by a short verbal introduction and Lorenzo's knowledge was much appreciated, his super sense of humour was rewarded more than once by bursts of laughter! If anything, it

was almost a pity, that the fiery temperament and extraordinary technical ability of the artist tempted him to play the *Capriccio* with such speed that whilst everything worked musically, some of the drama and yearning of Tedesco's melodies may have been explored more deeply.

The interval with a glass of (Italian!) wine gave everyone a chance to chat, and for our new guests it was chance to browse through Pam's superb albums while others exchanged recordings and music at the library. Many of us

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## Don't miss Craig Ogden on 12th January!

Our first recital of the New Year sees the welcome return of Craig Ogden. Craig is Australian and studied music in Australia and the UK before settling in



*Craig Ogden - 'a worthy successor to Julian Bream'*

the UK with his wife, the mezzo-soprano Claire Bradshaw, with whom he gave a superb recital at the Club last year.

This time he returns in his capacity as soloist to play a programme including three contemporary Greek pieces and works by Lovelady and Yoshimatsu, as well as

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## Lorenzo's triumphant return...

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were able to add Lorenzo's latest CD to our collections.

Lorenzo started the second half with the virtuoso *Fantasia Hongroise* by Mertz. By this time the excitement had reached such a point that it seemed that everyone could hardly wait for the final note of the piece to applaud. Then followed a collection of charming pieces by Barrios. Lorenzo can play this sweet, sentimental and capricious music with disarming sincerity. Even the most familiar of Barrios' music sounded fresh under his fingers, let alone the less well-known pieces such as the *Gavota al Estilo Antiguo*, the *Estudio - Homenaje a Bach* or the evocative *Primavera Valse*.

Finally - Llobet's *Variations* on the legendary "Folia de Espania", each variation exploring a different technique, all in all covering every possible way of making sound on the guitar, and thanks to the gift of wonderful performer - each full of character and meaning. Two encores, one of them - the spiky *Tarantella* by Tedesco (at Lorenzo's humorous suggestion - being the dance of someone bitten by a tarantula!) concluded a memorable evening. Surely none of us were complaining of being bitten by the "guitar bug"!

Lorenzo's intense musicality, utmost concentration, the precision and economy of his movements, his graceful way of addressing the audience and his charming smile

makes him an artist whom everyone would like to listen to again and again.

A few weeks later we met with Lorenzo in London, where he came from Italy with his former professor and friend, Frederic Zigante, to Bream's anniversary concert at the Wigmore Hall. We spent an excellent evening together and at the end were delighted to learn that one day Lorenzo and Frederic may play for us one of the greatest guitar duets of the XXth c. the 24 Preludes and Fugues by Castelnuovo-Tedesco. We may hear Lorenzo Micheli (and his new duo!) at our Recital Hall as soon as next year. Hope you will be able to come!

Sasha Levto

## Craig Ogden Recital—12th January...

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favourites by Villa-Lobos, Albeniz, Lauro and Bellinati. For full programme details check our web site.

Craig's performances and CDs have attracted much critical acclaim and the BBC's Music

Magazine has dubbed him 'a worthy successor to Julian Bream'. The Daily Telegraph said of his CD 'Music from the Novels of Louis de Bernières', 'this disc is pure joy'.

Craig is much in demand as an orchestral soloist and chamber

recitalist and is without doubt one of the most exciting talents of his generation. This recital promises to be one of the highlights of the season and a great musical start to the New Year. Tickets are available from Jonathan on 01243 528573—*Don't miss it!*

## Club Evening—7.30pm Sat 26th January—Xuefei Yang

It is a great pleasure to welcome this exceptionally talented young player to our stage in the first 'Young Professional' recital of the season.

Xuefei Yang was born in Beijing, China. She began studying guitar at the age of seven and started formal lessons with Chen Zhi when she was ten. Later in the same year she showed her talent in the 1st China International Guitar Art Festival and



Xuefei Yang

her performance won enthusiastic acclaim from artists and audiences. She was presented with a handmade guitar by the Spanish Ambassador

to China.

In 1990 she entered the Central Conservatory of Music as the first student ever to major in classical guitar performance in China.

In 1995, after listening to her playing, John Williams left his own Smallman guitar to her for her future concert performance.

In 2000 her debut CD was released and gained favourable reception. In June she graduated from the Beijing Conservatory and

a few months later entered the Royal Academy of Music on a Post Graduate course as well as being the first guitarist to get a full scholarship from the Associated Board of Royal Schools of Music.

In November she won first prize in the Ivor Mairants Awards with a unanimous decision from the jury. (Previous winners include Amanda Cook and Hayley Savage). Admission is just £3 (members) and £5 (guests).