

Fabio Fans the Flames

Fabio Zanon's reputation guaranteed a full house at the Regis School of Music two weeks ago.

Billed as one of the world's greatest living guitarists, in a little under two hours Fabio demonstrated precisely why he deserves that ultimate accolade. Beyond technical skill, beyond stage presence Fabio has matured into a truly great interpreter of so many classical guitar pieces, his Villa Lobos studies the definitive version and many other composers works are given new life, new nuances and meanings in his increasingly intense performances.

Beginning with the 2 Byrd pieces with their delicate tones deftly woven Fabio followed with a major selection of Bach, some of the elements of the Partita in E major were more familiar than others but all were played with a certainty, strength and delicacy of touch that is the Zanon hallmark.

The first half finished with Music of Memory by Nicholas Maw, a stunningly modern piece, a tour de force of memory and technique and played with great passion and intensity. Not all in the audience found it easily absorbed but many delighted in such a display of pyrotechnics.

The second half found us all on more familiar ground beginning with the two Albeniz pieces, Zambra Granadina and Torre Bermeja. The Zambra is a



Fabio makes a point

dance of the Moors, of the Albaicin, the Moorish quarter of Granada and the Torre Bermeja of that city's Alhambra Palace, the magical home of the Moorish Caliphs that ruled Spain for nearly half a millennium and left such a strong imprint on the music of Spain.

Fabio's renditions of both were fiery, agile and with a richness of tone that perfectly evoked the colours, the sounds and perhaps even the smells of the Albaicin and Sacromonte, the gipsy quarter, both of which are on the opposite side of the gorge from the Alhambra.

The playing of the Mignone pieces perfectly illustrated Fabio's interpretative skills, his understanding of his countryman's music brought special insight to the five studies, they were, bright, spirited, pieces tango influenced at times, more contemplative at others but all played with relish.

A masterly performance from an acknowledged modern master of the guitar played in a venue that is probably about a tenth of the size of some of the concert halls Fabio now plays; we were lucky to be a part of such an intimate performance.

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WSGC & hago at St Paul's

A cold and blustery evening welcomed the arrival of the first joint concert presented by the West Sussex Guitar Club and the Havant Area Guitar Orchestra (hago). The concert was held on neutral ground midway between the two home grounds at St Paul's Church Chichester.

The church can accommodate a very large audience. The concert was very successful with only a few empty seats to be seen. I was rather concerned that perhaps the concert should have been amplified – after all, it is asking much for a small plank of wood with 6 strings to fill a volume of some quarter of a million cubic feet with sound. However, it would appear that through some quirk of

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New Member

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

*Soraya Williams & family,
Selsey*

We hope you enjoy many happy evenings with us.

Chichester Festival Roundup

Another Memorable Festival! The success of the Guitar Section of the 49th Chichester Festival was due to many factors, but mainly this was because of the creative and professional input from all the participating teachers. As many as 7 teachers entered their students for the Festival.

Several classes were added this year, which brought the total number of classes in the guitar section to 19 in the Junior Section and 12 for the senior performers. Almost every class had a very healthy

part in this class; "Classical Song with Guitar Accompaniment"; "Electric Guitar Ensemble" and "Mixed Guitar Ensemble" for seniors.

Several classes had to be divided in two because of the number of participants. Next year we may offer performers in these classes different targets, so the choice will be greater and the numbers will be more balanced.

Full credit is due to all



The Junior Novice Classes

VII in difficulty. During the last few years the level of presentation has improved considerably, but this year it was particularly high. The majority of the performers demonstrated very good stage manners, announcing their performances, acknowledging the applause and showing courtesy to other participants.

Special thanks must go to Gary Ryan for his tireless dedication as adjudicator over the two weekends of the Festival. Each of the three days was full with Gary's "mini lectures" on a variety of musical subjects. Gary was always generous with his time, explaining and often showing himself how to achieve the desired effect. He was attentive to every good feature of the performances and was always fair in his judgement. It is fortunate

that this season's workshop on May 16th will be given by Gary Ryan, who may even write a piece of ensemble music for this day!

Many thanks are due to the parents who so generously supported this year's two day Junior Festival and provided such an excellent and encouraging audience for our performers. And of course special thanks to everyone who helped to organise and run our Section: Jonathan, Richard, Paul Edwards, Julie Angus, John Mason, Shirley Cook, Pat Kelsall, Sally Paice and very special thanks to Nina. Congratulations to everyone who took part in the Festival. You all are better performers now and we are looking forward to the next opportunity to hear you play!

Sasha Levto



The Senior Open Class

number of participants - as many as 29 in the initial class!

New classes this year included "Family Guitar Duet" - five duets between brothers and sisters took

the teachers, for ensuring that the young performers demonstrated good basic skills and musicianship. The competition in advanced classes often involved pieces up to grade

This year the Guitar section of the annual Chichester Music Festival was adjudicated by the outstanding guitarist Gary Ryan.

For the competitors he was very inspiring. Not only were all his comments personal, but also from time to time he would take

up his guitar and show us how the pieces were meant to be played. In one class he didn't think a piece was played with a strict enough Spanish rhythm, so he played it correctly but exaggerated the Spanish accentuation and then played it with a slightly different rhythm so it sounded like a very

amusing Greek wedding march. It was amazing how much he made the piece change. Throughout the Festival, it was almost as if he was giving a master class and even though the concert hall was packed it felt like you were having a one to one lesson with him only as a friend not a

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Gary Ryan

Chichester Festival Winners

Junior Classes			
No.	Class	I	II
650	Solo Novice: 9 & under	Emma Smallwood	
651	Solo Novice: 10 to 12	Christian Dodsworth	Katy Blott & William Doyle
652	Solo Novice: 13 years	Jodie Wilkes	Ruo Saida
653	Solo. 12 years and under	Alex Cox	Zack Franklin & Tamzin Barnett
654	Family Ensemble	Dodsworth Family	Barnett Family
655	Solo. 12 to 15	Andrei Rybalko	John Sawyer & Lynsey Pitt
656	Solo. Bach class: 12 and under	John Sawyer	Jack Fry
657	Solo. Bach class: 13 - 18	Kay Hepworth	Ross Godon
658	Solo. Open	Karim Bedda & Chrystal Briggs	
659	Duet. 12 and under	Francesca Gerard & Jack Fry	Soraya Williams & Tamzin Barnett Sam Allen & Zack Franklin
659a	Family Duet	The Row Duo	
660	Duet. 13 - 15	Felix Kellaway & Kenny Tanner	Lara Emerson & James Pockock
661	Duet. 18 and under	Shotaro Ikeda & Takahiro Kato	
662	Trio or Quartet 12	Regis Harmonics	
664	Guitar Orchestra	CMC Intermediate Ensemble	
664a	Electr guitar ensemble	CMC Ensemble	
665	Guitar duet or voice	Francesca Barsby & Sam Allen	Tamzin Barnett
667	Junior Recital	Kay Hepworth	Lara Emerson
668	Technical Perfection I	Jack Fry	Simon Keet
669	Technical Perfection II	Kay Hepworth	Felix Kellaway
Senior Classes			
No	Class	I	II
670	Solo Novice	Lindsay Barron	
671	Solo Intermediate	Camilla Hessenberg	
672	Duet Intermediate	Ian Burt & Debbie Burford	
673	Duet Advanced		
674	Guitar with other instrument	"Spiky Feather" duo	
675	Trio or Quartet	Gala Guitar Quartet	
676	Guitar Orchestra	Regis Guitars	
676a	Mixed Guitar Ensemble	Counterpoint Ensemble	
677	Solo. Open	Peter Russell	
678	Bach Class	Terry Woodgate	
679	Guitar Solo Recital	Lydia Hepworth	
680	Song Accompanied by the Guitar	Sally Paice	

Chichester Festival...

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teacher. His comments did not undermine you at all, he just gave you friendly advice. It was an occasion when you could have learnt a lot by staying and listening to him talk about other performers. It would be extremely beneficial to attend one of his workshops and there is one soon on 16th May.

As you probably know Gary has recorded 3 CDs his most recent is called *Worlds Apart*. It is interesting because it combines his interpretation of works from well-known composers in addition to his own compositions. He has written a series of pieces on this CD with the theme the Wild West. Personally, I really love his

compositions; the music is so atmospheric, listening to them really made me feel as though I was in the Wild West.

The suite explores the contrasting styles and techniques used in American music. The pace is varied both within and between numbers. The first track 'Railroad' encourages you to journey through the mountains on one of the steam trains that you see in old Wild West movies. The pace of the music fuels the mind as to the terrain. This piece demonstrates beautifully why I like Gary Ryan's music, this is because it's not repetitive even though there are repetitive elements so I do not get bored. 'Across the Plain' is a quiet piece and

even more thought provoking when you realize that it was written surrounding events of September 11th. There are 6 of his own pieces each demonstrating his sensitive and evocative playing. The last piece is extremely atmospheric and a wonderful end to the CD. It is hard to believe that it's an examination piece.

So if you want to know more about Gary Ryan check out his website at www.garyryan.co.uk. You can even download some previews of his music and have a go yourself! And why not treat yourself to his new CD. I assure you that you won't be disappointed!

Thank you to Gary and Sasha for sharing your expertise with us.

Francesca Gerard (age 13)

WSGC and hago...



Amanda Cook at St Paul's

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acoustics, the sound could be heard louder at the back of the church than at the front - rather like that other St Paul's in London which has a Whispering Gallery.

The first half of the concert was presented by the WSGC. It began with the John Mason and Mitch Callow duo playing two moving pieces. This was followed by the young duet of Tamzin Barnett and Soraya Williams playing a Fandango. It was nice to see both the girls smiling for all they were worth.

Ketelby's Chinese Temple Garden, complete with a huge gong, wind chimes and bird noises which all added to the fun. Alex Iles then played Rodrigo's Fantasia for a Gentilhombre, superbly accompanied by Nina Levto on piano. This wonderful rich sound truly did fill the whole church.

Finally, we were privileged to have Amanda Cook complete the first half with a Turina sonata. It is quite wonderful how Alex and Amanda have progressed from being junior members of the WSGC to holding a large

They obviously have no knowledge of the meaning of fear and were thoroughly enjoying themselves which is how a performance should be. Linda was next with - as always - a faultless rendition - this time a fiendish looking piece by Roland Dyens. The Gala Quartet followed with Debbie's transcription of

audience spellbound. Some of that may well be a gift, but make no mistake, a lot of it is down to sheer hard work.

After refreshments, it was the turn of hago to present some colourful pieces under the musical direction of Derek Hasted. With a mix of alto guitars (giving a mandolin-like colour) and bass guitars driving the pieces

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Editor's Note

Here is my second attempt as editor. It was all made quite easy by many of you sending in articles. Please keep them coming in either by e-mail - please note there was a typo in the address last time - but now it is correct - (see back page) or by conventional snail mail. Many thanks to Francesca for her perspective on the Chichester Festival. Are any more of our younger members going to contribute I wonder?

Terry Woodgate

Music Makes Brains!

Teaching music to children as young as three years old can improve academic performance says new research. A feature in the respected journal *New Scientist* suggests children who practise some form of music for as little as 10 minutes each day display dramatically higher results in intelligence tests.



The researchers have shown that the mental exercise involved in playing music at an age when the brain's connections – the synapses – are still being formed produces a long term measurable improvement in a children's thinking powers. Regular practise appears to modify the hard wiring of parts of the upper brain

thought to be the centre of creativity and intellectual activity.

The research is important to parents and to teachers of young children proving that early music training improves a child's ability to recognise patterns in space and time, a skill that has many other applications.

I teach dance to children from four years old and I have noticed that this seems to improve their self confidence but also they seem better co-ordinated than other children of their age, pick things up quicker and seem better able to see and remember patterns and sequences. If small children are exposed to stimuli they respond to those stimuli but many experts have thought that the ability to form thought processes, to plan ahead and to form mental images are skills that come much later but the new

research seems to refute that belief in suggesting that these skills can be learnt much earlier when learning music.

Perhaps then music should top the list of subjects at infant and primary schools rather than being seen as a second class subject as this government appear to do, reducing funding, limiting class time etc in favour of core subjects and so on. There is even some evidence that children who are good at music are also good at maths, again this is believed to be about recognising patterns and connections.

So come on kids, as well as the extra Weetabix each day for your physical health add 10 minutes of practising your instrument to the breakfast menu, it might make all of the homework easier !!

Helena Bengel

Letters to the Editor

Nicholas Maw - Music or Mess?

We are indeed very fortunate to be able to welcome such prestigious performers as Fabio Zanon coming to play at our club. In the first half, Fabio gave superb renditions of Byrd's Lord Willoughby's Welcome Home and the Bach Partita in E major. This was then followed by Music of Memory by Nicholas Maw. This is a modern piece which I have to confess leaves me feeling like the little boy who has just observed the Emperor in his new 'suit of clothes'.

Modern music is not at all like the 'modern art' of an unmade bed or a pile of bricks that takes just seconds to 'create'. Clearly, the composer has taken a great deal of time and effort in crafting together so many notes where no two are harmonious. Fabio has then learnt all these discordant notes and plays them to an audience with great conviction. Make no mistake, the piece is indeed a challenge, and perhaps that is the appeal to the performer. However, what of the audience? Am I alone in not appreciating what is going on? Could someone please write in and tell me what I am missing.

With so much beautiful music around, it seems criminal to play such dissonant pieces. Play them as an

academic exercise or as a finger exercise maybe, but surely they should not be played for listening to. I know that in the past much music was unpopular when first written and later became popular as ears got used to the sound and people could then appreciate the music.

However, I can never see such inharmonious pieces with no tune that one could whistle ever becoming popular. They would not pass the 'Grey Whistle Test' that's for sure. (The Grey Whistle Test' was a test devised by music publishers in the 20's and 30's in order to gauge the popularity of new tunes. If the elderly grey-haired women cleaners at the Company would whistle the tune while carrying out their chores, then the tune had the 'thumbs-up'). What am I missing with the modern music, can someone please enlighten me?

The second half of the concert was more conventional with some cracking pieces by Albeniz that we all know and love. Finally, the concert finished with five studies by the Brazilian composer Francisco Mignone who died in 1986. Overall, I thought it a wonderful evening despite being left bewildered by the 20 minutes of Nicholas Maw.

We are indeed very fortunate in having such high calibre performers

coming to play for us - effectively on our doorstep. We do not have to travel up to London and so we should really make the most of it when they visit us. Certainly the hall was filled to capacity for Fabio.

Trevor Chambers

Can anyone help Trevor? - or did you all feel the same? Write or email me on this, or any other subject at the address shown at the foot of the back page—Ed.

Club Evening - 24th April

We are delighted to welcome the Canadian guitarist **Steven Thachuk** in our Young Professional series.

Stephen is becoming known as one of Canada's most outstanding young guitarists. He has appeared in recital, as a chamber musician, and soloist with orchestra throughout North America, Great Britain and Europe. He has performed most of the major concertos in the guitar repertoire and has received critical acclaim, *Classical Guitar Magazine* describing his performances as "perfectly and sensitively done". Steven is currently Professor of Guitar at California State University.

The hago Story

Derek Hasted, musical director of the Havant Area Guitar Orchestra - hago - invited WSGC to share a concert with hago on January 31st. There were one or two questions about hago, so here he is to talk a bit more.

"hago started in 1999 as a way to challenge some of his better pupils and right from the start we wanted to bring in different sized guitars. We started with a requinto - a 3/4 sized guitar tuned four notes up - and a bass - tuned four notes down. This ad hoc arrangement found us playing in three different keys at once, because orchestra guitars are written in E, regardless of the pitch they play - like a brass band, not a recorder consort.

Soon, the requinto became an alto - five notes up - and hago started to plan to turn into a Niibori orchestra, a concept invented by Dr Hiroki Niibori of Japan, based on a family of different guitars. Out in Japan, Niibori community orchestras are as large as 200 guitars!

hago's current

instrumentation includes 2 altos, 2 basses and a contrabass, giving a workable range of almost 5 octaves against a guitar's three octaves. The guitars



Derek Hasted

are specially imported, and so are the strings, which come from America and Germany.

The founding principle of hago is "continuous improvement" and everyone works hard to improve the overall sound. Derek reckons that it's the determination of his players that has made so much possible, with rehearsal attendance nearly always 100%, and good humour and a big-hearted team spirit on show at all times. Of the original 12 players, 6 remain and 6 have moved

on. Derek says the fact that three emigrated is nothing to do with him. Currently running at 11, the new players have eagerly embraced the hago way of doing things and our sound is probably stronger still. hago music isn't terribly hard - what makes the sound is attention to detail by the players and careful arrangements by Derek to make the very best of these guitars."

Where next for hago? Well, WSGC has done so much for guitar by promoting concerts that bring the finest players into West Sussex, but Derek sees hago playing a different role - one of going out into the community and

introducing the guitar to audiences of "non-believers". With no clubroom, hago are well used to turning up with an entire concert in the boot of Derek's car, and have played in half a dozen different venues around the area. With two joint events with WSGC now under hago's belt, Derek is looking forward to the next time we share a Concert and bring a whole gamut of music to an audience of guitar-lovers and simply music-lovers.

hago's website at hago.org.uk has up to date concert details, plus photos and soundclips, and details of how to audition for a place. Or you can ring Derek on 023 9247 9200

(Continued from page 4) along, there was a complete spectrum of sound that is difficult to achieve with an orchestra of conventional guitars.

The programme of music was popular pieces through the ages. I particularly liked the train pieces - Casey Jones and Chattanooga Choo Choo where one could hear the rhythm of the wheels on

the tracks.

It was a most enjoyable evening and I hope that this could perhaps become an annual (or sooner!) event. It was well attended, and although it requires a lot of organisation behind the scenes, it is all worthwhile when the event is so popular and enjoyed by so many.

Terry Woodgate

Dates for your Diary

March 27th **Chandler-Southwood Duo**
£8 (members £5.50)

April 24th Club Evening with Young Professional -

May 8th **Richard Durrant**
£8 (members £5.50)

16th Guitar Workshop with **Gary Ryan**

Most events take place on Saturdays at 7.30pm in the Regis School of Music, 46 Sudley Road, Bognor Regis. For details phone 01243 866462. For concert tickets phone 01243 528573 or visit the **Ticket Hotline** at

www.westsussexguitar.com

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