



May 2019 NEWSLETTER

April meeting

The ensemble now has the *Smooth Going Body Lotion* flowing very nicely and is making good progress with Andrew York's *Pacific Coast Highway* with its laid-back and often syncopated rhythms.

After the coffee-break three society members gave us a short 'domestic' recital: Martin Slater offered his own *Prelude No.4* from 1981, Tim Woodnutt played Villa Lobos' *Prelude No.2*, and Tim Rushworth rounded off with the much-loved *Recuerdos de la Alhambra* by Tárrega. Then, as something out of the ordinary, we welcomed Swedish guitarist David Ravelid, one of Mark Eden's students from Birmingham. Among his many other achievements, David was a finalist in the Classical Guitar Prize at Birmingham Conservatoire in 2018 and 2019, and it was a privilege to welcome him to play a short recital for the Society.

David's programme was firmly in the 20th Century, beginning with *In the Woods* by Toru Takemitsu, composed in 1995. The work has three movements entitled *Wainscot Pond*, *Rosedale* and *Muir Woods* - the last referring to the giant redwood forests of coastal California. In a performer's guide to this piece, Matthew Dunlap writes:

In Japanese traditional music there is a form of expression concerning silence. The period of silence is referred to as "Ma." The basic concept is for the listener to enjoy a single sound or accumulation of sounds and then enjoy the space created after them.

This was very much evident in this piece: evocative note-figures and chords were set in surrounding silences like the carefully-placed rocks in a Japanese garden. There were some exceptionally challenging chords, too: at one point the left-hand thumb was brought to the front for a demanding stretch. The next piece was *Mosaic* by Colin Downs, a suite of very expressive short pieces, and then David ended the recital with the four-movement *Sonata para Guitarra* by Antonio José, perhaps the most famous work by this prolific and highly regarded composer from Northern Spain: he was compared with Debussy and other post-impressionists, but tragically he was executed in the Spanish Civil War at age of 33. It was

only later, David told us, that the Sonata was discovered by one of the composer's students.

This short recital was something quite refreshing for the Society, and a far cry from traditional Dowland, Sor, Tárrega and Barrios – but it opened the ears to some extraordinary musical possibilities for the guitar, and was very warmly received.

West Dean Guitar Festival 2019

Places are still available for the annual Guitar Festival at West Dean College near Chichester, 24-29 August 2019. For details go to the West Dean website www.westdean.org.uk/study and click on Short Courses and Music. Those not committed to the whole week may like to note the **Open Day** on Sunday 25 August (12.30pm - 7pm) . This year the day will include a guitar makers' showcase, a masterclass with Fabio Zanon, and an illustrated talk about the life and music of Joaquín Rodrigo by Raymond Calcraft. At 6pm Gaelle Solal and Boris Gaquere (festival tutors) will give their entertaining and unique guitar duo stage show performance of 'Crazy Nails' in St. Andrew's Church. See the website for more information.

SCGS members at Romsey Abbey

On Tuesday 18 June Nina Rideout will be giving a guitar recital as part of the Romsey Abbey lunchtime music programme, and on the previous Tuesday 11 June Gilly Slot will be accompanying Richard Edwards (baritone) – presumably on keyboard rather than guitar. All concerts in the series start at 1:00pm. Do come to give them your support!

November meeting

Please send any suggestions for the 2019 *Composer's Night* theme to Stuart Christie stuart@stuartchristieguitars.co.uk .

Next meeting: 7:30pm Wednesday 29 May at St Boniface.

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