



Newsletter No 160

June 2007

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BGS News

Our next meeting is on Sunday 3rd June - note the date - and will be an ensemble evening. For readers who may not be familiar with this format, we break up into groups, who select a piece of music from the BGS library to work on for the first half of the evening, After our break, the groups re-assemble and perform their chosen piece.

Our library contains music to suit a good variety of tastes and standards. There will doubtless be time for some solos, if you've got anything you would like to bring along. The date may be unusual but the venue and time are as normal - 7.30 pm at South Hill Park.

Meeting 13th May

Our preparations for the Spanish Circle continued with our May meeting, By the time we had played through both Ay Ay Ay and La Bamba a number of times under the guidance of Gary Jordan, we were beginning to feel that if we could reproduce the standard we had reached at the Spanish Circle itself then we would be OK

We had plenty of time left for solos, Chris Cook leading the way with a very nice arrangement by John Duarte of an Irish traditional tune, "O Dark Sweetest Girl".

I then followed with 2 of the set of 5 Endechas recently written by Alfonso Montes, these being called Soledad and Cancion Guyanese (an Endecha being a latin american lament). Allan du Feu then took us to our break with Tarrega's Lagrima.

When we resumed Adam Bunting-Palmer then gave us the Sarabande from J S Bach's 1st Lute Suite, his first performance in front of any sort of audience - well done Adam, a creditable effort that should offer lots of encouragement for the future.

We then returned to Spanish Circle preparation mode as Richard took us through Ponce's Scherzino Mexicana, followed by Steve Christmas with Barrios' La Catedral (played from memory - to me that's some achievement, the piece being difficult enough as it is to play without the worry of having to remember it all).

The evening ended with Gary Jordan and Jorge Morel's Variations on a Peruvian Folk Song, the theme of course being familiar from Simon and Garfunkel's "Bridge over Troubled Waters" album of the late 60's as "El Condor Pasa".

As we finished the feeling was that we had the makings of a good recital for our Spanish Circle hosts, all we had to do is to produce the goods on the night!

Spanish Circle May 25th

It soon became apparent from our warm up on the night of our "live" performance that the question posed in the final paragraph above was likely to be answered in a very positive manner.

It took a while for us to organise ourselves in front of the audience - it's only on these occasions that it dawns on me how much claptrap we classical guitarists carry around with us - but when we had done so and started the performance, even that tricky start to Ay Ay Ay didn't cause us any problems and we produced a rollicking rendition of La Bamba which our audience seemed to particularly appreciate.



The "BGS players" before performing their group pieces - how did we all squeeze in without doing any damage to each other or our guitars?



After we had sorted out the front of the hall the solos commenced with Gary Jordan playing Triptico para una Dama, a tribute to an acquaintance of both Gary and the Spanish Circle who had unfortunately recently passed away.

I came next with Septiembre, followed by Steve Christmas with Fandanguillo and La Catedral, the latter piece I know from comments afterwards particularly impressing the audience. Richard Butters came next with his rendition of Scherzino Mexicana, followed by Steve Tucker with two very appropriate pieces for the evening, an atmospheric "Spain" (anon) and Tarrega's Capricio Arabe.



Steve Tucker (left) and Gary Jordan (right) entertain the Spanish Circle audience on 25th May.



Our final player was Gary Jordan who augmented the programme with pieces by Calatayud, Turina and Lauro before closing the programme in fine fashion with the Variations on a Peruvian Folk Song, the theme being instantly recognised by the audience.

After the music there was time for an enjoyable glass of wine with our hosts who had clearly enjoyed the evening, hopefully as much as we had enjoyed the playing.

Thanks to the Reading Spanish Circle for inviting us once again, and also to everyone involved from the BGS for making the evening so successful.