

Berkshire Guitar Society

www.berkshireguitarsociety.org.uk

www.myspace.com/berkshireguitarsociety

Newsletter No 165

December 2007

NEXT MEETING:

SUNDAY 9TH DECEMBER

SHP @ 7:30PM

XMAS EVENING

UPCOMING EVENTS:

SATURDAY 5TH APRIL '08

SHP @ 7:30PM

ARADA DUO



BGS Meeting News

The November meeting was an orchestra evening led by Gary.

There was about 10 of us tonight who first attempted the "Handel with Care" for 6 guitars arranged by Stuart Orford. We all found this quite difficult to keep together so we decided to move onto some other pieces.

Next we played some pieces by Derek Hasted.

First was a first class stomp which was first class!

Next was Raindance which was more like a light shower than a downpour.

Then we played Tutu Tango where we tried to compete with the dancers next door to us in SHP. This we managed to play very well and this is a good contender for the Spanish society in May next year.

After the break we finished the Derek Hasted pieces with Saraband and we had a final run through of the Tango as we managed to put this piece together well.

We then finished the orchestra evening with Interlude by Richard Edwards, arranged by Stuart McGowen. This had some tricky high notes for guitar 1 and some strange sounds which we think were supposed to be there.

We then finished the evening off with some solos. Richard was first with Epitaph by Mikis Theodorakis.

Gavin then played a very nice Cancion de Cuna.

Mike then played a piece called Light on Water by Ian Burnham

Allan finished the evening off with an Allegro and a Waltz.

Next Meeting

This is the Christmas meeting so please bring your xmas music, although I am sure people won't notice after a mince pie or two if it is not very Christmassy. Please bring along some nibbles or drinks. (23 days until xmas)



Upcoming Meetings

- Sunday December 9th - Christmas meeting bring the mince pies!
- Sunday January 6th - Members evening " Early day favourites"
- Sunday February 10th - AGM followed by members evening.



Event Reviews

Ray Burley - by Steve Tucker

Ray is well known to the society, having conducted a very successful workshop in 2005, and I was very much looking forward to the all Bach programme, containing some of the Lute suites and also the Violin partitas. However, because the Bach CD that Ray was to record has been postponed, the all Bach programme was changed to part Bach and part Gordon Giltrap. So although we lost some of the Bach, we gained Giltrap, and this made for a very interesting program.

Those not familiar with Giltrap's music might need some background here. In the late Seventies, Giltrap enjoyed a brief spell as a pop star, with a hit album "Perilous Journey" and two hit singles "Heartsong" and "Fear of the Dark". "Heartsong" was nominated for an Ivor Novello Award, and is fondly remembered as the theme tune to the BBC's Holiday programme. Ray's partnership with

Gordon, as one half of the duo Double Vision, has given him a classic insight into Gordon's music and has made him the ideal candidate to offer these compositions in 'classical' arrangements.

Ray mentioned that Gordon usually takes 20 guitars on the road all tuned to unusual tunings. He wasn't about to do that, so set about arranging them in standard tuning. For example a piece in C minor in open tuning might be transposed to D minor and played in standard tuning. Ray joked that Gordon is most upset that Ray can play all his pieces without retuning!

The concert started with 2 pieces by Gordon Giltrap, "a misunderstood man", and Daisy Chain. It was evident immediately that these pieces work very well in these arrangements and in Ray's capable hands. Ray manages to suggest the effect of open tunings using campanella fingerings. Also remarkable was the tone of Ray's guitar, a spruce top which I later found out was a Philip Woodfield lattice top (and pleasing to me as I play a Philip Woodfield non lattice).

Next we came to the first of the Bach pieces, the violin sonata (BWV1003). Ray introduced this by saying that a straight transcription is usually unsatisfactory because of the incomplete voice leading imposed by the technical difficulties and limited strings of the Violin. Bach himself filled out the voice leading when transferring to harpsichord and this can serve as a model. These pieces sounded clear and transparent on the Woodfield, with crisp ornaments allowing the majestic structure of the pieces to shine through. Ray followed with the 3rd Lute Suite (BWV995) actually the first Bach wrote and based on the fifth cello suite. Here Ray took a brisk tempo, which suited the character of the dance pieces well. Ray ended the first half with three Giltrap pieces, From the Four Winds, Secret Valentine, and Tailor Bird. The Four Winds featured harmonics, and a really nice ending chord. Secret valentine modulated through several key changes ending in harmonics and tailor bird featured punctuated chords, with melodic sections and strummed chords. After the break, there were three more Giltrap pieces, the first, Quest for Nonsuch, in a pseudo renaissance style, similar to some of John Renbourn's pieces of that ilk. This was followed by The long Ride home and Tears of Joy, said to be written to commemorate Helen MacArthur's return from her Yacht trip.

We returned to Bach and a very well played prelude from the 1st cello suite, followed by the Sarabande and Double from the Violin partita (BWV 1002), sensitively played. Ray then introduced the Sarabande form the 2nd Lute Suite, explaining that it is in fact unplayable on the Lute and may have been composed for the Lute Harpsichord, which had plucked gut strings. There is some doubt that the suite was even composed by Bach, although the second section is similar to the St Mathew Passion.

Ray finished the concert with three Giltrap pieces "who knows where tomorrow goes?" which had rich chords, reflective melody and was somewhat jazzy, "A Christmas Carol" which apparently made Giltrap burst into tears when Ray played it to him, and "For those who bring sunshine" written for the occasion of a friends wedding, and which I really enjoyed, reminiscent of Andrew York's Sunburst.

For an encore, Ray played Julia Florida by Barrios, on Richard Butters' Rubio, the rich tone of this guitar suiting the romantic music well, and a fitting first concert outing for this venerable instrument. This brought a very enjoyable evening to a close

The Book and CD Ray has released of the Giltrap pieces is out now
http://www.giltrap.co.uk/index.php?page=news&category=02--Latest_Releases

Upcoming Events

Arada Duo on Saturday 5th April 2008 at SHP @ 7:30pm.



Simon Davies and Nicholas Lee began playing guitar together in 1992 whilst studying classical guitar with Gordon Crosskey, John Williams and Craig Ogden at the Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester. They have performed in numerous concerts across the UK including venues such as the Free Trade Hall (Manchester), St. James' Piccadilly (London) and the Barber Institute

(Birmingham). They are increasingly in demand at festivals, concert series and music societies. The duo have performed on BBC radio and were finalists in the Landor Competition 2005.

The website address if you would like to read more:
<http://www.aradaguitar duo.co.uk/>



And Finally

Some related website links you may find interesting:

(1) The Hampshire guitar orchestra's website.
HAGO was formed in 1999 by Musical Director, Derek Hasted, from an ensemble Workshop that had grown to almost 40 players. Hago has become a tight-knit group of players who enjoy the compelling mix of exciting music and they have a real sense of fun.

<http://www.hago.org.uk/>

(2) Derek Hasted Website.

<http://www.derek-hasted.co.uk/>
