

Editorial

Welcome to June 2014's Christchurch Guitar Society newsletter. In this edition:

Christchurch Guitar Society news

News - what's happening in the guitar society and the wider guitar world

An email interview with Gunter Herbig

Featured blog: Classical Guitar n Stuff by Melbourne guitarist Nicole Rogers

I would welcome contributions . The limit for a page is approx 500 words.

Please let me know if you have any suggestions for other content: gillian@magi.gen.nz

also stepped down as Treasurer after many years and Wolfgang has taken this job over. Jenni, Sue, Alan and Roger are our committee members.

Other business discussed included the website, junior guitar society, members concert, and Gunter Herbig and Matt Withers concerts. Our financial position is good. Full minutes have been circulated, but if anyone needs a copy please contact Gillian gillian@magi.gen.nz The current committee is:

President - Paul Zdrenka
Secretary – Gillian Calvert
Treasurer – Wolfgang Zdreka
Committee - Alan Dixon, Roger Welsh, Jenni Berryman, Sue Hely

Society concert

The annual Christchurch Guitar Society was held on 17 May 2014 at Hohepa Christchurch, Cashmere.

Gunter Herbig concert

Gunter's concert will take place on Saturday 28 June 2014 at Hohepa. Masterclasses will be held on Sunday 29 June and will cost \$30 per half hour per student.

Gunter Herbig

masterclasses

Held on Sunday 29 June at Hohepa, 10am-2pm. This is a great chance to get a second opinion on your playing or find a new direction. Cost \$30 – contact me if you would like to participate.

Next meeting

Sunday 6 July 7.30pm
Avon Loop Community Cottage, 28 Hurley Street

Guitar world news

International Guitar

Research Centre (IGRC)

In March 2014, the University of Surrey launched the International Guitar Research Centre (IGRC). The research centre aims to establish an international hub for guitar-centred research in all styles of music. The Honorary President is John Williams, Director Professor Steve Goss and Deputy Director Dr Milton Mermikides.

<http://www.surrey.ac.uk/sc/hoolofarts/research/guitar/>

Radio New Zealand

Classical Charts

Number 1 for the week 21 June 2014:

ARANJUEZ

Miloš Karadaglić, London
Phil / Yannick Nézet-Séguin
(DG 481 0652)

NEWS

Guitar society news

AGM

The AGM was held on Sunday 2nd March. Paul has carried on as President. Kathryn stepped down as Secretary for happy reasons and Gillian has taken over that position. David has

What is your favourite piece of guitar music to play?

My favourites change seasonally, or rather with which pieces I am working on at the moment. But I keep returning to Bach, Villa-Lobos and Barrios. And the Berceuse by Brouwer is a piece that I will always love.

Actually, there are a lot of Brouwer pieces that I really love, especially some of the Etudes Simples 1-10.

What is your favourite piece to listen to?

That also changes – a little like in the first question, I love the Bach, Barrios and some Brouwers.

But some of my real favourites to listen to are not necessarily guitar pieces – I really love Arvo Part, especially Fratres for vilin and piano and the amazing second movement (Silentium) from Tabula Rasa for two solo violins, prepared piano and chamber orchestra. And I have always been a Bob Dylan fan :)

What's your most embarrassing performance memory?

Probably a guitar lesson with my teacher Albert Aigner; after I played my heart and soul out with the first movement of the Torroba Sonatina, leaving every last drop of blood, sweat and tears on the floor, he asked me “so what are you going to do with the piece musically?” ...

It was then that I realised that there are two realities in a performance – the internal “reality” of the performer and the REAL reality of the listener. That was when I started to realise that playing the guitar really is a performing art where communication is everything.



Top tips for practising

Learning a new piece:

Practise slowly, learn fast.
Practise fast, learn slowly.

Practise tricky passages or even whole pieces in different rhythms, especially dotted rhythms: first the long note first and then turn the dotted rhythm around and play the short note first. That can be really challenging but always brings you to another level.

Rubato:

What you can't play straight, don't play crooked.

Practise when your mind and brain are still fresh. Ideally in the morning rather than the evening. Practising is brain work, not finger work – your fingers only do what your brain tells them to. Mindless repetition has very little benefits.

Melbourne guitarist and teacher Nicole Rogers has a very interesting blog <http://classicalguitarnstuff.com/>. She has been posting since September 2011 with a most comendable regularity. Her posts are useful for the amateur guitarist and cover a wide range of topics including practice tips, ways of avoiding pain and the Melbourne guitar scene.

Take a look at her blog: I have found it valuable. Here's a recent post, reproduced with permission.

[Learning Classical Guitar And The Mental Approach You Need For Success](#)

I was reading an article on LinkedIn recently that resonated quite strongly with me and reflects my own thoughts around succeeding/ acquiring of skill (something that I've discussed with former students of mine too).

Those thoughts are that skills, and particularly skills such as learning and playing the classical guitar, are very much influenced by your mindset and approach to learning. I personally believe that old adage that you achieve

pretty much anything if you set your mind to it.

Do You Have A Fixed Mindset or A Growth Mindset?

Folks with a "fixed mindset" (who might say things like "I am a musical person" or "I am not a musical person" or "I have always found this difficult and will continue to do so"), those that think that talent, brains, intelligence, natural gifts, call it what you will, are the answer to learning to play classical guitar (for example), can be their own worst enemy! Folks with a fixed mindset, thinking perhaps that they're not good at something, like it's something that's set in stone, and the ones more likely to give in or give up at the first sign of challenge and difficulty.

Do you have this kind of mindset when learning a new piece? When developing an element of your technique? That's preventing you from picking up the guitar even?

I seriously believe that a "growth" mindset is vital when learning the guitar and progressing on the instrument (as it is with any instrument or skill). A growth mindset is acknowledging and appreciating that you're probably not going to be that flash at something the

first time you try it and possibly even for quite a while thereafter. A growth mindset acknowledges, however, that changes and improvements do occur over time – they may be large or they may be incremental, but undoubtedly they will occur. They don't occur of their own accord though.

I've said this many times to past students, and I've said similar things many times previously on this blog too – the key to achieving mastery of the classical guitar (or at least getting a reasonable way into that journey) is focussed effort. Yes, talent can help, but it's really the efforts that you put in, and the knowledge that you'll improve, change and develop over time as a result of those efforts, that will set you on the path for success on the classical guitar.

For me when I first picked up the classical guitar I came to it with a background playing piano and clarinet, and having trained in classical dance for nearly 10 years. I was immersed in a musical world from a young age, so my "talent" (which was really just repetitive and consistent training and immersion over many years from a very young age – although that sounds rather brutal to put it in

those terms!) carried me for a time. After the complete hiatus for a few years I had from playing in my late teens and early twenties, picking up the guitar again and wanting to really take things as far as I possibly could with the instrument, that's where the "growth" attitude really came into its own.

I understood that a great deal of work lay ahead of me and came to enjoy that fact and the journey I was on. And I still do – my journey is still very much continuing. Part of this was also learning to be accepting of my technique at a given point and being in the moment, but knowing that I still needed to push and continue my hard work and focussed efforts to ensure the path ahead of me continued as I wanted. I was playing my path into view, if you like.

So do you have a growth mindset in your approach to learning classical guitar? Do you take technical challenges on? Do you ponder on how you can develop or overcome a particular challenge? Do you feel inspired listening to others? Do you appreciate that, given time and continued effort, you can play pretty much anything your heart desires?! I like to think it's true ;)

And this is the article I was reading that sparked this blog post: [http://www.linkedin.c](http://www.linkedin.com/today/post/article/20140609121847-20017018-the-one-mental-approach-you-need-to-succeed)

[om/today/post/article/20140609121847-20017018-the-one-mental-approach-you-need-to-succeed](http://www.linkedin.com/today/post/article/20140609121847-20017018-the-one-mental-approach-you-need-to-succeed)

