

# GUITAR NEWS

The Official Organ of the  
INTERNATIONAL CLASSIC GUITAR ASSOCIATION

No. 86

Single copy price 2/- (U.S.A. 45c.)

NOV./DEC., 1965

1965 Winners with Barbara Polasek (1964)



(L. to R.) Raul Maldonado, Miguel Barbera-Bisbal,  
Barbara Polasek and Turibio Santos

# GUITAR MUSIC from



EDITED BY KARL SCHEIT

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**“GUITAR NEWS” PUBLISHING DATES  
FOR 1966**

**No. 87 : January 1st.**

**No. 88 : March 1st.**

**No. 89 : May 14th. (This will be an expanded issue and will last for 3½ months.)**

**No. 90 : September 1st.**

**No. 91 : November 1st.**

**Members will still receive 6 issues for the subscription so this will include the Jan./Feb. issue 1967.**

**7th INTERNATIONAL GUITAR CONTEST  
R.T.F., PARIS, 1965**

**O**F the five finalists selected by the distinguished Jury, Josef Holecek (Czechoslovakia) was unable to obtain a visa from his government to go to Paris and Aldo Minella decided to withdraw. This left three guitarists to compete on June 2nd and 3rd at the headquarters of ORTF.

The First Prize was awarded to **Turibio Santos (Brazil)** who is described by Robert Vidal as ‘a young guitarist with very great talent and, above all, a very great modesty which will help him to reach a high level.’ The British Council of Brazil sent him to the Julian Bream Summer Course at Dinton in July; and he also went to Santiago de Compostela to study with Andres Segovia.

The Second Prize went to **Miguel Barbera-Bisbal (Spain).**

Raul Maldonado (Argentina) received a Mention and also took part in the Segovia Course at Santiago de Compostela.

**- Contest for Compositions**

No First Prizes were awarded in either the Guitar Solo Composition Contest or the ‘Guitar with one Instrument’ Contest. The Jury, who were unanimous in all their decisions, felt that although the compositions were well written by composers who knew their work, the guitar and its resources had not been completely understood. It seems to be an absolute necessity for a non-guitarist composer to have the advice and collaboration of a good guitarist if he is to write for that instrument with complete success.

However, Second Prizes were awarded to **Guy Morancon (France)**—last year’s winner—for his solo *Petit Livre pour La Guitare*, and to **Jean Pierre Martin (Switzerland)** for his work for flute and guitar *Petite Suite pour Flute et Guitare*.

(Over)

In the former category, Jacques Cerf (Switzerland) was awarded a Mention for his solo *Muances*. There was also a Mention for a composer who entered a *Divertimento pour Flute et Guitare* under the non-de-plume 'Ventadorn' but whose identity had not been authorised.

The winning compositions for guitar solo were played by the Czech guitarist Barbara Polasek, (First Prize winner in 1964). The works for Guitar and Flute were played by Konrad Ragossnig (1961 winner) and Werner Tripp (flute, soloist of the Vienna Philharmonic orchestra), who gave a special recital which included works for guitar and flute by Handel, Scheidler, Wissmer (Sonatine), and Haug (Capriccio). The two last works were dedicated to the recitalists by the composers.

It is impossible to estimate the great value of these contests to the progress of the guitar and we are full of admiration and gratitude to Radio-Television-Francaise, the musicians who serve on the Jury, those who donate prizes, and particularly to the dynamic organiser—Robert J. Vidal.

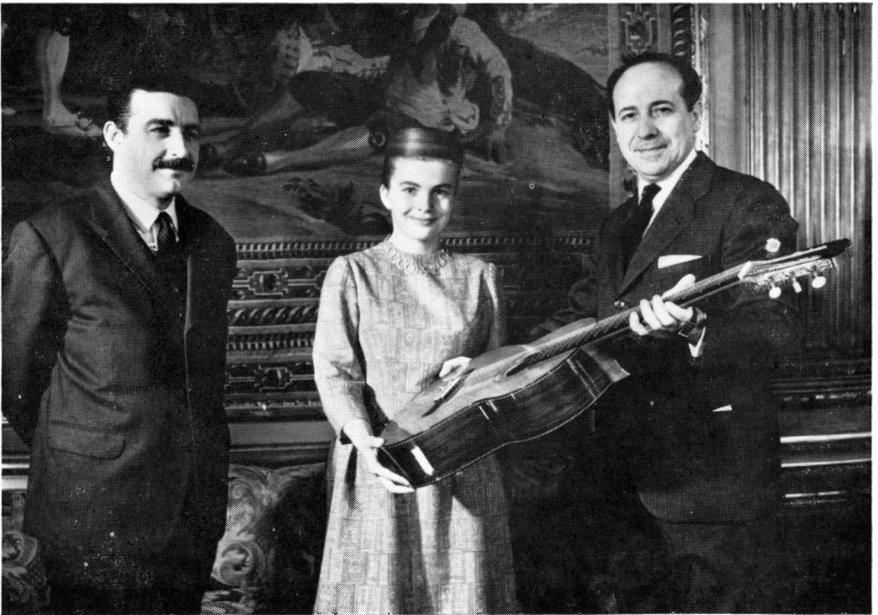


Photo :

O.R.T.F.—Bernard Allemanc

*'Uncle Bob' watches Mr. Rafael F. Quintanilla, Cultural Attaché to the Spanish Embassy of Paris, presenting a fine José Ramirez guitar to Barbara Polasek.*

*(In the background is a Goya Tapestry)*

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# THE EVOLUTION OF THE CLASSIC GUITAR —A TENTATIVE OUTLINE

By **Wilfrid M. Appleby** (*Britain*)

## *Resumé*

*Following the Golden Age of Sor and his contemporaries of the early 19th century the guitar was somewhat under a cloud and remained thus until well into the present century. But in Spain Torres, the guitar-maker, and Tárrega were preparing the way for the modern Renaissance of the guitar.*

## PART VI

### ‘ — IN THE HANDS OF AN ENGLISHMAN ’

**D**URING most of the long reign of Queen Victoria (1837-1901) the acknowledged ‘Queen of the Guitar’ in Britain was Madame Sidney Pratten, but although she worked for the guitar to the best of her ability she had not the musical qualities of Ferdinand Sor or Francisco Tárrega. Tárrega actually came to London, but he was not impressed with the guitarists he met. “A guitar in the hands of an Englishman is almost blasphemy!”—was his verdict.

However, one Englishman of that period might very well have become a great guitarist, if circumstances had been more favourable. Ernest Shand (1868-1924) was born in Hull, Yorkshire. He had considerable musical talent and had been taught music and the violin by his father. One day he found in an old book-shop a piece of music which aroused his interest. It was a guitar solo by Aguado, a very difficult one. Accepting it as a challenge he bought a guitar and proceeded to teach himself to play it, evolving his own technique, until he could interpret the printed music fairly successfully. After a while he became a pupil of Madame Pratten—if only he could have been a pupil of Francisco Tárrega!

He practised the guitar five hours a day for ten years and studied composition at a London Conservatory. By the time he was thirty years old he had written about 150 solos for guitar, an original ‘Method’ and a guitar concerto.

Hoping to make the guitar his career he opened a studio in Portman

Square, London, in 1896, but few pupils enrolled and although he continued to play and to teach the guitar he had to earn his living as a star comedian and actor. He seldom played the guitar in public, but when he did it was with great success. One such recital was in Sydney, Australia, in 1897, when after twenty solos, the delighted audience still clamoured for more, and the *Sydney Herald* reported that he was 'in every respect one of the most pleasing guitarists ever heard here!' His music could be described as 'light', in keeping with the popular taste of the period.



ERNEST SHAND  
(1868 — 1924)

*A re-constructed portrait based on  
a faded snapshot.*

## ENTANGLEMENTS

During the later years of the 19th century the guitar became merged with, or rather *submerged under* two other instruments. First, it was in danger of becoming merely a humble accessory of the Neapolitan mandolin, a plectrum-played wire-strung bowl-shaped instrument whose double strings were tuned *à la violin*, which had quite a vogue in spite of its tremolo. Then came the banjo craze. The parchment resonator of this instrument produced a nasal tone which was thoroughly exploited in the so-called 'Nigger Minstrel' shows of the period and in the early jazz-bands.

Unprejudiced, analytical reflection will show that, by their very natures, both these instruments are extremely limited in their tone-colour ranges compared with the guitar. Commercially, rather than aesthetically, they were grouped together as 'fretted-instruments' in the following order **BANJO**, **MANDOLIN** and **GUITAR**. This led naturally to 'mongrelising', the plectrum of the mandolin being used not only on the banjo (originally played with the fingers) but even on the guitar (wire-strung) which was thus debased for playing 'jazz'. Another craze was the so-called Hawaiian guitar with its excessive glissando. Many of the older guitars (Lacotes, Panormos, etc.) were ruined by being adapted to the 'Hawaiian' style by musically uncultured vandals.

Several fretted-instrument magazines were published during this period. They were published by firms who sold banjos, etc., and only a small share of their space was allotted to the legitimate guitar.

## BEFORE 1940

Such was the perilous situation of the guitar until well on into the present century especially in U.S.A. and Britain. However, in some parts of the world purely guitar activities were increasing.

## ARGENTINA

Argentina has been one of the strongholds of the guitar since the seventeenth century. Its great liberator, General San Martin, was a guitarist who had been a pupil of Sor. Many guitarists from Spain visited Argentina, some to settle there.

In 1917 Domingo Prat began to teach a ten-year-old girl, Maria Luisa Anido (affectionately known as 'Mimita'). She was bright, intelligent and musically sensitive far above average. Later she had a few months of instruction from Josefina Robledo, one of Tárrega's pupils. At the age of fifteen Miguel Llobet became her tutor, with the result that in June 1925, she took part with Llobet in a recital which thrilled the guitar loving citizens of Buenos

Aires and which was hailed as the greatest exposition of guitar music ever heard in South America.

In 1923 Juan C. Anido (Mimita's father) published and edited the first issue of "La Guitarra" (su historio, fomento y cultivo). It had thirty-two pages of articles, portraits of many leading guitarists, including an exquisite sketch portrait of 'Mimita' by Llobet. Unfortunately the very high standard of this first issue could not be maintained, so that by the sixth issue (1926) it had become a music magazine of general interest with only one or two articles of special guitar interest. However, a Guitar Association was formed and the guitar has continued to make great progress in Buenos Aires and other cities. Maria Luisa Anido was appointed Professor of Guitar at the National Conservatory of Music in Buenos Aires. A vast amount of guitar music has been published in that city.

#### U.S.A.

The American Guitar Society was founded in 1923 by Vahdah Olcott Bickford, and it is still flourishing. It has organised hundreds of guitar concerts and recitals in California and has published some interesting music for guitar.

*In New York.* Christian Frederick Martin (1796-1873) left his native Saxony and established his guitar-making business in 1833 in New York, moving to Nazareth, Pennsylvania, six years later. His guitars were of the same high standard as those of Lacote and Panormo, but built on a different structural plan.

In the 1920's the shop of Vicente Tatay, guitar-maker, was the rendezvous for those interested in the instrument. The American-born William Foden (b. 1860), Oyanguren of Uruguay, and Miguel Llobet were among those who gave recitals in New York before 1928, when Segovia made his debut at the Town Hall. This event gave great stimulus to those interested in the guitar, but it was not before 1936 that a society was formed, which became the Society of the Classic Guitar of New York. Amongst the earliest members were Howard J. Donahue, George Brandon, Vladimir Bobri, etc.

*In Washington.* Sophocles Papas first organised a Guitar Club in Washington D.C. in 1926 and has been active as teacher, composer, etc., ever since.

#### FRANCE

The Society *Les Amis de la Guitare* was founded in 1901. André Verdier was for many years its Director. At one time Emilio Pujol was its President and it had ninety members and a library. Ida Presti was associated with it in the earlier years of her career. In the 1930's she played at the Salle Pleyel, Paris, when she was only ten years old, and within the next few years she had played at the concerts of Paris Conservatoire and the Padeloup concerts and made gramophone recordings.

## AUSTRIA

Jacob Ortner (b. 1879) studied the guitar under Alois Gotz and was appointed Professor of Guitar at the Vienna State Academy of Music in 1924.



JACOB ORTNER  
(1879 — 1947)

He founded the *Austrian Guitar Review* in 1927 and edited its several issues. One of his pupils at the Academy was Luise Walker who gave her first recital at the age of fifteen. Later she studied under Llobet and on the retirement

a 7th string on which the i.m.a. fingers might have leaned after striking.

The relative stability the right hand gets from the application of **apoyando** is something not worth even mentioning as it is simply a consequence not sought at all. Our main concern is **the direction** we let the struck string take. The unsupported stroke lets the string vibrate more or less transversely in relation to the fingerboard surface; when accentuated this stroke lets the string bang on to it, while the **apoyando** stroke lets it vibrate parallel to the fingerboard thus making it possible to produce louder and at the same time more beautiful notes.

**When do we play apoyando:** Although to learn and thoroughly understand this technical proceeding it is necessary to have it explained and see it applied by an experienced instructor or guitarist, we may mention here that in **apoyando** we play scales and in general the melodic passages of single successive notes which may also be accompanied by a bass struck simultaneously by the thumb on a lower string placed at least at a distance of two or more strings, as **apoyando** is obviously not applied when **neighbouring strings** must be put into vibration simultaneously and be kept in vibration. Also **apoyando** is not applied in **arpeggios** as we wish to keep the notes vibrating as long as possible (longer than their **written** value indicates) obtaining thus a 'pedal effect', except, if desired, in rather slow **descending arpeggios** when we strike the strings from a higher to a lower one.

In playing **non-apoyando** (unsupported stroke) the **right** hand is obliged to **drop** slightly, because we want to avoid touching the adjacent lower (in sound) string. Nevertheless we should try by careful exercising to acquire such a technique as to have the **minimum dropping**, in other words, to be able to play **apoyando** and **non-apoyando** with **almost** one and the same position. If the hand jumps while we play, we risk missing many notes because the striking finger has been driven away from its regular course by the 'jumping hand' to some new place. To be obliged each time to put back the entire hand into its right place is not only useless but harmful, while by keeping the hand still we also increase the range of action of the fingers—which is an important quality to acquire.

In case I am misunderstood by some beginner I should add that the hand, of course, follows the fingers from above downwards (and vice-versa) when we play from the lower to the higher strings (lower and higher: always referred to the **sound**!); but this has nothing to do with the **jumping while the finger is striking**. To summarise: **we play with the fingers**;

the hand or the forearm do not participate.

Even when in due course we start practising the thumb (alone, followed by any finger, simultaneously with one, two or three fingers) we must practise the right hand **alone**, on open strings, or at the most, on simple chords.

I can only assure the guitar student that it certainly is in his interest to follow with the maximum attention all that I am trying to explain in these articles. We know that in many arts one has first to learn how to proceed by applying a great number of rules, only to disregard and break them later but there is a very great difference between breaking a rule consciously and doing it through lack of knowledge.

**NAILS:** Although much has been written and said about using (or not) the nails of the right hand fingers, I think it desirable to repeat here that the greatest concert guitarists play with nails not only because with them they can play louder (in big concert halls) but also and especially because they can produce a great variety of sound colours.

As we should always touch the string first with the fingertip followed by the nail (i.e. the fingertip is the first to come into contact with the string while the nail is the last to leave), to render this action possible and easy we must avoid having the nails too long. The fingers with nails less than one-eighth of an inch beyond their tip, just by touching a string can produce a nice brilliant sound, whereas the fingertips deprived of nail must penetrate deeply under the 'string surface' to 'get hold of' the strings, thus causing the action to be heavier—consequently slower—and producing a sound that is rather dull, opaque, colourless, cold . . .

Care should be taken to file the nails round so that, when one examines them by looking towards the palm of the open hand, they emerge regularly around the fingertip like an aureole; nails with pointed ends are not advisable. The thumb, like the i. m. a. fingers, should also have a nice strong round nail. Though normally, even with this digit, we touch the string first with the fingertip and then with the nail, when an accentuated passage with a somewhat brilliant or metallic quality is desired in the bass, we may strike only with the nail.

Here I should mention that in a conversation I had with Segovia, he told me that he did not agree at all with those who preferred using nails for all the fingers but not for the thumb. And Segovia asked: "How would it be possible to produce a nice brilliant bass with a thumb deprived of nail?"

(To be continued)

### CONCLUSION (AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL)

This essay on the Evolution of the Classic Guitar was intended to end at the year 1941, which was when the writer began to take an interest in the guitar. But so much has happened since then that a few more words seem necessary to mention some of the high-lights of the past twenty-five exciting years.

I studied the guitar and all things relating to it—history, music, biographies of its exponents, etc.—during the second world war, making copious notes. Soon I commenced to write articles, give lecture-recitals and correspond with guitarists in several lands. A considerable library of guitar music and publications was formed.

In January 1946 I began a series of 64 monthly articles on the guitar for a magazine. I made contact with the pre-war London guitar society (P.S.G.), which was revived, and in July 1945 I agreed to produce and edit a Bulletin for the Society. Altogether I brought out thirty-three issues of that Bulletin. The guitarists in New York (Society of the Classic Guitar) were contacted and "The Guitar Review" began publication in October 1946. At about this time the term 'Classic Guitar' began to be used to distinguish the real guitar from its debased derivatives.

In February 1946 with Miss Joan Prior, Mrs. Kay Appleby and Mrs. Lister I helped to inaugurate the Cheltenham Classic Guitar Circle, which on December 9th of that year organised Julian Bream's first public recital (at the age of 13) at Cheltenham Art Gallery. This Circle is still active.

In December 1947 I first met and heard Segovia, and later in that month I organised an Exhibition of 100 photographs of the guitarists of 16 countries at Cheltenham Art Gallery. It was seen by 1,500 people and demonstrated that the classic guitar is played by 'artistic modern people of intelligence and culture.' At about this time I first met Miguel Ablóniz whose writings on guitar technique have so greatly helped guitarists throughout the world.

On March 17th, 1951 six guitarists met in Cheltenham to consider the future progress of the guitar and how it could be helped. It was agreed that a new organization should be formed (The International Classic Guitar Association) and that its official organ should be *Guitar News* which I should edit.

### THE CLASSIC GUITAR TO-DAY

Only twenty-five years ago the following expression was used in a British national publication: "As dead as gaiters and guitars!" Such an expression would be absurd to-day.

Practically all important Music Conservatories now recognise and teach the classic guitar. Expert qualified teachers of the instrument are being trained.

(Continued on page 16)

## The inspiration of the modern guitar movement



SEGOVIA

More and better music is published than ever before, and a larger selection of gramophone recordings is now available.

Guitar Societies have been formed all over the world. Excellent guitars are being made by highly-skilled craftsmen in several lands.

Special courses on Guitar are held each year under the direction of Segovia, Julian Bream and other great artist-guitarists.

Great international competitions for guitar playing and composition are organised annually by Radio-Television-Francaise. Recitals and concerts attract large audiences with a high proportion of young people. Radio and television broadcasts occur more and more frequently, so that the 'public image' of the real guitar has been immensely improved.

Moreover there are thousands of talented young guitarists all over the world from Mexico to Japan, from Australia to Iceland, throughout Europe and the American Continent, who even though they may not become professional guitarists will enjoy making good and inspiring music on this grand instrument—so old and yet so new!



*Segovia, touring the world with his guitar, seen with Warren Coffey of Cincinnati, U.S.A.*



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## NEW TALENT BLOSSOMS IN SACRAMENTO, USA

**T**HE Classical Guitar Society of Sacramento was quite delighted, and justly so, when it became apparent they could top off their fourth year of existence with a program featuring all new performers. This was truly an important stride in the growth of the little group, as they now need two group recitals each year in order for all the qualified to participate. For many this was their first appearance before the public, and all came through with flying colors. Whatever mishaps occurred were so small they went completely unnoticed and no one had to restart any piece or passage! It must be mentioned also that the only performing experience these players have had was during the monthly meetings of the society, which once again proves that George J. Marks of Florida was right when he lectured here in 1962, the essence of which meant: "The best approach to the concert platform is to take every opportunity to play before your society."

Another encouraging aspect of this concert, was that of these nine players, at least four of them were over forty, indicating that since virtuosity is limited to the up and coming generation, the experience of participation is nevertheless for everybody. In the end all were happy they had met this challenge, and many expressed the hope that their peers throughout the guitar world will go forth and do likewise.

The program took place in the Belmonte Art Gallery on May 23rd as follows:

|   |             |
|---|-------------|
| Winfield Anderson and Bob Ruston                  |             |
| Allemande and Andante from opus 87 ...            | Kuffner     |
| Mike Saunders                                     |             |
| Etude No. 20 ... ..                               | Sagreras    |
| Plegera ... ..                                    | G. Gomez    |
| Pavane No. 3 ... ..                               | Milan       |
| Linda Keen  |             |
| Andantino ... ..                                  | Giuliani    |
| Allegretto ... ..                                 | Sor         |
| Jim Dawson  |             |
| Country Dance ... ..                              | Carulli     |
| Prelude No. 1 ... ..                              | Tárrega     |
| Mazurka ... ..                                    | F. Rocamora |
| Tom Sawyer  |             |
| Two Minuets from the Sonatas op. 22 and 25        | Sor         |
| George Artz                                       |             |
| Pastorale ... ..                                  | Carulli     |
| Habanera ... ..                                   | L. Walker   |
| Robert and Sally Rollicheck                       |             |
| Two Minuets from Anna Magdalena's Notebook ... .. | J. S. Bach  |
| Waltz and Three Variations ... ..                 | Carulli     |

*George Nichols.*



*Back row, left to right :*

Robert Rolicheck, Mike Saunders, Bob Ruston, Winfield Anderson, and George Artz.

*Front row, left to right :*

Tom Sawyer, Linda Keen, Sally Rolicheck, and Jim Dawson.

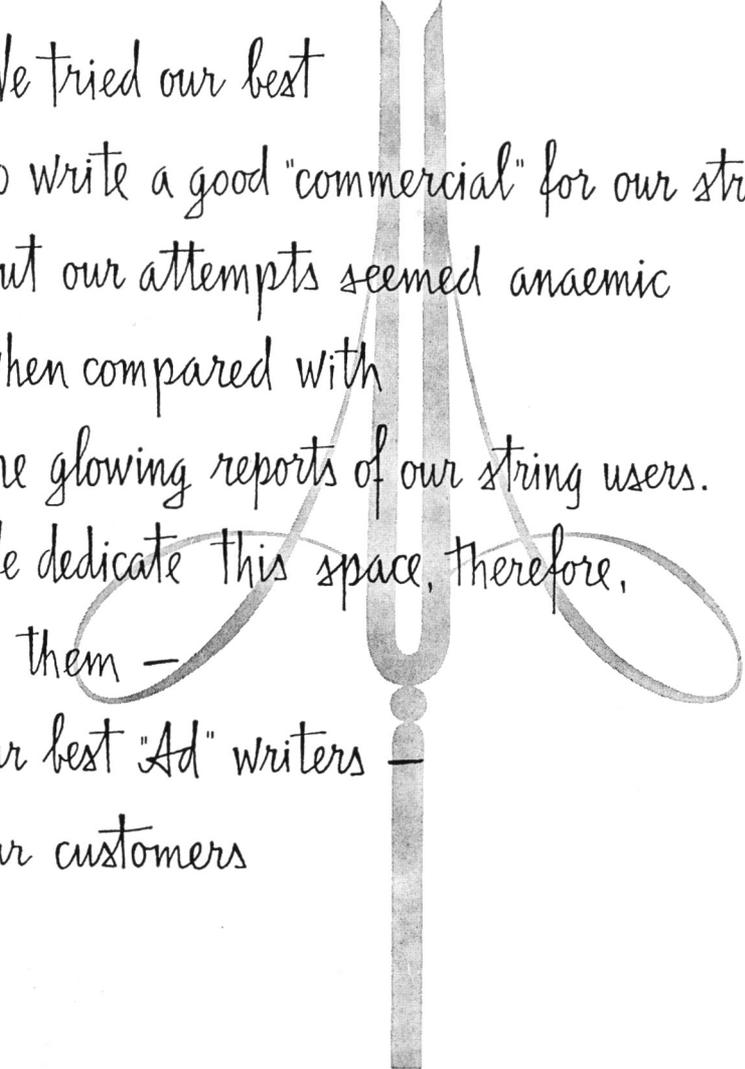
### BARNA KOVATS

**I**N the Marble Hall of Mirabell Castle, Salzburg, a recital of guitar solos was given by Barna Kovats on August 8th. The programme was as follows :—

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
| Galliard and Lady Hunsdon's Puffe ... .. | John Dowland |
| Suite ... ..                             | R. de Visée  |
| Etude ... ..                             | Giuliani     |
| Sonatas in A and E ... ..                | D. Scarlatti |
| Menuett (from Serenade) ... ..           | Mozart       |
| Minuetto ... ..                          | Paganini     |
| Six Preludes ... ..                      | Ponce        |
| Prelude No. 4 ... ..                     | Villa-Lobos  |
| Three Preludes ... ..                    | Debussy      |
| Kleine Suite ... ..                      | Barna Kovats |
| (encores)                                |              |
| Alemanda ... ..                          | Roncalli     |
| Andante ... ..                           | B. Kovats    |
| Minuet ... ..                            | J. Clark     |

The Hall was completely filled and the audience included a number of visitors from England.

Barna Kovats is Professor of Guitar at Salzburg Conservatory and is teaching a large number of pupils there.



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## GLASGOW MUSIC FESTIVAL, 1965

SIX months ago, David E. Morton, a nineteen-years-old second-year medical student at Glasgow University, decided to have professional instruction on the classic guitar. He had previously only used it for folk-songs.



Photo :

Eric Thorburn

The result of this wise decision was that he not only won the Class "A" Contest for Solo Guitar (First Class certificate and "Guitar News" Trophy), but was awarded the Ailie Cullen Memorial Prize for the outstanding performance of the Festival. (A Scroll and a prize of £25, for musical tuition.) The test piece was Study No. 12 of the Segovia Edition of the Sor Studies, and he also played Prelude No. 1 by Villa-Lobos. This is the first time that this coveted award has been won by a guitarist.

In an interview with a *Daily Mail* reporter David said: "I have a thorough grounding in singing and piano, but no other instrument can compare with the classic guitar for feeling and expression".

The Class "B" Contest was won by Richard Morrison, who played studies by Sor and Carcassi,

# RATIONAL GUITAR TECHNIQUE

By Miguel Ablóniz (*Italy*)

## Part 3

### THE RIGHT HAND : IMPORTANT DETAILS

I had thought of dealing with the following question later on, but as three professional non-Italian guitarists, among those who have come to see me recently, asked my opinion about the inclination we should give to the right hand fingers (i. m. a.), I realised that this matter had better be cleared immediately in the interest of those who like the above mentioned (who even teach the instrument) may not know it.

At any rate, in writings of this kind, intended rather for permanent consultation, the 'treating' of a subject concerns us more than its 'chronological appearance'. The important thing is 'not to leave it out'.

Far from being the narrow-minded traditionalist sticking to old systems, I however must attract attention about an idea regarding the right hand fingers and more precisely 'the side of them which contacts the string', spread lately by two rather well-known guitarists who maintain that Segovia's sound is weak and claim that they have found a way to obtain a sound which is in the meantime louder and nicer. How? They pluck the strings with the **right side** of the fingers (when **they** look at their fingers in playing position) instead of the **left**, as used by Segovia and by all those who did and do the same since at least Tarrega.

Such ideas, of course, do create a considerable confusion in the mind of the beginner guitarist and may even lead us to chaos. Has it not already cost us enough trouble to discover and divulgate our modern, well settled, technique?

Why does Segovia and those who like him use a technique based on the same principles strike the strings with the **left side** of the fingers?

Surely not because the adoption of the characteristic bending of the right wrist, hand and fingers renders them more pleasant to look at!

Why then?

Simply because of 'apoyando', (which I will explain at length in a later article), and because our right thumb, sticking out from the left side of the hand, participates in playing!

Had we not needed the thumb, any side of the fingers would have served equally well.

Before the discovery of 'apoyando', a guitarist could do any of the following actions, in **various** positions of the right hand, getting more or less the same results :

- (1) any finger (i.m.a.) or the thumb, used singly
- (2) any two fingers simultaneously
- (3) all three fingers simultaneously
- (4) any finger and the thumb simultaneously
- (5) any two fingers and the thumb simultaneously
- (6) all three fingers and the thumb simultaneously.

With the discovery of 'apoyando' we have gradually adopted the characteristic bend of the right wrist, hand and fingers because **only so we can do in one and the same position** all the just mentioned actions plus the two following :

(7) any finger used singly, 'apoyando'

(8) any one finger and the thumb used simultaneously on any two strings that must be separated at least by one string (on which the finger—which plays 'apoyando'—leans against). The thumb, obviously, strikes always the lower string while the finger strikes the higher.

It is especially this last action (8) that has determined our right hand position, a position assigning (allotting) to each finger and to the thumb a precise space into which each of them performs its part, doing always the same natural (easy) movement either when used alone or when used simultaneously with any one or more of the others, without the need of letting the hand participate by moving also at the moment the fingers strike.

There could not be any other solution. If one wants to do the eight actions in **one** position he **must** place his hand in Segovia's way. Is that clear? To try, cost what it may, to do it in some other way is almost as if one wished to induce us to walk on our hands!

A finger used in various inclinations **can produce the same quality of sound**: The section of the extreme part of the fingertip is almost a perfect half circle and for those of us who use 'fingertip-and-nail' (the nail sticking out a little and filed so that it has a similar half circle form) the conditions remain unaltered. If now we represent the string by a horizontal line and place on it a finger whose extremity points downwards, so that a very small part of it shows (from behind) under the representing-the-string line (forming a tiny arc), we may easily figure out that whichever inclination we gave to the finger from left (northwest) to vertical (north) to right (northeast), the tiny arc under the line (string) would remain **identical** because the fingertip has the shape of half a circle. Anybody may see this at once by using his left index stretched and by placing for example his right middle finger (from above) behind it, so that a small fraction of its tip shows under the index; incline now gradually the middle finger from left to vertical to right and observe what happens.

What I am asserting about the non-importance of the 'finger inclination', regarding quality, can be proved by any **advanced** guitarist who plays in the 'Segovia way'. Although, when we look at our fingers in playing position :

the index is inclined northwest

the middle finger is inclined north-northwest

the ring finger is inclined a few degrees leftwards of the vertical

(that is : three fingers of various length in three different inclinations)

yet, if we strike for instance, 'apoyando', many times the second string open, using combinations of two or three alternating fingers and accentuating all the notes equally, no person **just by listening** would ever distinguish **any difference** in quality of sound.

As a matter of fact, for the sound quality what is of capital importance is not the left, vertical or right inclination of the striking finger but the point where the **wrist** stands. Why? (The distance from the bridge at which we strike the string is not considered here.)

(a) If we keep the wrist low and fallen outwards, a finger (i. m. or a.) on moving naturally, will follow the trajectory that the fingers normally trace when we close the fist, and on striking a string will pull it somehow outwards. Result : The string will bang on the frets because the hooklike finger, by pulling it **outwards**, has let it vibrate transversally to the fingerboard surface.

(b) If on the contrary we keep the wrist as high as possible, with the ball of the thumb not more distant than 1 to 1½ inches from the sounding table, the finger being almost unbent, after striking will either fall on the adjacent lower string if we play 'apoyando' or pass just over it if we play 'non-apoyando'. Result : The vibrating string will be moving almost parallel to the fingerboard surface (the ideal direction), and will never bang.

Now, if a guitarist prefers to play with either side of his fingers, using different hand positions for each of the following actions : the one we called 8, arpeggios, scales, chords, melodic passages, etc., no one would ever care to prevent him; it's his own business !

But when some pretend to have discovered a 'new technique' and find simple-minded people who are ready to believe it, and often compelled to adopt it, I think that those who can demonstrate the nonsensicality (not to say the harmfulness) of these innovations, should not refrain from doing it.

If Segovia produces a sound that may be weaker than theirs, it is certainly not because he is **unable** to get it louder. I rather suspect it must be because he likes 'his' volume better ! Sensibility, taste . . . Things personal . . .

As long as mankind will be supplied with fingers of the same shape and disposition like ours, with a thumb stuck on the left side of the hand, and the guitar technique will be that practised also by Segovia (which after all is not that bad), to strike with the left side of the fingers will still be the most logical and efficient manner.

If we insist on recommending Segovia's position and technical principles it is because up to now they are the best to adopt; just hear his results! Our advice then is of a purely artistic nature and absolutely disinterested. We well know that at the end all are free to choose the system that seems to them more suitable.

Anyhow, I heartily wish every student-guitarist to become a 'Segovia' even if, like him, he would have decided to adopt the 'wrong side' of the fingers!

For the good of all guitarists then, and consequently of music in general, instead of losing more time and energy to discover 'new techniques', we reiterate that even where technique may have more or less reached its top development, the mind can yet keep improving and that it is in this direction that we should search for progress.

The guitarists, because of their being mostly taught privately (not in Conservatories), by persons inadequately prepared (to play a few pieces more or less well does not necessarily mean to have also acquired what an instructor should be able to transmit) are among all instrumentalists those who count in their files the highest percentage of players who do not seem to have realised at its proper degree the importance that a sound theoretical musical knowledge assumes when music is 'made' on the instrument. Without fearing any contradiction, we believe that between two guitarists who possess the same technique (presuming for a moment the measuring possible), the one who is more advanced in his studies of theory of music, harmony, etc., will undoubtedly be the better because his interpretations gain thanks to his theoretical preparedness. We should not forget to consider also the effort he spares in each new work he studies, by learning it and discovering its 'spirit' much quicker than the other.

To conclude: in musical matters after all, the only, the supreme, judge remains the 'ear'. If one plays clearly, with feeling and musicianship, to say that 'we like how he plays notwithstanding his wrong use of the fingers' is foolish!

In case by now some readers might have not yet been able to make up their mind toward which side to propend, I modestly offer this parable: If a young and enterprising ball-point pen manufacturer advertised, guaranteeing that his new and 'specially made' pen is the 'optimum' for right or left handed people, because it can be used inclined either toward oneself or rightwards or leftwards and that it is particularly recommended for writing languages (Arabic and Chinese included), would we not all agree that it is a slogan equivalent to much ado about nothing?

In a future issue we shall see how we can be certain of using the right hand correctly and how we produce sounds differing in quality (from sweet to harsh) and in volume (from pianissimo to fortissimo).

(To be continued.)

## SUSAN PRENDIVILLE: A DEBUT

**S** PONSORED by the Society of the Classical Guitar, Sydney, Susan Prendiville made her debut on the concert platform at the age of 18 at the Cell Block Theatre, Sydney on August 12th. After commencing the



SUSAN PRENDIVILLE

guitar in England, she returned to Australia where José Luis Gonzalez supervised her studies. When Segovia toured Australia in 1964 he was so impressed that he presented her with a scholarship to his Master Class at Santiago de Compostela, Spain. She has performed over the A.B.C. Radio, appeared on T.V. and is preparing a Guitar Concerto for next year's A.B.C. Concerto and Vocal Competition.

At her first public guitar recital on August 12th before a packed house she somewhat stunned the critics with a programme ranging from Luis Milan to Manuel Ponce which included the brilliantly played Capriccio Diabolico by Castelnuovo-Tedesco. The appreciative audience was conscious of being present at an historic occasion which was aptly summed up by the *Sydney Sun* with the words: "... she evokes the days of Menuhin's beginnings."

*Walter Schumacher.*

### RALPH FREUNDLICH

**R**ALPH FREUNDLICH gave sixteen full concert programmes on his fourth consecutive annual tour in the USA, in his dual role of singer-guitarist and unaccompanied flutist, from July 9th to August 12th, in the states of Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont. Audiences comprised summer camps of boys and girls and adult centres.

### 'ARTIST OF THE MONTH'

**J**OHN WILLIAMS was the 'Artist of the Month' for August in the BBC Music programme (Radio) in which each month a well-known artist is invited to introduce and perform a wide range of music. Autobiographical facts are usually given, so John Williams told listeners that he was born in Melbourne, Australia, on August 12th, 1941, and came to London in 1952. Between 1953 and 1961 he studied with Segovia at Siena, but his career really commenced after his training at the Royal College of Music, London. He is now married with a daughter, a few months old.

One of his greatest experiences was to give the 'first-ever' guitar recital at the Prada, Madrid. He has also played in USA, Russia, Japan and France.

With Alan Loveday (violin) and Amarylis Fleming (cello) he formed The Paganini Trio.

The music played included Fantasia (Mudarra), Ballet and La Volta (Praetorius), Courante (S. L. Weiss), Sarabande and Gigue (Bach), Andantino variato (Paganini), Burgalesa and Madronos (Torroba) and Molto Vivace (Stephen Dodgson).

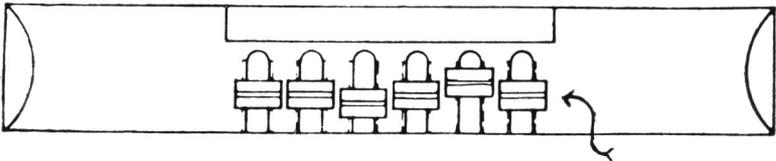
### JULIAN BREAM'S CHELTENHAM RECITAL (Nov. 18th)

*This recital will take place at the Town Hall, Cheltenham on November 18th (Thursday evening) as announced, but the programme has been changed. It will still include the 'Nocturnal after John Dowland' by Benjamin Britten as well as music by Mudarra, Sanz, Weiss, Bach, Sor, Stephen Dodgson (Partita), Ponce (Sonatina) and Villa-Lobos (Studies Nos. 8 and 11).*

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## CONSTRUCTING A CLASSIC GUITAR

By Thomas H. Corcoran (USA)

**E**VER since I made my own guitar from a guitar-making kit, my friends and enemies are more interested in my guitar than in my playing. The kit I bought (manufactured in Europe) contained all the components for a Classic guitar and the promise that I need only apply glue to the



pieces. A can of glue was included and on the box was a photograph of a twelve-year-old boy serenely sticking his guitar together. Alas, it was not that easy.

My kit was not expensive and furnished everything needed: neck, rosewood fingerboard slotted for frets, plywood back and sides, fair quality spruce top, machine heads, bridge, fret wire, stain, lacquer, even sandpaper, etc. The two sections of the top were glued together and the sides were already bent to shape (which I later found to be a disadvantage). By a rather ingenious method my guitar could be constructed without a mold

(ordinarily a mold, which is a kind of frame shaped like the outside of a guitar, is used to hold the sides while the back and top are being glued on). Furthermore, in strategic places the wood was marked with pencil lines to aid in joining the pieces. The instructions, printed on a single sheet with a few photographs, were clear and encouragingly succinct.

My problem was that no piece fitted another. Each had to be sawn, filed, bent, shaped, or otherwise reworked. As a result I came to the conclusion—halfway through my guitar making—that I would have done better to follow the example of a friend who simply ordered guitar components from a supply house. He purchased essentially what was in my kit and did only a little more reworking of the pieces than I did. I guess the major difference was that he had to glue the top sections and bend the sides. Also, he had to use a mold in which to assemble the guitar body; however, the mold made the task much easier. On the other hand, his guitar materials from the supply house cost about three times as much (but for top quality stuff, of course).

I did alter my guitar kit's plans, a little. For a small amount I added a tone hole ring, rosewood banding, and some strutting material. The ring strengthens the tone hole, and the banding protects the rims of the guitar; while both enhance its appearance. I used fan-shaped strutting for the top rather than the single cross-bar under the bridge which the kit's plans called for. Although I escaped bending the sides I wound up bending the banding. Using a bending iron turned out to be easier than I had imagined.

How does my kit-built guitar sound? Beautiful. I doubt that Segovia would choose it as his concertizing instrument but it certainly excels in tone and playability the average medium-priced guitar for sale in local music stores.

As for such a kit and its promises: I must admit that I am glad I bought one. It is true that a good supplier will send you a list of exactly what you need for building a Classic guitar, but a kit has everything in one box. My only words of caution: if you are not a twelve-year-old genius you must expect some very aggravating moments trying to make a guitar. Yet, for lovers of the Classic guitar it is a rewarding and satisfying experience. It is also fun. And, if you can control your language during the aggravating moments, your wife will be pleased at the many months you spend every evening at home building your guitar.

### ROY ADAMS

We learn with great regret of the death of Roy Adams on July 26th. Roy Adams was a Founder Member and the First President of the Society of the Classical Guitar, Sydney, Australia.

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**J**OHN WILLIAMS and Julian Bream, who recently made their concert tours throughout Japan, have certainly made our guitarists more enthusiastic about the instrument. It may sound a little odd, but both Mr. Williams and Mr. Bream gave our general audiences the impression that guitar concerts are not at all different from those of the piano or violin. This has given great encouragement to young Japanese guitar players.

Mr. Kazumasa Ishizuki is one of them. In order to study chamber music for guitar and other instruments he organised the Tokyo Guitar Chamber Music Society, the only group to play guitar concerto and chamber music in Japan, in 1962. Since then Mr. Ishizuki and other young guitarists have jointly given six recitals in Tokyo.

The sixth recital which was held at Tokyo Metropolitan Cultural Concert Hall on June 21st was the most successful one. Mr. Ishizuki and three other up and coming guitarists charmed not only the classical guitar fans but also the general audience with their brilliant skill and lovely tones.

*Mineru Nakada.*

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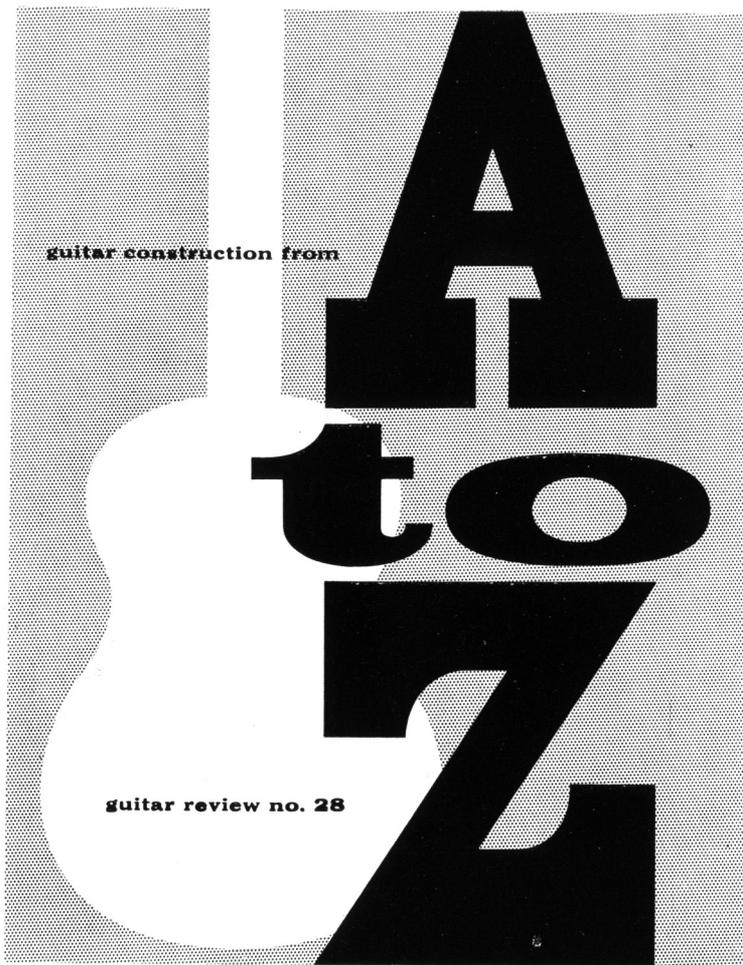
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## “THE GUITAR REVIEW” No. 28

Reviewed by Wilfrid M. Appleby

**T**HIS latest issue of “The Guitar Review” is one of the most practical and valuable of the twenty-eight which have been published by the S.C.G., New York.

Its cover (designed by Bobri) displays the words: *Guitar Construction from A to Z*.

It is an analysis of the problems of making a good guitar and how they have been tackled by various craftsmen. It does not attempt to give instruction on guitar-making, but the information collected will be of great value not only to guitar-makers but to all who wish to acquire a good and suitable guitar or to improve the instrument they possess.

The main article is by H. E. Huttig II on *The Guitar Maker and his Techniques*. This covers woods and their acoustical properties, the body and strutting systems, the head, tuning mechanisms, nut, neck, fretboard and frets, bridge, assembly, etc. It is illustrated by some excellent drawings and photographs.

The other article is by John C. Tanno: *A brief discussion of the Construction and Assembly of Guitars by Non-Spanish Luthiers*, to which is added a Bibliography and some interesting ‘footnotes’. There is a foreword by the Editor, Vladimir Bobri.

Very little has been written on guitar construction and its problems. A small book by Arthur Froane, *The Guitar and How to Study it*, (published in England in 1898) included a section on ‘Regulating the Guitar’ in which he states that (at that time) ‘not one guitar in a hundred is in a fit condition to play upon, unless made so by one who understands it thoroughly.’

The first articles in the English language giving instructions on making a guitar (based on the Torres model) were by Clifford Hoing in “Woodworker” magazine (1955) and Eric V. Ridge in “Guitar News”. These articles and those by Dionisio Gracia, J. K. Sutcliffe, etc., in former issues of “Guitar News” are out of print and are no longer obtainable from I.C.G.A.

Further scientific research into the acoustical problems of the guitar is urgently needed and much purposeful experimentation is necessary in which scientists, craftsmen and leading guitarists should co-operate. The problems of volume and sonority, for instance, are often misunderstood not only by guitar-makers but by guitarists themselves. Loudness is not enough, there must be carefully balanced sounds and they must be controllable so that the artist-guitarist can reveal the exquisite range of tone-colours of which the guitar is capable.

## THEODORE NORMAN

**T**HIRTEEN programmes of classical and contemporary chamber music, performed by distinguished Los Angeles artists, are being presented at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art by the Southern California Chamber Music Society in their 1965-66 season.

The guitar, played by Theodore Norman, will be heard in three of these concerts :

October 25th in Arnold Schoenberg's Serenade, op. 24.

December 13th in Riccardo Malipiero's "In Time of Daffodils" (five poems by E. E. Cummings, set for soprano, baritone and seven instruments).

January 24th (1966) in Charles Wuorinen's Chamber Concerto for Flute and Ten Players.

## CHELTENHAM CLASSIC GUITAR CIRCLE

**T**HE September meeting of the Circle opened with solos played by Paul Bate. Study in A minor (Sor), Miller's Dance (Manuel de Falla) and Prelude, the first performance of an original composition.

Paul Bate, one of the younger members of the Circle, has developed his musical talents by study and practice, gaining diplomas in Music Festival Contests and giving pleasure by his guitar playing not only at the Circle meetings but at other functions and concerts. He was the youngest Vice-President the Circle has had. This was his last appearance before departing for Sheffield University with the cordial good wishes of all the members.

The Annual General Meeting of the Circle showed that progress was satisfactory, the office-holders for the coming year being :

President : Mr. Eric H. Miller.

Vice-Presidents : Mrs. V. Macrae, Mr. R. D. Molesworth and Mr. P. J. Gamble.

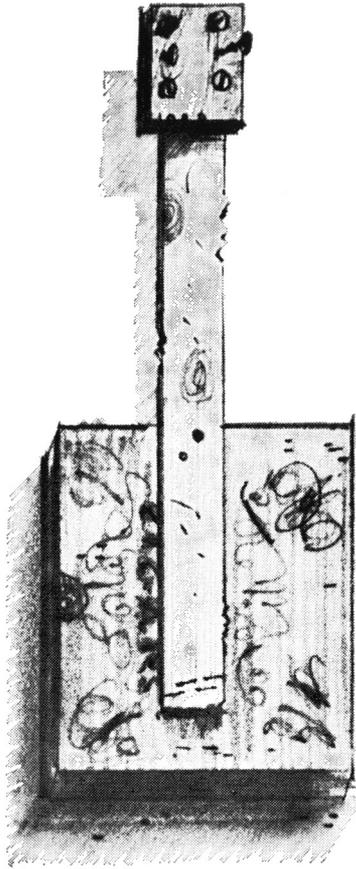
Honorary Secretary : Mr. Wilfrid M. Appleby.

Hon. Assistant Secretary : Miss Joan Prior.

Honorary Treasurer : Mrs. Vera Macrae.

After the business, playing was resumed as follows : George Zarb played Rondo (Sor) and Homage to Tárrega (Turina); Mrs. V. Macrae played Caprice No. 3 (Carcassi) and Kleine Romanze (L. Walker); Eric Miller played Prelude No. 3 (Villa-Lobos), Two Pavanés (G. Sanz), Pavan (L. Milan) and Prelude (Bach).

It was announced that Cheltenham Public Library has now a section for Classic Guitar Music in its lending library.



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## AQUILES VALDEZ ORTIZ



**A**T the University of Juárez, Mexico, on June 9th, a successful recital was given by Aquiles Valdez Ortiz. The programme included Prelude (Bach), Gavota (Ponce), Sarabanda (Handel), Ave Maria (Schubert), Three Mexican Songs (Ponce), Recuerdos de la Alhambra (Tárrega), Vals Venezolano (Lauro), Danza Española No. 5 (Granados), Asturias (Albeniz), etc.

Aquiles Valdez Ortiz studied the guitar under Prof. Guillermo Flores Mendez at the National Conservatorio of Music, Mexico, and has acquired an admirable technique. He has given many recitals in his native land, played guitar music in three films and made a gramophone record for the Astro Co. of Mexico.

## GUITARISTS' WEDDING

**T**HE brilliant Greek guitarists, Lisa Zoi and Evangelos Assimacopoulos were married on July 24th.

Through the reports of their many concerts and recitals they have become well-known to readers of *Guitar News*, who will wish them a long and happy life together.

We understand they will play as a Duo. We wish them every success.

## MEMBERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS

Members' Announcements are intended for the use of MEMBERS only. Guitars advertised must be second-hand and the actual property of the advertiser.

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*No trade advertisements such as strings, new guitars or music can be accepted as Members' Announcements. (Please send for our Displayed Advertisement rates.)*

BLANCHE MUNRO, A.G.S.M., Professor of Guitar at the London College of Music and Guildhall School of Music, accepts pupils, including beginners, at 35 Corringham Road, London, N.W.11. Enquiries SPEEDWELL 7740.

CLASSIC GUITAR STUDIO: A new studio in Lincolnshire for guitar instruction. Principal: Malcolm H. Grady, 393 Wellington Street, Grimsby, Lincs. (Formerly of Hampshire.)

GIL M. DE JESUS, B.Mus., Teacher of Guitar at New England Conservatory of Music accepting pupils at 126 Paul Gore Street, Boston, Mass. U.S.A. (Phone 524-1888).

MADLINE BALLARD—Classical guitar—formerly of the Spanish Guitar Centre and the Ministry of Education, London, England and now resident in Montreal, Canada, accepts students, including beginners, for private and group tuition. Segovia-Tárrega method. Also for Theory, Solfege and general musicianship. Lessons conducted in both French and English. Tel. 733-8691.

ADELE KRAMER, Professor at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London, gives lessons in Classical Guitar for beginners and up to Concert Standard. 24 College Crescent, Swiss Cottage, London, N.W.3. (Tel: PRImrose 5366).

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GUY B. SIMEONE, Guitarist, 11 New Heath Street, Roxbury 19, Massachusetts and 318 Hatherly Road, Scituate, Massachusetts, USA.

"GUITAR NEWS" back issues. Only issues available: Nos. 65, 68, 69, 70, 71, 73, 74 and 78—1/8. No. 84—2/- plus postage. I.C.G.A., 47 Clarence Street, Cheltenham, Glos., England.

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