



February 2021 NEWSLETTER

January Meeting

The great thing about Zoom meetings is that you don't have to step outside your own front door on a cold and wet winter's evening in order to take part. This month we were pleased to welcome several new members Richard King-Li, John Plunkett and Russ Clark, as well as two former members from the Society's early days: Rod Pearce and Steve Rickaby. Rod had been Treasurer, while Steve had served as Secretary and President as well as newsletter composer and artist. Unfortunately the software conspired against Rod and all we were able to see or hear of him from Cheshire was a frozen video clip although he could hear some of our music and chat. Steve and his cat did better, all the way from West of Penzance, although audio was occasionally lost.

First to pick up the guitar was Elaine White playing two pieces from the Trinity Guidhall guitar syllabus: *Vals No.1* by Bartolomé Calatayud, with some attractive ponticello effects and harmonics, and *Cubana* by Patrick Benham. Then, as quite a contrast, Richard King-Li played his own arrangement of the Handel aria *Non lo dirò col labbro* from the opera *Tolomeo*, subsequently adapted by Arthur Somervell in the 20th Century as a popular classic *Silent Worship* beginning with the lines "Did you not hear My Lady go down to the garden singing ... ?" Richard's assured playing quickly dispersed any butterflies that allegedly bothered him earlier. Next, David Chillingworth played a rather silly *Study in G* by Aguado that might not be out of place in a Monty Python sketch, and by chance Penny Candlin also played a *Study* by Aguado - this one a little more sober. The 'modern' school of guitar playing (with *apoyando*, use of the ring finger, etc.) is often attributed to Tárrega, although much of it goes back to Aguado who published his *New Guitar Method* in 1843.

It was then the turn of Martin Slater, with Dowland's *Lady Hammond's Alman*, followed by two pieces of his own composition: a jolly *Rustic Rondo* from 1978 (first public performance!) and *Prelude No.4* from 1981. John Plunkett then gave a very accomplished rendition of the slightly spooky *Bagatelle No.2* from the set of five composed by William Walton for Julian Bream, a piece not heard often at our meetings. Tim Woodnutt played next with the perhaps more familiar *En los Trigales* by Rodrigo, and then Russ Clark, from his background with the Southampton Folk Orchestra, played the even better-known *Lágrima* by Tárrega - a good marker of progress in Russ' lockdown project of learning the classical guitar! Taking up the Folk theme, Chris Thompson first gave a rendition of the 1960s number *Angie* composed by Davey Graham, and then played *El Totumo de Guarenas* by the Venezuelan composer Benito Canónico (1894-1971), arranged by Antonio Lauro and revised by Alirio Diaz. El Totumo is a mud volcano in the North of Colombia (a bit of a tourist trap, according to tripadvisor) although Chris pointed out that it can also mean a bang on the head, and he played the piece as if the composer had been knocked a bit sideways in the middle - that is Chris' story, anyway.

It was good then to welcome again Chin from Lincolnshire who joined us for the first time in November. Chin played his own delightful arrangement of the *Last Rose of Summer*, with a very effective tremolo accompaniment in the later part, and followed

this with a *Fantasia* by Sylvius Leopold Weiss. For something rather different, Tim Rushworth then played a Chilean dance *Cueca* by Barrios, and Dave Rawlinson ended the concert programme with *Dedicatoria* by Enrique Granados and an *Oración* by Barrios. The *Dedicatoria* is a piece from Granados' suite *Cuentos de la Juventud* (Stories from Childhood) written for piano but quickly appropriated by Tárrega as a guitar piece, while the *Oración* is one of several *Oraciones* written by Barrios¹ (see also *Oración de la Tarde*, *Oración por Todos*).

This completed the performance programme for the evening, although much pleasant chat ensued with old and new members. The meeting then concluded with a plug from Tim R for the Redlynch Acoustic Guitar Group that meets on the second Friday of each month (for details contact tim.ru.6@gmail.com), and a plug from Denis Gibson for the Society website www.scgs-guitar.org.uk/ with an encouragement for those members who have not done so to sign in to the site and perhaps upload a photo or two and any interesting news. Thanks once again to Denis for hosting the meeting, and to Tim R for efficiently chairing the proceedings.

Next meeting: Wednesday 24 February 2021 at 7.30 pm



El Totumo

¹ Augustín Barrios Mangoré of course; not to be confused with Gregorio Barrios: *Oración a mi Amada* !