LONDON CELLO SOCIETY
NEWSLETTER

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Going West

The Piatigorsky International Cello Festival in Los Angeles?

• *An Interview with RALPH KIRSHBAUM*

Ralph Kirshbaum

Selma Gokcen visited LCS's Honorary President Ralph Kirshbaum in his studio, where he occupies the Gregor Piatigorsky Chair in Violoncello at the Thornton School of Music, University of Southern California, Los Angeles. On a sunny day in February they talked about the Piatigorsky International Cello Festival which he founded upon moving back to the United States, his native country. How did the grand ideas which made the Manchester Cello Festival such a draw for cellists the world over transplant to the soil of Southern California?

SG: How did you find the cello world when you arrived here in the land where entertainment is king? Having grown up in Southern California during the time of Gregor Piatigorsky, Gabor Rejto and Josef Schuster, I recall that the cello was thriving back then, but that was a long time ago!

RK: Moving back to America altogether was a major change for me. I had been based in Europe since 1970, and although I came regularly to the United States for concert tours, I had not lived here for over 40 years. To leave England for California was quite a decision for me and my wife. In taking this step I was aware that in terms of time, my wife and I were still physically able to make such a move—we were, after all, not just changing continents but moving all the way to the West Coast!

When I came to the University of Southern California Thornton School of Music to speak about this position with the current Dean, Dr. Robert Cutietta, I felt he was a leader of an institution with fresh ideas and someone who also welcomed them from others. Like the former principal of the RNCM, Sir John Manduell, [where the Manchester Cello Festival took place under Ralph's direction] he was receptive to the idea of a cello festival. Dean Cutietta thought it would be an extension of their bi-annual 'Piatigorsky Seminar', and although I tried to assure him it would be a very different beast, he didn't seem reluctant to proceed. Had he known ahead of time the extent of this truly international event, he may have had cold feet but in the end, he was extremely happy with the success of the first festival in 2012 and we now have plans for another in 2016.

Coming back to the cello world here, I already had a warm personal relationship with my former student Antonio Lysy, professor of cello at University of California at Los Angeles and a cordial relationship with Ron Leonard, the former principal cellist of the Los Angeles Philharmonic and former holder of the Piatigorsky Chair who now teaches at the Colburn School. I knew there were thriving cello departments in the area. Furthermore, Piatigorsky was my childhood hero; I played for him at age 13 in a masterclass in Texas. I felt the cello world as I found it was very healthy and that it would be wonderful to be a part of it, and to see what could be developed as I built my own class. This is now my sixth year at USC.

SG: What are the necessary conditions for establishing a successful cello festival?

RK: I can only speak from my 25 years of experience, having led 10 of these festivals. First of all, you have to have good friends who share your enthusiasm and vision, and who enter into the idea with a positive spirit. Even without money you then have the genesis of a good festival. Like a chef who has the best ingredients and the imagination to use them, you need these initial ingredients to build a good festival.

Secondly, you need financial support to build a festival of any scope. Often this also comes from good friends or other people who are patrons of the arts. If you can galvanise those forces, along with the ingredients, you have the makings of a successful event. All those years in Manchester I had many stalwart friends, both among cellists and those happy to be sponsors. Here in Los Angeles at the first festival in 2012 we had an extraordinary coming together of four major institutions of this city. It was certainly the first time that USC spearheaded an event of such magnitude, in partnership with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, and the Colburn School of Music. Even the city got involved; the mayor sent a warm message of congratulations and the city council named March 9-15th the 'Piatigorsky International Cello Festival Week.' At the opening event, Piatigorsky was inducted into the Classical Music Hall of Fame, based in Ohio.

SG: Manchester is a more central location relative to the States and the far corners of Europe. Did you have any doubts that you would be able to draw the artists and participants to the West Coast of the United States?

RK: Yes, to be honest I wasn't sure how my European-based colleagues would feel about making the trip to the West Coast of America. However those were minor reservations at the outset; I never really thought it would be a serious impediment. If we could make the conditions comfortable for them, I felt confident they would come. And they did.

SG: In honouring such a legend in the music world as Gregor Piatigorsky, what was uppermost in your mind when establishing a cello festival in his name?

RK: It was important to remind people, especially the younger generation, what a great artist he was. People have short memories—if you ask a young person who is your favourite cellist, the answer is usually someone in their forties. They don't seem to have an awareness of the great cellists who preceded them; the only musicians they know and love are today's performers. That's why in Manchester we always had seminars on the great cellists of the past. It is important that we should not forget them. The relevance and artistry of people like Gregor Piatigorsky must not fade away. I remember a conversation with William Pleeth many years ago when I put the question to him: "Isn't it amazing how far the technical ability of cellists has advanced these days?" His answer was: "You know, I don't think anyone today plays the cello better than Feuermann did in 1940."

However, there are many more cellists of a high level today and our festival celebrates the diversity of talent and abilities in our cello world.

SG: Can you share with us in a general way how the funding transpired? Some of us might aspire to start a cello festival but the 10,000 foot mountain is always who pays? Did you encounter those rocky moments which kept you awake at night?

RK: My experience has been that you start with those you have known personally and who will be enthusiastic about the project. You usually find that you have 2 or 3 people whom you know well, who respect your work, and who can see the possibilities. The overall budget of the Piatigorsky Festival was considerably more than the Manchester Cello Festival because it was longer and with more sections. Here in Los Angeles, I knew Deborah Borda, President and CEO of the LA Philharmonic, and I went to see her with the idea. In the same way as in Manchester with potential partners or patrons, I was totally unashamed to ask for support for the Festival as it is not a personal request, but a

larger conception which inspires the confidence to appeal for this support. Once you have the initial ground level commitment, the momentum develops, people hear through the grapevine, and it becomes easier to go to the next level of funding. It escalates naturally when one is on positive footing.

The fact that the LA City Council declared the 'Piatigorsky International Cello Festival Week' came as a pleasant surprise—that a cultural event was viewed at the highest echelons of city government as worthy to endorse and promote.

When we started the Piatigorsky Festival, we had a fluid budget. As we were successful in our fundraising, the scope of our plans expanded, and in the end our programming lasted 10 days. We made use of three halls at USC, two halls at the Colburn School, and in the largest venue, Disney Hall, we had a series of three concerts with the Los Angeles Philharmonic. Our closing gala also took place at Disney Hall and all of our concerts there were full.

SG: Can you tell us about some of the very special moments of the first Piatigorsky Festival that perhaps took you by surprise?

RK: For the very opening concert of this new venture, we learned 6 weeks ahead of time that Patrick Demenga (who was to give the American premiere, with his brother Thomas, of a Double Concerto which Thomas had written) had to cancel due to ill health. What could we do? It turned out that Thomas had a student, Sayaka Selina Studer, who had not yet learned the concerto but he was confident of her abilities to do so. And in the end she performed remarkably well—it turned into a wonderful occasion of master and student joining together and giving a joyful performance.

SG: Is it too early to ask what the focus of the next festival might be and also the dates for our members to note in their diaries?

RK: The focus is still cloudy! It isn't that I haven't a lot of ideas, but the way I build the programming for a festival is to consider seriously the ideas of the artists invited to participate. We will have an evening of all the Beethoven Sonatas and Variations with different artists; and an evening with the LA Chamber Orchestra with Baroque and Classical concertos. And there will be another series of concerts with the LA Philharmonic, this time to begin the Festival. And we'll have a very festive concert on the opening weekend to welcome everyone to the USC campus.

The dates are 13-22nd May 2016. I welcome all my friends and colleagues to plan ahead and come to California to enjoy the Festival and the fascinating and culturally diverse city of Los Angeles.

SG: We wish you the very best of success!

Of Special Interest

Taking Off

• Sophie Gledhill

Some time last summer our newsletter editor Amy Jolly received this query from a member:

Professionals do this regularly. For those like me who fly with their cello once in a blue moon it is quite a challenge. Do I use the hold or book a seat? I have heard conflicting views on this point and am told that BA is very gentle with cello cases in the hold. I recently flew BA to Geneva which involved contacting a special department to reserve a seat for it but am told that with Easyjet it is possible to book online. Any advice?

Having travelled many a time with her cello, but never once having a problem, she thought she wasn't the best person to respond! Hence she turned to her colleague and good friend Sophie Gledhill for an answer:

I begin this article with the assumption that, as a cellist, your response to the old chestnut, 'Don't you wish you played the flute?' is invariably and emphatically, 'No'. So, we're happy with our instrument choice, but perhaps less happy with the practical issues involved with a human-sized yet largely inanimate travel companion. It's customary these days for cellists and their partners in crime to travel by air, yet airlines and their staff are far from streamlined in their handling of our four-stringed friends, right the way from the booking process to boarding.

The first decision an air-bound cellist has to make is whether they are willing to take the risk of entrusting their cello to the hold. I have never done this, partly because I don't have a robust flight case but, even if I did have one, I've heard one too many stories of cracked ribs and broken necks, and I'm not just talking about the baggage handling staff. Of course there are baggage handlers who heed multiple 'fragile' stickers, but it is equally true that too many treat the warning as a challenge. Having said this, I know that heavy, sturdy, buxom Stevenson flight cases have been a trusty friend to many a cellist (www.stevensoncases.co.uk), as have Stevenson's soft outer covers which act as a cocoon for your own case. These covers are available to hire, which may be your most cost-effective option if you travel fairly infrequently. It's also worth noting that very rarely a member of airline staff will take pity on your cello and go out of their way to find it space in the cabin. But in the world of cello travel, there is always an anecdote to counter an assumption; I heard a story from a colleague recently in which cabin crew offered to keep his cello in a passenger toilet. An original and generous gesture, but I can't help feeling retrospective concern for the human passengers on that flight, especially if it was long haul with free drinks.

If you decide to book cello seat, I always suggest telephoning the airline directly to triple check with a human the specific airline's policy for 'oversized' instruments, and quadruple check that your cello has been given a window seat next to your own. Some airlines, including BA and Virgin Atlantic, will actually remove tax from the cost of your cello seat, which can make a significant difference. It's important that your extra seat is booked as such, rather than as another person, to save all manner of grief down the line. Different airlines have different protocols for this, but over the years my cello has assumed such identities as Mr Cello Gledhill, Extra Seat Cello, Mr A Cello and CBBG (cabbage?), sometimes with its own boarding pass and sometimes sharing mine. It's possible you'll have to answer personal questions including the vital statistics of your travel companion. If it helps, my cello in its case comes to about 8 kg; I'm sure he won't mind me telling you that. Once, when it was discovered at check-in that a proper record hadn't been made for my cello, I was asked for a passport number and date

European Union Youth Orchestra cellos jetting off on tour

of birth. The computer wouldn't accept 1846 as a year of birth, so I was forced to give false information.

Try not to have special dietary requirements. If you're born with such an affliction, you will have to accept and adjust to the fact that you will be treated as a doubly difficult citizen. 'What do you mean you chose an outsized instrument *and* a horrendous intolerance to our bread rolls? Don't you think it'd be more convenient for everyone if you swam across the Atlantic?' On the positive side of onboard catering issues, cabin crew will invariably believe they are the first to think of asking, 'And would your cello like a G&T too?' Always say yes, and make sure they know you're serious.
More often than not you will be given an extra seat belt, usually intended for those carrying babies. On rare (but secretly quite exciting) occasions your own team of engineers will arrive in white coats with a manual of indecipherable diagrams in order to strap you all in. On even rarer occasions you will have your cello taken from you at the gate (if you let them) and put in its rightful window seat by a said technician, something which can be both terrifying and helpful. The key point is that you never know what to expect, and a policy is only a policy until someone decides to change it, which is more often than not.

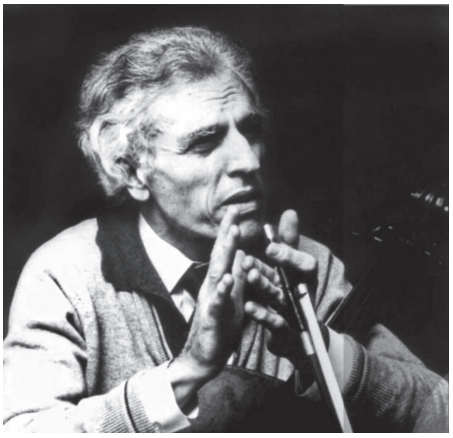
With this in mind, I think it's safest to refrain from sweeping judgements about specific airlines. I've flown long haul with British Air ways several times, and each experience has varied wildly. As a rule I always plan to arrive at the check-in desk with at least three hours before any flight with a cello. This allows for numerous calls to supervisors ('We've never dealt with anything like this before'); calm but firm repetition ('I definitely did pay for an extra seat, and no, the extra passenger does not also require a gluten-free meal') and endearing yet probably redundant stories ('My nephew used to play the guitar'). Two years ago my cello was even christened at check-in. Travelling to Heathrow from New York JFK airport for the first time with my recently purchased instrument, a seemingly serious American man working behind the BA check-in desk asked, 'What's his name?' I was shocked to realise that I hadn't yet named my new addition, but I had only recently parted with Audrey. 'Ralph, call him Ralph,' was my unexplained order, and the rest is history.

In short, don't be put off by the cello travel horror stories and don't let anyone tell you that flying with a cello isn't worth the hassle; whatever happens, you'll always have a story.

Thanks Sophie! Please don't hesitate to contact me if you need any more help, or refer to this website for more advice:
http://cellobello.com/blog/index.php/victory-of-the-campaign-fair-treatment-for-musicians-traveling-on-planes-with-their-instruments/

Paul Tortelier • A Personal Recollection

• Richard Markson



Paul Tortelier

"Tortelier and Rostropovich are quite alike" Jacqueline du Pré told me when she called upon returning from Moscow, "the only difference is that in Tortelier's class the women are constantly in tears and in Rostropovich's, it is the men too."

Tortelier never intended to upset his students but his impulsive temperament, when not applied to the cello, often got the better of him. My association began as a 12 year-old. "It is a leettle late but we will manage" was his prediction after persuading my mother that I must go immediately to Paris to study with him.

In the UK, Tortelier's colourfully flamboyant televised master classes sustained his image as a star, but back at the Conservatoire his teaching style was markedly different. Only the students mattered and no teacher was more committed. By today's standards his approach would be deemed autocratic. Before starting a new piece we were required to copy his markings assiduously. Deviation was not encouraged, but if you brought different ideas to the class his reaction would be one of the following:

"Mais non!!" or: "Bravo, may I copy your fingering?" and on one occasion: "That's very expressive. What fingering do you use? Can I copy it?" Me: "Maître, it's your fingering!" Pause, whilst he fingered it in his mind, then: *"Oui, en effet!"*

Nothing was set in stone. In a lesson on Bach's G major Courante in which I had dutifully followed his newly published bowings and fingerings, he proceeded to turn everything on its head, somewhat to the exasperation of his wife with whom my lesson followed on the same piece. As he relentlessly sought to develop his ideas he would alter his bowings and fingerings at the drop of a hat. During a rehearsal of Haydn's D major concerto he was unhappy with a fingering in the slow movement. I suggested another - probably one of his own, but when the passage arrived during performance he beamed at me in acknowledgement.

We too were expected to be adaptable. Minutes before an exam at which I had to play the scherzo from the Elgar concerto, I recall him hovering excitedly backstage proffering a new fingering. Useful training perhaps, but not for nothing that his wife dubbed him an *indécismaître!*

Leonard Rose thought him: "meshuge, (mad) but nicely meshuge". Isaac Stern disagreed: "Let's just say he was a little different", whilst their pianist Eugene Istomin remarked: "Well HE ain't no slouch!" But in these days of greater consensus they all agreed he was a great cellist even if some musicians were less fulsome in their appreciation: The pianist Paul Badura-Skoda told me his friend Jörg Demus performed with Tortelier in Buenos Aires. As the story goes, they were rehearsing a Bach sonata when Demus launched into an erudite explanation as to why his interpretation was stylistically inappropriate. Tortelier responded: "Most interesting..." before adding: "but I don't feel it that way. I am so sorry!" Badura-Skoda was highly amused by what he regarded as the unanswerable reply. Demus, when I met him years later was less amused. "I suppose he might be an important cellist, but what kind of answer was that?"

Humour was never far from the surface with Tortelier. An engaging raconteur with impeccable timing, he doubtless could have been a comedian if his mother hadn't decreed he be a cellist. He could also dance. I recall a virtuoso performance of the Charleston with his son Pascal, an occasion also marked by my attempted dancing with his daughter which amused him considerably. On television his humour was in full flow as he hilariously narrated a story to Bach's C major Bourrée. A few months later, following a performance of Haydn's D major concerto at the Usher Hall, Edinburgh, a little boy knocked gingerly at the Green Room door: "Mr. Tortelier, what story do you think of in the last movement of the Haydn concerto?" Without hesitation Tortelier launched into a colourful account of a children's playground with merry-go-rounds, babies crying and mothers rushing around. As the boy backed out of the room mumbling almost inaudibly that he would always think of this when listening to the Haydn concerto, Tortelier turned to those remaining: "Zees boy, how little does he know... All I think about in the Haydn concerto is the danger of the shifts!"

He was a performer *par excellence* who thrived on adrenalin and the appreciation of his audience, but his extrovert showmanship co-existed with a sober awareness of his strengths and weaknesses. His cello compositions reflect his imaginative and innovative approach to left hand technique. He bowed with the refinement of a fiddler and admired the fluidity of Fournier's bow arm, recalling that when Fournier once told him he wished he had his left hand he replied: "and I wish I had your right!" It was Casals however whom he idolised, firmly of the belief that his stature as cellist and musician was unique in relation to everyone, past and present.

His pupils were immediately aware that to be a "mere" cellist was not enough. When they followed him to Ma'abarot, a kibbutz in Israel where he lived for a year, he enquired whether they wanted to study "technique" or "musicianship". When they opted unanimously for technique he reportedly replied: "Very well, we shall study technique.....and tell me, musically everything is OK?"

He was a musician to his fingertips, undoubtedly a showman, but not in a way that compromised the integrity of his musicianship. I remember him poring over Don Quixote at the piano, dissecting it without recourse to the score in an illuminating analysis of Strauss' genius. Bach however was his lifelong passion. He belonged to the camp that was convinced Bach would have welcomed the expressive possibilities afforded by the modern bow. In his own words: "One must be a purist, not a puritan", which is perhaps not a bad epitaph for the man himself.

On the Edge

Arpezzato: A new style of cello playing?

• Ivan Hussey

Throughout the world there are many cellists experimenting with, and using, a variety of pizzicato-derived techniques on the cello. The process of playing and teaching these varied techniques, to my mind, deserves further attention and exploration.

A number of years ago, I began creating compositions for an album, where the melody, harmony and rhythm of the whole piece were contained completely within the pizzicato cello part. Much like it could be for a guitarist. As I developed this style of playing, it occurred to me that the word 'pizzicato' did not cover the full extent of what was happening with the fingers of both hands.

Pizzicato, in Grove Music online, is described as 'A direction to pluck the string(s) of a (generally bowed) instrument with the fingers'. In the 1600s, Montiverdi asked players to pluck the instrument using two fingers of the right hand. Leopold Mozart later told us that a correct pizzicato involves pulling the string outwards with the index finger. Within my own playing, there were too many varied techniques employed for it to be simply called pizzicato.

Many of the finger techniques I use are imported from the world of Pop/Rock, Blues and Jazz and include: 'hammer-on', 'hammer-off', 'slide', 'pop', 'slap', 'strum', 'walking', 'wide vibrato' and 'boom-chick'. These techniques can be heard on a variety of stringed instruments, such as the electric guitar, acoustic guitar, double bass and the electric bass. Over the hundred years since jazz and blues began, instrumentalists had developed these techniques away from the classical arena.

To use these techniques as a cellist requires a different way of approaching the instrument and puts a different set of demands on both the right and left hands of the player, demands not usually covered within the pedagogy of classical playing. In a sense, this is a new style of playing, one that requires a name to incorporate the wide range of techniques employed. By combining the word 'Pizzicato' with the word 'Arpeggio', I settled on 'Arpezzato'.

The use of guitar-like arpeggio forms the basis of the 'arpezzato' style, where the cello is played using the thumb, index finger and middle finger of the right hand. The thumb operates on the C and G Strings and takes the role of the bass while the two fingers fill in the harmony on the D and A strings. Through the use of different rhythms and combinations of finger use, a multitude of guitar-like passages can be explored. Add to this a selection of the above-mentioned techniques and the possibilities are endless.

Arpezzato is an advanced style of cello playing that requires the instrumentalist to have a good cello technique, a solid knowledge of chords, experience with improvisation and an understanding of guitar and bass techniques used in Pop/ Rock, Blues and Jazz. Most importantly, as in the study of classical music, knowledge of the many varied musical styles within these genres needs to be both explored and absorbed.

My path in life afforded me these possibilities.

I progressed through school and teenage years under the tutelage of John Kirby who, when the time was right, passed me on to Leonard Stehn, a professor at the Guildhall School of Music. During this time, I was approached to play the cello in a band called 'The Reggae Philharmonic Orchestra'. Soon it was clear that I wanted my career to be within the Pop / Rock arena.

The many years spent touring and playing on records gave me the confidence and the desire to start my own project, where the cello would be the main focus... hence Celloman.

Whilst creating the debut Celloman album 'Aquador', the harmonic and rhythmic structure of many of the tracks composed were initially devised by building up short two to four-bar pizzicato loops consisting of two to three parts layered on top of each other. These loops gave the overall sound an ingredient that became an integral part of the 'Celloman' sound. By the third album, this use of the 'arpezzato' style had become more developed?

I am by no means the only string player to experiment with the 'arpezzato' style. A brief look on YouTube will show a great range of cellists, violinists, violists and double bass players that have all used pizzicato-derived techniques in the search of new textures. In my opinion, the arpezzato style works best on the cello where the range, depth, size and sound of the instrument lend a sonority not found on the other members of the quintet.

Beyond Cello is allowing me to open a debate on imported finger styles, whether these combined techniques can be called a new style of cello playing and... how 'arpezzato' can be taught.

Ivan Hussey will appear as part of our tenth anniversary celebration in the event entitled *Beyond Cello* on Sunday 9th March 2014 at Kings Place, London. To book tickets, please go to www.kingsplace.co.uk

Members' News & Views

• **Angela East** is inviting applications for her next teacher-training course to begin in September 2014, consisting of nine weekends over a year. For more information, please go to her website: www.angelaeast.co.uk

• **The Association française du violoncelle** has produced a recording of David Popper's 40 Studies by 20 eminent cellists, including Enrico Bronzi, Marc Coppey, Eric-Maria Couturier, Hélène Dautry, Henri Demarquette, Roel Dieltens, Thomas Duran, Ophélie Gaillard, Anne Gastinel, Francis Gouton, Marie Hallynck, Michal Kanka, Damian Martinez, Marie-Paule Milone, Jérôme Pernoo, Xavier Phillips, Raphaël Pidoux, François Salque, Istvan Vardai and Sung -Won Yang. If LCS readers wish to buy this double CD album, they can send their order with a cheque of £20 to L'association française du violoncelle, 2 rue Jacques Coeur, 74004 Paris. For more infomation, please visit our web site: www.levioloncelle.com

• **From Richard Holmes:**
'Monster Bows' update: Apologies for the incorrect doctorcello address in my entry in Issue no. 21. My next idea is to conduct scientific research into establishing the energy efficiency and other benefits (e.g. in line with Alexander Technique) of the new bow and hold. For this I am looking to recruit 10 interested volunteers (perhaps including cellists who are or have experienced physical or artistic problems with traditional bowing technique). It would be good to perhaps meet up at 'Exploring the Bow: Speaking and Singing' on 6th April.

• **From Michela Cocolin:**
As a cello lover and amateur cellist I can think of few things that are better than the warm, intense sound of a cello, except when it comes to two cellos or more! In "A Tale of Two Cellos" by Naxos, three generations of cellists, from the world-renowned cellist Julian Lloyd Webber and wife Jiaxin Cheng to the former BBC Young Musicians of the Year Guy Johnston and Laura van der Heijden, take us to an exciting journey through nearly 500 years of gorgeous music, from Monteverdi to Arvo Part. Pianist John Lenehan and harpist Catrin Finch also feature on this CD. The music is relaxing, exciting, intriguing, surprising, teasing, sensual, moving, it may well span 5 centuries but the human emotions it conveys are still the same, it proves once more that music is a universal language that knows no barriers, it brings people from all countries, cultures and backgrounds together. Highly recommended!

• **Cello for sale:** Neuner & Hornsteiner, circa 1880-1890. In very good condition, bridge by Colin Nicholls, set up with Pirastro Permanent Soloist (A&D) and Spirocore (G&C) strings. Valuation from Bridgwood & Neitzert available on request. £8500.00
Please contact: Louise Pardoe, 07850685105, louisep@gotadsl.co.uk (North London)

Elaine Spicer has written to tell us about the Brian Laurence Memorial Cello reception day at Stringers in London:

Robert Max came and played the cello at the reception at Stringers in London last Saturday 1st February. The special thing about this instrument is that everyone involved, from the makers (2 luthiers - one deceased - and 3 students of violin making) through to Stringers and Robert Max, are making no profit from this project. The sale of the cello will benefit the RAB Trust, who in turn award grants to help young violin makers with expensive essentials of the trade.

This was Robert Max's impression after playing the instrument: *'It's a lovely cello! The sound is focused and bright with a feeling of solidity underneath and it responds evenly across all four strings. It is also made from really handsome wood so it is pleasing on the eye as well as the ear. I think the makers have done a brilliant job'.*

The event on Saturday brought together, players, teachers, luthiers and dealers in a way that must be beneficial to everyone concerned, and Robert Max's playing of Bach and an interesting piece by Robert Crumb captivated everyone. The cello is now on sale at Stringers, who are taking no commission, and available for anyone interested to try it out.

Contact Stringers on: 020 7224 9099