

North Bay Spotlight

Christopher Parkening is recognized heir to Segovia tradition



Classical guitarist Christopher Parkening will perform in concert Sunday, February 27, 3 p.m. at the Marin Veterans' Memorial Auditorium.

Ranked as one of the world's preeminent virtuosos of the classical guitar, Christopher Parkening, the recognized heir to the tradition of the Andres Segovia, has a rare combination of dramatic virtuosity and eloquent musicianship.

His concerts and recordings span twenty years and have received consistent world wide acclaim. His former teacher, the legendary Andres Segovia, proclaimed that "Christopher Parkening is a great artist — he is one of the most brilliant guitarists in the world."

North Bay fans of the classical guitar will, once again, have the opportunity to

hear and enjoy Parkening's talents when he appears in concert on Sunday, February 27, 3 p.m. at the Marin Veterans' Memorial Auditorium, Marin Center, San Rafael.

Parkening will perform the following program:

Suite in D Major by Michael Praetorius; *Allemande* by John Dowland; Four Renaissance Pieces, *Prelude from The Well Tempered Clavier*, *Prelude from Cello Suite No. 1* and *Jesu, Joy of Mans Desiring* by Johann Sebastian Bach; arrangements by Andres Segovia; *Variations on a Theme of Handel, Op. 107* by Mauro Giuliani; *Villanesca* by Enrique Granados; *Suite in Modo Polonico* by Alexandre Tansman; *Prelude and Etude* by Heitor Villa-Lobos; *Layenda* by Isaac

Albarez and transcribed by Segovia.

Parkening's recordings on the Angel/EMI label place high on the record industry sales charts, and he has received two Grammy nominations in the category of Best Classical Recording, including a nomination for *The Pleasures of Their Company*, a collaboration with soprano Kathleen Battle.

Parkening's critically acclaimed 1991 release, *A Tribute to Segovia*, was dedicated to the great Spanish guitarist and was recorded on one of the Maestro's own concert guitars.

Other recent recording releases include *Virtuoso Duets* with assisting artist

David Brandon and Julie Andrews' *The Sound of Christmas* with the London Symphony Orchestra. David Brandon will be the assisting artist on the following pieces: *El Pano moruno* and *Danza del molinero* by Manuel de Falla, *Evening Dance* by Andrew York and *Prelude and Fugue* by Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco. Since 1984 Brandon has toured extensively with Parkening and performed with him on the *Virtuoso Duets* album and the 1990 Julie Andrews Hallmark Christmas album. He is a solo artist in his own right.

Tickets for the concert are \$18 and \$15 and may be reserved by contacting the Marin Center box office at 472-3500.

Ancient Future returns for 15th anniversary concert

On February 11, 1979 Ancient Future performed its debut concert at the Sleeping Lady Cafe in Fairfax to a packed house. On February 11, 1994 Ancient Future will return to the site of the now defunct Sleeping Lady Cafe which has been converted to a dance concert studio called Dance Theatre Seven, 56 Bolinas Road in Fairfax. Three other 15th anniversary concerts follow it around the San Francisco Bay Area.

Tickets for the anniversary concert at the Dance Theatre Seven are \$10. You are advised to bring a pillow to sit on. For information call (415) 459-1892.

Ancient Future will appear at the Freight and Salvage in Berkeley on February 18; Village Theatre in Danville on February 19; and Embarcadero Center Cabaret in



Ancient Future will perform a 15th anniversary concert on February 11 at the Dance Theatre Seven in Fairfax.

San Francisco on March 10. Ancient Future's first national-

ly distributed release was *Natural Rhythms* (Philo 9006). Originally

released in 1981 *Natural Rhythms* foreshadowed the world music movement as one of the first albums to convincingly blend Eastern and Western music for which it won N.A.I.R.D. "Indie" Awards in World Music and Album Cover Design. It will be released on CD in the United States by Philo/Rounder Records in February to commemorate 15 years of Ancient Future history.

Ancient Future will also be showcasing material from their sixth CD, *Asian Fusion* (Narada Equinox ND-63023), a musical travelogue spanning the vast geographic and cultural expanse of Asia showcasing some of the top performers in the Asian music field including Zhao Hui, China's preeminent master of the Chinese koto and Bui Huu Nhut, a leading performer of the Vietnamese dan bao (a one string instrument).

Spotlight on Theatre

The Sum of Us is arresting theatrical entertainment

by Julia Hawkins, Spotlight Theatre Critic

The touching comedy, David Stevens' *The Sum of Us*, performed by the Marin Theatre Company, is about the friendship between a homosexual son and his housemate, his widowed father, and the son's yearning for romantic love. The action takes place in an Australian industrial suburb (the son is a plumber) and transpires over an unspecified period of time.

David Frost's direction and the superb cast make for arresting theatrical entertainment: it is the presentation of ideas that is problematic in so far as they are reduced to television sit-com-type cleverness and profundity. That is to say, where the playwright's techniques and intellectual stretch are those found in television, they are false and unsatisfying.

Stevens also wrote the television screenplay for Alex Haley's *Queen* on

CBS, and co-wrote the mini-series, *A Town Like Alice* and *Breaker Morant* and he knows what he is doing. Such techniques as the actors explaining the action to the audience in the form of earnest and often sly fraternal confession, employing raunchy jokes and crude expressions as a means of establishing gritty realism, for laughs, to numb the audience against homophobia, for example, make for quick communication but do not amount to satisfying theater.

Harry Mitchell (played by W. Francis Walters) is so jolly in his acceptance of his son's homosexuality that he constantly offers the son's lovers hospitality, serving tea in bed and offering drinks and friendly chats in the living room, overlooking with a laugh and joke the physical intimacies transpiring before his eyes.

This would be wierd behavior if the lovers were heterosexual, and it does so disturb the son's lovers that they flee.

The father does not explain his motivation in his soliloquies to the audience and his humorous wriggling over imaginary coke bottles, his purchasing and offering male cheesecake magazines as aphrodisiacs, his talk of playing hide-the-sausage, contrast with his otherwise rational talk and behavior.

The fact is, he is so desperate for his son to find happiness that he goes overboard in being cooperative and encouraging whatever the boy wants. He only gets annoyed with his son for not being more adventurous and bolder in pursuit of love. In the end, speechless and immobile from a stroke, he regrets not telling his son "goodbye" and typical of the script's mixture of solemn with the farcical, complains about all the fish and lasagna his son feeds him. The director notes in the program that the more we spread love the more we stick to those we love: "We stick together according to whatever parts make contact and the more we struggle, the

more stuck we get." Under his direction, the "stuckness" is the most charming aspect of the production.

Spencer Aste plays the son Jeff Mitchell as an exuberant, affectionate, thoughtful and self-doubting, late adolescent, who thoughtlessly drops his clothes where he takes them off and won't eat sweets for desserts those nights he goes to the local gay bar so he won't get acne. He loves his father dearly and is good to him, and they are as much "mates" as they are father and son. For him the symbol of misery is the aging woman he once saw on a train, "mutton dressed as lamb" in her makeup and dress, who drunkenly kept repeating, "Oh, the agonizing pain of it all." He knows just how she felt. All he wants is the comfort and coziness of a stable love relationship with another man and in the end, accepting what fate deals him and his father finally silenced, he is in a fair way of acquiring it. We are the sum

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