

Professor Hector William Quine, Hon RAM (30 December 1926 - 1 January 2015)

Hector Quine was highly influential as a leading classical guitar teacher in London; he was one of the first guitarists to teach at the London conservatoires and many of his pupils rose to prominence in the profession. He was my guitar professor at the Royal Academy of Music when I went there to study in September 1977. To his friends he was known as Bill, as I quickly discovered when I heard colleagues of his such as Stephen Dodgson and Arthur Wills addressing him. Establishing a guitar department at such a prestigious musical establishment as the Academy was no easy matter, partly because the guitar was not considered to be a serious classical instrument in the mid 1950s. In 1958 Bill was asked to join the teaching staff of Trinity College of Music and this was followed by a similar invitation from the Royal Academy of Music in 1959. It was a few years later in 1966 that he was approached by the Guildhall School of Music and Drama to replace the Austrian guitarist Adele Kramer, who was born in 1900 and probably the first guitar teacher at a conservatoire of music in the UK. This was not the last conservatoire to offer him a post, as the principle of the Royal Northern College of Music asked him to take on the first study guitarists from Manchester. As Bill did not have the time to travel up north, the three students concerned were given the train fare to travel to London; the students managed to turn this arrangement to profit by buying an old banger of a car and sharing the cost of the fuel!

Bill stated that his career as a guitarist began in 1948 with the purchase, for two pounds, of a poor quality and unsuitable guitar from a young friend. He had just been de-mobilised from the army and had served four years, during and after the second World War, in Egypt, Palestine and Norway. At this time there were very few competent guitar teachers in Britain and it was in an edition of *Banjo, Mandolin and Guitar* magazine that he found contact details of the Russian guitar teacher Alexis Chesnakov in London, who gave Bill lessons for a year and a half. It was through Chesnakov that he was able to contact another Russian, Dr. Boris Perott, who was president of the Philharmonic Society of Guitarists. The society held monthly meetings, and it was at one of these that he met the seventeen year old Julian Bream, who agreed to give him some help with his guitar studies. Bill recalled paying ten shillings and sixpence for these sessions that often turned into lengthy discussions about basic guitar technique. Bill later heard John Williams playing at the Philharmonic Society and I remember him telling me that many of the theories he developed on basic guitar technique were informed by observing both Bream and Williams playing the guitar.

In the early fifties, good Spanish guitars were hard to find, and Bill resolved to make a guitar for himself. Julian Bream was largely responsible for encouraging Bill's interest in guitar construction, and the feedback that Bream could provide was invaluable. In fact the second Quine guitar was so successful that Bream used it in his Wigmore Hall debut and it can be seen on the cover of the original LP, released by Westminster of Bream's, '*A Bach Recital for the Guitar*'. The guitar was not the only enthusiasm Bill shared with Bream, they both fervently enjoyed cricket. Bill was compelled to stop making guitars around 1970 because of the pressure of other work; eighteen guitars were completed and the nineteenth was only three-quarters finished until some years later when José Romanillos kindly completed it for him. At the height of the guitar's popularity in the late sixties and early seventies Bill had gained a reputation as a guitar teacher in London; he gave lessons to some notable people including the daughters of the film actor Douglas Fairbanks, Jane Asher (who once brought her then boyfriend Paul McCartney to a lesson) and a Mrs Simpson (owner of Simpsons, Piccadilly) who would send her chauffeur to take him to her flat in Portland Place in a Rolls Royce.

On the night in 1963 that John F. Kennedy was assassinated, Bill was playing at the Festival Hall in Britten's *Gloriana* to celebrate the composer's fiftieth birthday. At this time, he was also in demand as a freelance performer and he would play at the Royal Opera House when the guitar was needed in works such as Verdi's *Falstaff*. Such was the demand that there was at least one occasion when he had to perform in two separate theatre performances in the same evening, so he had to dash quickly from the Aldwych to Covent Garden and back in the midst of both shows.

As a teacher Bill was always committed to the idea that the guitar should stand alongside instruments such as the piano and violin in terms of interpretative possibilities, and that it should be accepted as a concert instrument in the world of classical music. This approach mirrored the philosophy of Andrés Segovia, but Bill took it further by establishing general musicianship classes at the Academy in fingerboard harmony, ensemble playing, and chamber music with wind and string players. A wealth of publications by him appeared of transcriptions and arrangements for the guitar, and there was a series of arrangements for guitars with orchestral instruments to encourage guitarists to integrate with players of other instruments. Oxford University Press and Ricordi published the bulk of his output, and it was in 1971 that OUP published his highly successful tutor *Introduction to the Guitar*. In 1990 *Guitar Technique* appeared; a slim volume, highly succinct but thorough, this is a treatise on playing the guitar and was a product of Bill's vast experience as an analytical and methodical teacher. When the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music realised there was enough demand to include the guitar in their grade examinations, they commissioned Bill to devise the syllabus, and he did this for other examination boards such as Trinity College and Guildhall. Throughout his career he was much in demand as an adjudicator at music colleges and music festivals across the UK and Europe, and in the mid 1990s he presented a guitar programme for the BBC World Service.

One of his great strengths as a teacher was that he had the uncanny knack of tracing a player's problems back to a fault in basic technique, and he was able to guide his students through a comprehensive course of study that would rebuild and extend one's technique in a holistic manner, until mastery was achieved; as he states in the preface to *Introduction to the Guitar*: 'No apology is offered for the quantity of detailed discussion on what may seem to the beginner to be trivial matters. Every experienced guitarist knows that it is only by careful attention to this kind of detail that a true mastery of the guitar, which should be every aspiring guitarist's aim, is to be attained'. He believed that technique should serve musical interpretation and that, in order for the guitar to accept its rightful place in mainstream music-making, a guitarist should study and understand all music, not only guitar repertoire. He often demonstrated basic technique during lessons and whenever he did this, the sound that he made on the instrument was exquisite. The tone he produced was rich, warm and robust, rather like a sonorous lute or harp. I always found his demonstrations thrilling and I was inspired to enjoy playing anything on the guitar, even a simple exercise, simply for the sheer beauty of sound that the instrument was capable of. Another legacy of my lessons with him at the Academy was that I often fancied I could smell pipe smoke whilst practising; Bill was renowned as a pipe smoker and his teaching room was redolent of the pungent and mildly aromatic smell of Balkan Sobranie, which was one of his favourite tobaccos. I was told on several occasions by younger professors that the room still smelled of 'Hector's Pipe' for many years after he had retired!

An important aspect of Bill's promotion of the classical guitar was his unceasing campaign to persuade composers to write for the guitar. The list of composers that he worked with is long;

Michael Berkeley, Timothy Bowers, Stanley Glasser, Gordon Langford, Carey Blyton, John Gardner, Joseph Horovitz, Kenneth Leighton, John Rutter, Alan Ridout, Phyllis Tate and Wilfred Josephs are but a few. He believed that the modern guitar was a twentieth century instrument and that the richest and strongest repertoire was of that century. He had a long and fruitful collaboration with Stephen Dodgson that turned into a close friendship. One of their earliest and most substantial undertakings was to produce two volumes of studies for the guitar that were published by Ricordi in 1965. The purpose of the 20 studies was to supplement the classical studies by offering material written in a contemporary style, reflecting the rhythmic variety, textures and harmonic language of the times. John Williams was a great advocate of these pieces and recorded them soon after they were published. Dodgson and Quine also produced an excellent sight reading book, 'Progressive Reading for Guitarists', which was truly ground-breaking; Bill arranged the material so that the guitarist was able to gain familiarity with key positions on the fingerboard of the guitar, and he provided exercises in the reading of rhythm so the player could isolate the components of reading at sight. This book demonstrates how Bill's mind worked in its didactic capacity: he would analyse problems and then work out a systematic and stepwise plan of action. It also underlined another basic tenet of his teaching: that a high standard of reading at sight, a basic requirement on all classical instruments, was also essential on the guitar.

Bill was responsible for founding the guitar departments at the majority of London music colleges and was awarded honours for his work; in 1965 he received an Honorary Associateship of the Royal Academy of music, then in 1969 a Fellowship of Trinity College of Music and finally in 1972 he was made an Honorary Member of the Academy - the highest honour that could be bestowed. He was also elected a member of the Royal Philharmonic Society, the Royal Society of Musicians and the Performing Rights Society. He taught so many guitarists who were at the vanguard of the emerging classical guitar world in the 1960s and 70s, such as Anthony Rooley, John Zaradin, Gerald Tolan, William Waters and David Russell; the Hand-Dupré duo (Richard Hand and Tom Dupré) and the members of the English Guitar Quartet studied with him. Pupils of his found posts at the London colleges: William Grandison at Trinity College of Music, Gerald Lee at the Guildhall, Douglas Rogers at the London College and Michael Lewin at the Royal Academy of Music. On 13 June, 2010 there was a celebration at the Royal Academy of Music to mark 50 years of guitar teaching at that institution. I was amazed at the number of guitarists who attended this event from all over the world, and some from as far away as Canada and Japan. Michael Lewin hosted the event and he and David Russell gave speeches. Hector Quine was able to be with us and was in excellent health and spirits as he spoke to the assembly. His humour was very much in evidence when he tripped and narrowly avoided a fall when negotiating the stairs to the podium, 'The stairs at the Academy seem to have become steeper since I was last here!' he said, with a characteristic dryness of tone.

Bill was a highly cultured man, he had a fondness for literature and history and he also loved good wine; I remember being offered his excellent homemade sloe gin when I visited him. As a musician he was very knowledgeable on opera, and orchestral and chamber music, at a time when this was unusual for a guitarist; two of his favourite composers were Haydn and Schubert. His voice had a soothing sonority, and he was gently spoken with elegant diction, but his laugh was unruly and infectious. He spoke and wrote knowledgeably, logically and persuasively, especially when explaining musical matters; he was a master at finding the most apposite words in a discussion. It was in 1960 that he married Penny and they had two children: Adrian was followed by Francesca. He was keen for both of his children to play music, so Adrian learned the violin and Francesca the piano. I heard stories of Bill

supervising his son's scale practice by playing along with him on the guitar, so that Adrian would develop good intonation. The last time I saw Bill, with Penny and Francesca, was when he came to a concert that I gave with the English Guitar Quartet at East Bergholt, Suffolk, in the summer of 2012. We were all past students of his and we were delighted when he spoke to the audience telling them that he was a 'huge fan' of ours. He was very keen for the four of us to visit him at his cottage in Stoke-by-Nayland but sadly this was not to be. The last few months of his life were spent in hospital where he became very weak, but his mind remained as sharp as ever. He passed away suddenly and unexpectedly, two days after his 88th birthday. Hector Quine was highly influential as a leading classical guitar teacher in London; he was one of the first guitarists to teach at the London conservatoires and many of his pupils rose to prominence in the profession. He was my guitar professor at the Royal Academy of Music when I went there to study in September 1977. To his friends he was known as Bill, as I quickly discovered when I heard colleagues of his such as Stephen Dodgson and Arthur Wills addressing him.

Roland Gallery, ARAM, Professor of Guitar, Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance