

by Kim Short

A good musician always makes me wish that I had even a smidgen of musical talent. On September 30, Philip Dent Candelaria, being an exceptional classical guitarist, had me feeling that way once again. Mr. Candelaria played at Memorial Hall to an almost sold out and very appreciative audience as part of the Creative Arts series run by UNB and STU. I was pleased to see that there were many students in the audience along with other university people and Frederictonians in general.

Candelaria is a solo guitarist of Spanish descent who grew up and began his study of guitar in Canada. He completed his Master's at the Peabody Conservatory of Johns Hopkins University and is currently a classical guitar instructor at Cambrian College in Ontario. He also teaches for Laurentian University's music program. He is quickly becoming well known in Canada and has won awards both at home and internationally.

There is a strong Spanish and South American feel to Candelaria's playing and the pieces he chose to play ranged from traditional Virtuostic concert standards like Albeniz's "Asturias" and Giuliani's opus 61 - the "Grand Overture" to voodoo-derived rhythms unique to the Haitian people. He also played some interesting contemporary experimental compositions that were written by Canadian composers; one such, Walter Buczynski, composed "September Edition" for Candelaria because he had heard him play, liked his style and wanted to work with him. The performance of "September Edition" was a premiere for Eastern Canada, being a little over a year old. It consists of 9 short movements each exploring a specific musical texture, mood or idea.

Candelaria is able to make his guitar sing. He skillfully covered a variety of styles varying his tempo and volume within and between pieces to create a particular mood and to tell a story. He quickly established rapport with his audience through his quiet sense of humour and the eye contact he maintained while giving a background sketch for each piece he played. Though all of the pieces he chose to play were good, I preferred the

Sneezes, Wheezes, and A Hell of a Guitar Player



more traditional of the compositions because they tended to be more lyrical and more entertaining musically than the modern pieces. The artist's dexterity was also impressive because of the rapidity with which he fingered the guitar - at times his hands were a blur. The entire audience enjoyed the concert and applauded for an encore.

Perhaps the only detraction from the performance was the noise made by some of the sick people in the audience. Because of the nature of Memorial Hall every cough, sneeze, nose blow, and opening of cough

drops breaks the mood in the hall. When a solo guitar player is in the midst of a particularly quiet and moving piece this is annoying. But, alas, Mem Hall is better than no hall.

For any students who have even the slightest interest in

classical music, the Creative Arts series is something to check out. The musicians who play are very good and often Canada's best. The series is a refreshing change from the rowdy riots at the Tragically Hip shows (not that they don't have any value in their own

right) and at \$4 a ticket for students (\$12 for normal people) you can hardly go wrong!



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