

State and Local

Performance of classical guitarist captures hearts of A&M audience

By Brian Frederick

Review

Performing a program consisting largely of Spanish works, guitarist Christopher Parkening captured the hearts of his audience at his performance in sold-out Rudder Auditorium last night.

Sponsored by the MSC Opera and Performing Arts Society, Parkening more than satisfied the expectations of his audience, yet left them wanting to hear more.

Parkening performed pieces primarily by Spanish composers ranging from the Renaissance and the Baroque to the Modern period, including works by Albeniz, Sanz, de

Falla, Rodrigo, Torroba, Granados, de Torrijos and Villa-Lobos. He also performed pieces by Bach. Guitarist David Brandon came on stage half-way through the second half of the performance to play several duets with Parkening.

From the beginning of the evening, Parkening's virtuosity was evident. He played difficult works with confidence, allowing only occasional grimaces to betray their difficulty. The grimaces ceased as the performance progressed with Parkening playing even better and with greater feeling.

As befits the true virtuoso, Parkening did not scruple to change the scheduled performance, and his first

change provided one of the highlights of the evening. Instead of playing a variation on a theme of Handel, he announced that he would perform "Variations on a Theme of Mozart," a piece often performed in concert by his great teacher Andres Segovia.

Parkening dedicated the piece to Segovia, who died last year. Showing himself to be a master of his music, he played confidently and with feeling as his hands moved rapidly along the frets from one end of the guitar's neck to the other. His inspired performance earned him prolonged applause.

Several duets performed with David Brandon, a former student of

Parkening, comprised the last segment of the program. The duets had Spanish themes and beautifully intricate melodies that enabled the performers to fully display their talents. At times Parkening was picking melodies and harmonies with both hands at once. Brandon, too, distinguished himself.

Following the concluding piece, the audience gave Parkening and Brandon applause rising to a standing ovation. This brought the performers back for a dramatic encore, which the audience again richly rewarded. Parkening and Brandon played another encore and then took their last bows to another standing ovation.

Murder of woman leads to suffering for town in Texas

KINGSVILLE (AP) — A jury has decided the fate of Richard Lewis Brimage Jr., but the pain over the woman he murdered lives on in this South Texas city of 28,000.

Mary Beth Kunkel, 19, a popular Texas A&I University freshman and former H.M. King High School homecoming queen, was found dead Oct. 7 in the trunk of a Cadillac parked at the Kingsville home of Brimage's parents.

Kunkel's suffering became obvious as the crime story unfolded in the courtroom, but so did the pain of the Kunkel and Brimage families.

"I just have to wait to heal my pain," said Kunkel's mother, Frances, during the seven-day trial in New Braunfels. "I love my daughter very much. I miss her."

Brimage, 32, was convicted last week of capital murder and sentenced to die by lethal injection.

Brimage's father, Richard, a U.S. Air Force pilot, testified of the guilt he felt for spending too much time away from his son.

"I'm having one heck of a time not putting this on myself," Brimage's father testified during the punishment hearing. "I really didn't get to spend much time with him. I was too ambitious."

At one emotional point in his testimony, Brimage Sr. said, "I'd like to tell Mrs. Kunkel how sorry I am that this has happened."

The apology brought tears to members of the Brimage and Kunkel families.

Leonel Molina, 32, of Kingsville, was convicted of murder for Kunkel's Oct. 5 slaying, and sentenced to 50 years in a plea bargain.

The crime and subsequent dis-

coveries also brought grief to the witnesses and some of their families.

Wendy Scarborough, 18, granddaughter of Kleberg County Sheriff Jim Scarborough III, testified that she attended a "coke (cocaine) party" on Oct. 3 with two other girls, Brimage and Molina.

Scarborough said in an interview with the *Corpus Christi Caller-Times* he was "horrified" when he found out his granddaughter had used cocaine with Brimage.

"The people of Kleberg County have been very supportive," Scarborough said. "They know I don't have any control over her."

Wendy Scarborough's testimony prompted discussions about the availability of drugs in Kingsville, several residents said.

Businessman Clyde Allen said he did not excuse Brimage's behavior because of drug addiction, but hoped that future drug-related crimes could be avoided.

Allen, chairman of Citizens for a Safer Kingsville, said the Kunkel case was the impetus that brought many citizens together to question the Kingsville Police Department's handling of crimes.

Allen's group found itself pitted against other citizens when the district attorney's office and the police made contradictory statements over whether Kunkel had been sexually assaulted.

Kingsville real estate developer Fil Garcia, who leads a pro-police group, accused Allen's group of generating hysteria over the Kunkel case, and said the police handled the evidence correctly.

Professionals say hospitals violate rights

AUSTIN (AP) — If not for a concerned psychiatrist, Margaret Allen never would have known what drugs she was given in a private mental hospital in San Antonio 10 years ago.

The hospital's policy was to withhold such information from patients, but Allen's doctor chose to tell her what he had prescribed.

Such violations of patient's rights occur all too frequently when people with mental illnesses do not speak up for themselves, Allen and other mental health advocates say.

The advocates said the Mental Health Consumer Caucus, scheduled in Austin Saturday, could help change that.

University receives books owned by U.S. presidents

SAN MARCOS (AP) — Southwest Texas State University officials have received 34 books owned by U.S. presidents from George Washington to Ronald Reagan.

Some of the books in William Crook's \$350,000 collection are battered and some are like new, but each bears the signature of its presidential owner.

The collection includes works of religion, poetry, history and presidential memoirs.

A volume of Moliere's plays, in French, includes Thomas Jefferson's eccentric method of signing books by writing his initial T in front of a J in the text, and writing a J after a T.

The oldest book, a 1678 copy of Isaac Barrow's "Sermon's Preached

Upon Several Occasions," belonged to John Adams.

The collection includes a life of Henry Clay given to Abraham Lincoln by Stephen A. Douglas in 1852, six years before the debates between them that gave Lincoln such a boost toward the White House.

"I'm not sure I could read any of these books if I was stuck in an airport," said Crook, a retired businessman and former U.S. ambassador to Australia who now lives in San Marcos.

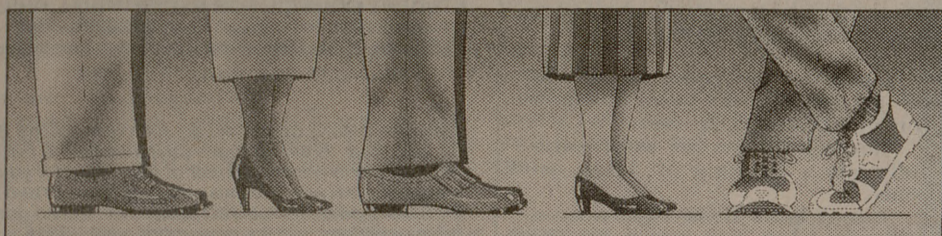
"It's the thrill of holding in your hand something from George Washington's library, knowing that he read it and liked it enough to keep it and pass it on to his heirs," Crook said. A dozen letters to Reagan pro-

duced repeated promises from his staff of a book, but none came. Crook said the same letter was sent to Nancy Reagan, and a copy of Robert Service's poetry signed by the president arrived 10 days later.

The collection is unique, although lacking books owned by four presidents, including Andrew Jackson and James Madison, according to Austin rare book dealer John Jenkins. He assembled the collection from private sources.

Southwest Texas President Robert Hardesty said that when completed, the collection would be "priceless."

Crook said he wanted the books at Southwest Texas because it was Lyndon Johnson's alma mater.



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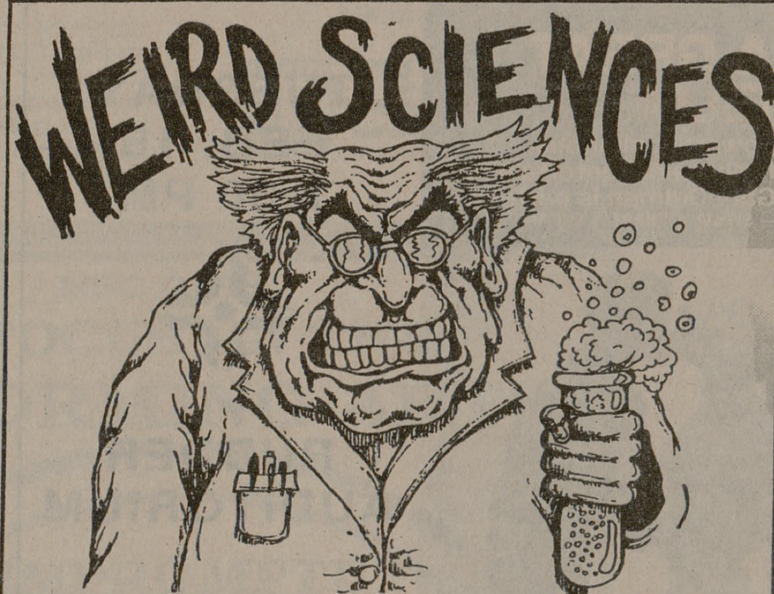
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