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REVIEW: Michael Chapdelaine's GuitarSarasota concert is eclectic and then some

By **Richard Storm**, Herald-Tribune
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Michael Chapdelaine, the international award-winning guitarist whose intriguing recital closed the GuitarSarasota concert season, is nothing if not varied in his tastes and talent.

Starting with two unidentified heavy metal pieces, Chapdelaine moved to the first of two compositions from the Beatles. The first, by Paul McCartney, was impressive in its delicacy. Later in the program, George Harrison's "Something" held the audience spellbound by both the hypnotic melody and the guitarist's technique.

Chapdelaine is a composer, too, and he placed several of his own compositions on the program. Not surprisingly, he is not an astute editor of his own work, so several of his pieces were overlong and repetitive. However, his "Beau Fleuve," a musical depiction of the river near his home in New Mexico, and "Blue Chili" contain much admirable melody, enhanced by the ingenious percussive effects he teases out of his instrument.

His "Portrait d'une Femme," a triptych originally intended as an homage to his wife, had a dark side which, he explained, was an unconscious reference to their impending split. Whatever the reason behind the piece, it is fascinating, especially the lyric middle movement.

Some classical Spanish guitar repertoire, which may have attracted some of the audience, was beautifully rendered, especially some music by Isaac Albeniz which provoked a disagreement with one of his tutors, the legendary Andres Segovia. The dispute, according to Chapdelaine, was insignificant. Be that as it may, it was sufficient have him expelled from Segovia's master class.

Although soft-spoken (and barefoot), Chapdelaine definitely does not lack self-esteem, much of which is certainly merited, judging by this concert, which elicited diverse reactions from the audience.

As if to prove the point, the main program concluded with a driven exercise in rock for the guitar. Rock it certainly did.

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