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NIGHTLIFE

Guitarist went against the grain

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Anyone who grew up in the 1960s and was in a rock band took their power chords very seriously. David Starobin is the exception to the rule.

A Long Island native, Starobin trekked to Manhattan's famous Tin Pan Alley every Friday night to study classical guitar under teacher Manuel Gayol. At the time, Starobin was a mere 8 years old, but this did not stop him from becoming the critically acclaimed classical guitarist he is today. He's the next featured artist in GuitarSarasota's concert series Saturday night at St. Paul Lutheran Church.

Starobin had "very influential parents who were great music lovers," he said. "My father was an amateur pianist and my mother started studying the guitar alongside me to keep me going."

His parents also took him to countless concerts from a very young age, making Starobin realize that "the musical world was larger than I could possibly imagine. I didn't just like the guitarist, but the piano player and the other musicians, too."

Starobin attended the Peabody Conservatory of Music, where he was already considered a virtuoso of the classical guitar. In his junior year, he was made part of the faculty and also received its "Distinguished Alumni Award" upon graduating. In 1981, Starobin and his wife, Becky, founded Bridge Records, where he served as president until 2005.

In 1993, he became chairman of the guitar department at the prestigious Manhattan School of Music, where he served for a decade and continues teaching today. Starobin's students have won competitions all over the world, which he says is "one of the many wonderful things given back to me."



DAVID STAROBIN

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