

Sandrey Date – A True Friend

by Gavin Carr

A gentle man and a true gentleman, a deeply loving husband and friend, an extraordinary combination of scholar and enthusiast, without side and without edge – and seemingly without limits to his knowledge of music. It is fantastically rare that such a living encyclopaedia should have been without the ego of so many of us in the musical world, but this is one of the reasons why he was so broadly loved: he would receive you with an open mind, and put his wisdom to your service without a hint of judgement. If you were fortunate enough to strike a spark of excitement in his imagination, he would fly with you over the broadest landscapes for hours on end in exploration of the geography of possibility – he had the stamina of a great explorer in this, and the excitement of a child meeting its first dragonfly.

His eyes would glow and he would give that inimitable half-chuckle of excitement before delving further into the idea – “Well, wouldn’t *that* be something!” he’d say, as if scarcely believing where his own intellectual dash had got us to. But always it was the power of the music to move that was important: he was not interested in arid intellectualism, he wanted fire and flow, the pangs of a full heart released in catharsis...and he would not be satisfied with a hammy mime of it: it had to be the real thing. In the innocence of his heart, he knew that music is a way for us to be human with one another, and he was brim full of humanity. For this was the secret about Sandrey the musician: this gentle librarian vibrated like a Guarnerius cello to the love within music, and all of us who loved him knew this about him above all.

How to contemplate the floor being taken out from under us? The pain of his loss is severe: Sandrey was the platform upon so much of what we share in music was built, and for his closest friends his was an essential warp and weft in the structure of our lives. For Carolyn, the warp and weft and all the multicoloured threads of a truly profound interweaving of souls has no place in it to call just ‘Sandrey’ and just ‘Carolyn’ – all is mixed, and will remain so, and cannot be otherwise.

Quiet, except when excited or challenged, or aggrieved by stupidity; calm, except when upset by things not going *precisely* to schedule; fascinated by people and their varied talents and creations; reliably sceptical about things that deserve it, and quizzical and searching, with that upwardly-inflected Scotch-snap of a laugh ready to burst out at any time; modest in his outlook but able to enjoy the more extravagant outlook of others and indeed revelling in it; a collector, a connoisseur of the arts (but not, perhaps, of foreign cuisines!), and above all a man whose twinkling eyes revealed that inner warmth and affection of character that was his most telling attribute...a unique and marvellous combination of things that made it so easy to love him dearly from the first.

A one-and-only friend, a true musician and the truest of hearts - Sandrey.