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Moto4 = Moto-vation

Just about the time I get to feeling frustrated by the shallow and lazy "development curve" of any new venture - the expense and time and singular obsessive attention necessary to succeed in anything new and different - something happens to provide the necessary motivation to go on, to keep at it.

This last weekend was just such a recharge. Friday night our friend Sheila Hamilton arrived at the Gristmill with the musicians comprising Moto4 and proceeded to blow us all away once again. Sheila surprises us again and again, arriving one recent evening to do a complete classical program on flute, accompanying New Paltz guitarist/attorney/town board member Jim Bacon. A few weeks later she was one of Debbie Gulino's Swing Shift, belting out children's songs during Deb's live Hot Diggity Dog radio program.

Saturday night, Sheila reinvented herself yet again, this time on bass flute in Moto4's performance of the Claude Bolling Jazz Suite for Flute and Piano, and then on harmonium for a second set of blazing tango. My cheek muscles still ache from the grin I could not give up all evening.

Sunday afternoon, Leonid Polishchuk, his wife Sofya Maryanova and their daughter Mariya performed a full-hour program of violin and piano light classical favorites in the cafe, including Paganini, Gossec, Haydn, Shostakovich and Chopin. Leonid and Mariya lifted us all with the first movement of Bach's Concerto for Two Violins in D minor, anchored firmly by Maryanova's fingertips on our humble Baldwin. The audience was small and appreciative and included children who paid attention as long as children are able in similar circumstances.

It is after such weekends that I find myself convinced again that Gardiner needs a place to showcase the wonderful artistic talent hidden in the hearts and minds of our neighbors and friends, who remind us of our humanity. Next week we welcome local painter Lynne Friedman, whose oils are displayed in the mill; and Friday evening Bill Gulino returns for his regular "cabaret".

It is noteworthy that all our guests have worked enthusiastically to make regular performance a part of life in Gardiner, and for not much more than peanuts and the applause. I am compelled to take this opportunity to thank all the musicians and artists who have been so generous with their talent and time. Their dedication and generosity continue to be an inspiration.

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