



“You can add a little DiDiDi”

By Femke van Iperen

Nia is the world’s first fusion fitness technique. As a dance / cardiovascular exercise, it has numerous health and personal benefits and it is being taught here in East Finchley. Dorit, the trained teacher and former opera singer, is determined to let the world, and in particular north London, know about Nia.

Nia was devised by two American aerobics instructors who integrated different techniques into their routines, from yoga to martial arts. Shoes off and ban the repetitive movements of aerobics, they said. As it’s popular worldwide and about to catch on big time in the UK, *THE ARCHER* went to try it out.

Nia is a spiritual, holistic training, for both men and women, at any fitness level, and provides a fun workout. You optimise the use of your body by mixing flowing dance movements with dynamic and explosive martial arts and the contemplative serenity of yoga and tai chi. Combined with groovy music, from Moby, Afro-Celt and Massive Attack to Enigma, it leaves you truly invigorated, calm and centred.

I felt very self-conscious at first and, under instructions to follow the movements but also listen to my own body, I could

only think of one word. Help. However, the class, with its relaxed atmosphere, was over too soon. Dorit leads you gently and creatively, with inspiring words (see the headline!), body movements and visuals, as you dance, kick and ‘paint the ceiling’.

Most people will enjoy the careful balance of smooth relaxing poses and heart-pumping, stress-releasing kicks. The larger the group, the better the feeling, I was told before we began. It was only later I understood this: a sensation you cannot really describe, tribal, collective movements, collective mind, fun. So, go on. Make the group bigger!

LA fitness, East Finchley, 11am-12noon Saturday mornings, Holmes Place, Mill Hill East Tuesdays 11.30-12.30 (non-members welcome). More classes are planned. Further info: www.uknia.com or email: dorit@peternoble.net

Chasing light and colour

By Ann Bronkhorst

That person peering intently at your front door might be a stained glass enthusiast rather than a burglar. Here in north London there are some fine examples of stained glass and, thanks to Helene Davidian, new enthusiasts keen to find them.

An illustrated talk by Helene to a well-attended meeting of the Finchley Society on 27 April began with an overview of the history of stained glass. She outlined Egyptian and Roman techniques and showed how centres of excellence developed in medieval England.

The main focus of her talk was on local stained glass. Appropriately, she began with examples at Avenue House itself, moving on to three local churches. Striking windows in St. Mary’s RC church, East Finchley, commissioned in the 1980s, were contrasted with the huge Victorian rose window in Christ Church, Finchley. Another 19th century church, St. Barnabas, Holden Road, has a beautiful rose window, and Salvin’s Holy Trinity, Church Lane, is rich in stained glass including a lancet window by Thomas Willamant, who worked for Queen Victoria.

Golf club treasure

At Nethercourt (Finchley Golf Club) Helene was delighted to discover a magnificent large hall window designed

in 1883 by Frederick Weeks, son of a famous sculptor. Its three main sections are themed as morning, noon and night. The design shows people, birds and animals and, in its detail and colour, recalls Pre-Raphaelite art. Helene was particularly pleased to receive copies of the original cartoons (designs on paper) from a descendant of the Weeks family.

Helene has tracked down fine stained glass in homely settings, too. In the Church End area, especially Clifton Avenue, she found elegant windows and fanlights surviving from the Edwardian period. While some people want to learn the craft of making their own, through teachers like Helene, others just appreciate those distinctive touches of colour gracing local Victorian and Edwardian buildings, and are keen to preserve them.

For her research Helene was given a great deal of information and assistance from north Londoners (see *THE ARCHER*, March 2006) but hopes for more. She can be contacted on 020 8444 3669.



Panteleimon Michaeloudis practising his art

A warm heart for the guitar

By Paul Chapman

East Finchley musician Panteleimon Michaeloudis has hit high and low notes in his career as a guitarist, composing, performing and seeking to popularise classical guitar music.

Panteleimon started playing at the age of 10 under the guidance of his father, himself a professional artist. He recalls: “At the age of 13, I was taken to meet the great Spanish guitarist Andres Segovia who, on hearing me play, said I had a great facility and a very warm heart for the guitar.”

Segovia recommended that Panteleimon should enter a conservatoire to further his career. Since then he has performed on the international stage, won prestigious musical prizes and gained a scholarship to study for a postgraduate diploma at

the Royal College of Music, where he attended master classes by Carlos Bonell and John Williams.

He became a member of Bonell’s Ensemble and has performed at many venues, including London’s Wigmore Hall and Queen Elizabeth Hall.

Trouble with agents

Of his experiences in the music business, he says: “I may have been naïve in some of my dealings with agents.” One agent asked for about 300 of his CD recordings for distribution but nothing ever materialised in return. And early on in his career

an agent even asked him for the rights to all his music, an offer which, of course, he refused.

Panteleimon says he would like, ideally, to follow the path set by Nigel Kennedy and Vanessa-Mae in popularising ‘high-brow’ music.

Listening to his arrangement of the Beatles classic “Yesterday” and to his performances of more classical pieces reveals his confident technique and his warm heart.

His music can be found on www.panteleimon.com including his recent collection *Dance of the Goden Wielder*.

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