

The famed Brazilian Guitar Quartet performs at Elon

Katelan Steele
Reporter

If you passed Whitley Auditorium on Tuesday night, you may have assumed that a full string orchestra was performing. But don't be fooled, my friends, for that overpowering musical magic that was seeping through the doors and windows was not the sound of many men, but four.

The Brazilian Guitar Quartet, which is currently touring in numerous American cities, is composed of Everton Gloeden, Tadeu do Amaral, Paulo Porto Alegre, and Nicolas de Souza Barros. The four native Brazilians have not only mastered the art of classical guitar, but changed it dramatically. The BGQ, as they are often referred to, is highly respected in the music world, and after Tuesday night's performance, highly respected by the Phoenix, as well.

While the lights dimmed and the four bearded men adjusted their microphones and tuned their guitars, all eyes were on Gloeden as he situated his large-necked guitar between his legs, playing it like a cello. Upon further examination, you would see that both Gloeden and de Souza Barros play the eight-string guitar, which is fairly new and rarely used. While traditional guitars have six strings, the eight-string guitars added the effect of a complete string ensemble. Although Gloeden's guitar looked like a cello, his sharp picking gave the auditory impression

of a harp: deep and melodious. The other eight-string was much higher and sounded almost like a violin.

The quartet's repertoire is completely classical, ranging from such traditional composers as Bach and Albeniz to more modern pieces by Kreiger and Mignone. The audience was completely enthralled by the collection. Whatever your knowledge of classical music or guitar may be, the Brazilian Guitar Quartet is guaranteed to be unlike anything you've ever heard. The extra strings, insistency on playing notes rather than chords, and the attention to the small frets ignored by most guitarists made the performance breath-taking; everyone in the audience was smiling with awe.

The best part about it was that the four men were smiling. It was obvious that the quartet was enjoying themselves, and that made the audience all the happier. The quartet was as emotional as each song they played; happy as the high-tempos of Albeniz and solemn as the ominousness of Villa-Lobos.

The audience's constant applause reminded the quartet of their greatness, and the standing ovation at the end of the performance sparked an amazing encore. The Brazilian Guitar Quartet is incredible, and their performance at Elon fell no short of perfection.

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Photo courtesy of University Relations

Everton Gloeden, Nicolas de Souza Barros, Tadeu do Amaral and Paulo Porto Alegre, above from left, make up the Brazilian Guitar Quartet, which visited Elon Tuesday evening.

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