



MIMMA ADDS A HISTORICAL INSTRUMENT TO ITS COLLECTION

After a long journey that began on 3rd November 1819 in London, a magnificent harp arrived at the Museo Interactivo de la Música (MIMMA) this week. The harp was made by Sebastian Erard at the beginning of the 19th century. The museum, directed by Miguel Ángel Piédrola will present this piece thanks to the kind donation of harpist and writer Marion Leigh (above). Before this new piece joined the museum the MIMMA already had three pianos from the prestigious house of Erard. MIMMA has a collection of instruments from around the world and from all ages. Within the museum there is a 'Please Play' room in which the public are encouraged to learn an instrument by experimenting, picking them up and playing.

PET CARE

An unfortunate comment

A judge's remarks in a recent court case could be misinterpreted

PETER HARRISON

There was an announcement on television that violent scenes would follow so parents could spare children distress. Indeed the scenes of a mentally handicapped man kept in a garage as a slave and being punched and kicked were abhorrent to put it mildly. Custodial sentences were imposed on perpetrators of the crime.

What concerned me greatly and is relevant to this column is the comment by the judge to the defendant: "You treated him as a dog."

To any child or susceptible adult watching this puts out a sad fallacious message. Whilst man's inhumanity to man is unacceptable and punishable by law, it could be interpreted that cruelty to a dog is commonplace and acceptable. Surely cruelty to a dog or indeed any animal is to be condemned?

I have sometimes been accused of being over sentimental towards animals, a charge I totally refute. I believe in the adage of praise when a dog behaves and im-

mediate scolding when he or she transgresses.

True, I judge by human standards but the dog lives in a domestic environment and is fortunate to do so. Humans set the standard. This does not mean any kind of physical punishment to a dog that transgresses. This may be an immediate reaction of a human but it severs the essential bond between guardian and animal. Dogs love to be praised. They dislike making their guardian cross and it is correct to be very cross indeed to get the message across.

I recall going into my study and finding a leather-bound book, with which I had been presented by my parents for some minor achievement as a child, chewed to pieces by my dog. Yes, I was very angry indeed and took a walk in the garden to regain composure. I felt sudden empathy with Isaac Newton who three hundred years before had found his meticulously prepared scientific papers shredded by his dog "Diamond".

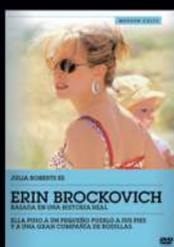
In the recent "slave" case I do wish that people in high places such as the judge would consider words more carefully. Cruelty is totally unacceptable to animals as well as to humans, surely we have long passed the era when animals were regarded as mere chatels. Dogs and indeed most animals are sentient creatures.

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