

## **SAXOPHONES AND MORE**

At this year's Jazz Study Morning on 28th May, (2015) Snake Davis, one of the country's leading saxophone players, enthralled us with an inside view of his life as a busy jazz musician illustrated with a wide-ranging presentation about his music and the instruments he plays. Of the ten or so saxophones he mentioned (contrabass through to sopranissimo) he treated us to a varied selection from his jazz repertoire, sometimes soulful; sometimes hot and dynamic. He also told us about his collection of flutes. In jazz he does use the normal classical flute but he also introduced us to others. As well as the four-holed folk flute and the much-loved tin whistle he showed us a Japanese bamboo flute called the Shaku Hachi. It has five holes and is played like a recorder but without the help of the mouthpiece. Snake performed on his shakuhari with much head-bobbing combined with bodily contortion as demanded by this difficult instrument. Yet his performance of the Japanese melody 'Sakuru' (Cherry Blossom) was an absolute delight.

But his real talent lies in his saxophone playing and though he covered many other aspects of his work, including how to shake off pre-performance nerves and what it's like to play in front of a Japanese audience of thousands, it was his solo saxophone numbers which made the morning special. And, in case you were wondering, Snake's friends call him that because it is a fair description of his gyrations when in full flow on the stage.

Note: The Jazz Groups who were responsible for the Jazz Morning may have one or two places available in September.

***Harvey Mahn***