

Friends of Florilegium

President ~ Emma Kirkby OBE
Honorary Vice Presidents ~ David Hill and Sir David Lumsden

'PARIS QUARTETS' get rave reviews

The icing on the cake of an extraordinary year was a Gramophone 'Editors Choice' accolade for our CD Telemann: 'Paris Quartets', vol 2.

A track was included on the September edition's cover CD, and the summary read: "Another splendid disc from Florilegium recorded with spectacular fidelity and imagination. Ashley Solomon's playing on a modern copy of a 1720 flute is delightful, but then so is the ease and charm of all the playing here."

Headed 'Interpretations of a very high calibre' the full review by Nalen Anthoni was even more complimentary.

'I've never heard a more beautiful disc'

As if that was not enough Classics Today wrote 'I don't think I've ever heard a more beautiful disc of Baroque chamber music than this one. Telemann's Paris Quartets are delightful and well served on disc, particularly by the Leonhardt/Kuijken performance on Sony. But this release sweeps the board both

CD SPECIAL OFFER ENCLOSED

interpretively and sonically. The watchwords of the interpretation can be found in the titles of the movements themselves, particularly "Tendrement" from the First Quartet, "Gracisement" from the Third, and with perhaps a touch of "Coulant" from the Second Quartet tossed in. Tender, gracious, and flowing: these are exactly the qualities that the music requires, and exactly what the members of Florilegium provide.

Ashley Solomon plays an enchanting Baroque flute, with a touch of recorder-like breathiness but also rich-toned and perfectly in tune. He blends perfectly with Kati Debretzeni's violin, making their entwining solo lines bewitching to hear and an endless source of listening pleasure. The two lower string players (cello and bass viol) know exactly when to bring out the bass lines and when to merge seamlessly into the scintillating harpsichord playing of James Johnstone, whose instrument offers support without ever overpowering his colleagues with harsh clanging and mechanical noises.

'It doesn't get any better'

The sonics perfectly complement the interpretation. A warm acoustic space allows the musicians – not the engineer – to create the necessary atmosphere and blend, with no compromise in clarity or presence. Even if you don't ordinarily care for Telemann or Baroque chamber music, you may well find yourself won over by the manifold excellence of this production on both musical and technical grounds. It doesn't get any better.'

AUTUMN 2004 EDITION

Music of the Chiquitos and Moxos Indians of Bolivia

In the last edition of *Friends of Florilegium* we described the extraordinary experience of performing in the Bolivian jungle, hours from the nearest town. Little did we know it would result in Florilegium becoming involved in one of baroque music's most exciting projects.

Following two concerts in 2003 with Emma Kirkby, President of *Friends of Florilegium*, which raised over £10,000 to buy musical instruments for children in Bolivia, Piotr Nawrot, the Polish missionary musicologist behind the project, decided the music merited wider exposure. With financial backing from the Prince Claus Fund in the Netherlands a recording has now been made, and Florilegium will undertake a major series of concerts during 2005.

The story starts soon after Jesuit missionaries arrived in South America 1691. The Chiquitanos already had a strong musical tradition, and the missionaries' arrival saw a rapid development in their musical skills. The Jesuits concentrated on teaching vocal skills to children and young people, so a vocal group with four voices emerged in San Javier, and was copied in the other missions. An intense period of creativity followed, giving birth to a large and attractive distinctly South American repertoire.

Local baroque music was given an important boost when Father Martin Schmid, helped by Indian assistants, started to produce organs, violins, 'cellos



The church in Concepcion, photographed by harpsichordist James Johnstone. Much of the music was written for performance in this church, in which it was also recorded by Florilegium.

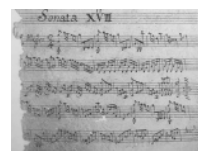
and double basses, until every mission had a choir and orchestra of at least 40 players, and eventually a music school was created. By the time the Jesuits were expelled in 1767 an impressive collection of

Manuscripts rediscovered

manuscripts had been produced in San Rafael, Santa Ana of Chiquitos, San Ignacio, La Exaltación of Moxos and other missions. And so, after centuries, this extraordinary cache of manuscripts was re-discovered, largely through the efforts of Piotr Nawrot, who in addition to his missionary duties is the musicologist to the Pro Art and Cultural Foundation of Bolivia and has worked for years editing and reconstructing the manuscripts.

An early decision was made to use a quartet of Bolivian singers for the project, and Ashley Solomon, Artistic Director of Florilegium, found himself more or less commuting to Bolivia to hold auditions, after which **Katia Escalera** and **Alejandra Wayar Soux** (sopranos) **Gian-Carla Tisera** (mezzo soprano) and **Henry Vilca Suntura** (tenor) were selected. They were then coached in the UK by Emma Kirkby and Jennifer Smith, another leading baroque soprano who coincidentally also speaks Spanish and has performed extensively in South America.

In April Channel Classics, Florilegium's recording company, shipped all its equipment to Bolivia, and a



CD was made in the church in Concepcion for which some of the music was originally written, following which *Florilegium* and the four soloists gave three concerts at

the 5th International Festival of Latin American Renaissance and Baroque Music "Misiones de Chiquitos" before an audience of baroque music lovers from around the world. Latin American press from Santiago, Buenos Aires, Montevideo and elsewhere hailed the four Bolivian singers as the 2004 Festival's outstanding surprise.

The CD has now been edited, and will be released in January 2005 together with a DVD in a special presentation pack which tells the full story of the remarkable rediscovery.

European concert tour

Florilegium will introduce this programme to European audiences in a concert series featuring the Bolivian singers early in 2005. Full details are overleaf; we start in the chapel of Les Invalides in Paris on 27 January 2005, followed by St Paul's Birmingham, the Konzerthaus, Vienna, Concertgebouw, Amsterdam, Wigmore Hall (1 February) and Berlin. We are honoured that the Queen of Holland will be attending the Concertgebouw performance and will host a reception afterwards for Florilegium and the Bolivian singers.

To reserve your pre-launch copy of the new CD and a ticket for Wigmore Hall on 1 February 2005 please complete and return the enclosed form.

Becoming a Friend

Florilegium has prided itself on its close relationship with its audiences, expressed through *Friends of Florilegium*.

Friends benefits and privileges include:

- Every new *Friend* receives completely free Florilegium's private 10th anniversary CD.
- A regular Newsletter.
- Priority concert booking.
- Complimentary (members of The Director's Circle) or discounted CDs as they are released.
- Social events provide opportunities to meet the members of Florilegium.



Members of The Director's Circle receive up to 3 free CDs a year and acknowledgement in the *Florilegium's* concert programmes. They are personally hosted by Ashley Solomon, Founder and Artistic Director of Florilegium, at exclusive receptions to hear about future plans and contribute their own thoughts.

Dates For Your Diary

Music of the Chiquitos and Moxos Indians of Bolivia

Currently scheduled performances of this programme are as follows:

27 January 2005

Chapel of Les Invalides, Paris

28 January 2005

St Paul's, Birmingham

30 January 2005

Konzerthaus, Vienna

31 January 2005

Concertgebouw, Amsterdam

1 February 2005

Wigmore Hall, London

3 February 2005

Berlin

Florilegium in the UK

19 November 2004

Mozart : *Mass in C minor* and *Symphony No. 41 in C major 'Jupiter'*
Winchester Cathedral
Waynflete Singers, Andrew Lumsden

23 December 2004

This concert will be broadcast by Radio 3

The Italian Connection : Instrumental and vocal music by Handel, Vivaldi and Scarlatti with
Lorna Anderson (soprano)
Wigmore Hall, London

2 February 2005

JS Bach : *Mass in B minor*
Royal Festival Hall, London
Bach Choir, David Hill

5 March 2005

J S Bach : *St John Passion*
Winchester Cathedral
Waynflete Singers, Andrew Lumsden

13 and 20 March 2005

J S Bach : *St. Matthew Passion*
Royal Festival Hall London
Bach Choir, David Hill

Florilegium abroad

Please see above for performances of the Music of the Chiquitos and Moxos Indians of Bolivia.

9 – 11 March Spanish tour

Arias for Farinelli

with

Derek Lee Ragin

9 March ~ Valencia

10 March ~ Zaragoza

11 March ~ Jerez

29 – 31 March French tour

The Italian Connection : Instrumental and vocal music by Handel, Vivaldi and Scarlatti with

Lorna Anderson (soprano)

29 March ~ Angers Cathedral

In May, we look forward to a trip to Malta and to our first trip to Cyprus with Danish soprano Sine Bundegaard, with whom we will be giving two concerts of Bach cantatas. We will also be undertaking educational projects in Cyprus.

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Player Profile

Jennifer Morsches 'cello



Jennifer Morsches grew up in Alexandria, Virginia, and first played the 'cello at the age of eleven. During high school she

became a fellow of the National Symphony Orchestra, then under Mstislav Rostropovich, and was granted scholarship lessons with David Hardy, the orchestra's sub-principal 'cellist. Jennifer also attended several music camps as a teenager, the most formative and all-embracing being the Apple Hill Center for Chamber Music in New Hampshire, to which she now returns each summer to teach and play as a faculty member.

Jennifer graduated from Smith College with degrees in German literature and music history. After receiving the Ernst Wallfisch Memorial Prize in Music she moved to New York City to study with Timothy Eddy at the Mannes College of Music, where she received her Master's degree in 'cello performance, completing her Doctorate in Musical Arts in 'cello in 1995 at the State University of New York at Stony Brook.

Throughout her post-graduate years Jennifer participated in numerous festivals such as the

Click on 'On Tour' at Florilegium's updated website at www.florilegium.org.uk to see the spectacular photographs and read Jennifer's own account of the ensemble's astonishing experiences in Bolivia.

Ashley Solomon also reviews the 2004 season and previews 2005.

Quartet Program, Bach Aria Festival and Tanglewood, where in 1994 she received the coveted CD Jackson Prize for outstanding merit and contribution. She was fortunate to have had the inspiring guidance of such revered musicians as Felix Galimir, Eugene Lehner, Louis Krasner, Yo Yo Ma, the Juilliard String Quartet and Julius Levine.

Jennifer then ventured into London's thriving early music scene, intrigued by the beautiful, very human sound of gut strings after hearing Anner Bylisma's groundbreaking 1979 recording of the Bach 'cello suites and Christophe Coin's superb Haydn 'cello Concerti recorded with the Academy of Ancient Music. Jennifer is now a member of The Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and has played with many of London's top period instrument ensembles. She is core member of Florilegium.

When touring with these ensembles Jennifer has performed in some of the world's most revered halls and festivals, and visited countries she never dreamed she would have an opportunity to see. It is a wonderful realisation of one of her childhood dreams to be able to travel around the globe, as other cultures and foreign languages have always fascinated her. She has also enjoyed different

cuisines around the world, and rates, without a doubt, Japan, Mexico and Italy as the most delicious foods she has ever tasted. She often collects recipes from people she meets in her travels, and rates especially the wonderfully enticing salsa recipes from Don Jose, a driver on a tour of Mexico.

For her next adventure, Jennifer is hoping to visit the renowned gypsy band, Taraf de Haidouks, on their home turf in Romania. After meeting some of its members in a hotel in Quebec recently, she was overwhelmed by their virtuosic playing, endless feats of improvisation and hauntingly beautiful sounds.

Chamber Choir performs in Fontainebleau

by Ashley Solomon, Artistic Director

The re-launched Florilegium Choir gave its inaugural concert in the Chateau Fontainebleau just outside Paris in October, with a performance of Henry Purcell's *King Arthur* in the Grand Salle before an enthusiastic capacity audience of about 700 people. A French actor joined us on stage to read introductions to each act, helping set each scene for the almost exclusively French audience. To launch the choir once again in such a venue was inspiring, and the players and singers rose to the occasion, delivering a full hearted, energetic and lively performance of one of Purcell's greatest semi-operas.

Perhaps one of the lasting and most amusing memories of the concert was the second encore of "*Your hay it is mow'd*" when the tenors (Alan Clayton and Andrew Tortise) joined together with the basses (Dan Jordan and Ronan Collett) to lead a rip-roaring west country rendition of this country song which left the orchestra and audience in fits of laughter.

In the past the choir enjoyed considerable success in France, the Canary Islands and Spain, and gave some notable performances in London. We are delighted now that after a break of nearly five years we can once again look forward to larger scale projects with the Florilegium Orchestra and Choir under the directorship of David Hill, with whom we have worked so often in concerts with the Bach Choir. In the immediate future we are negotiating possible appearances at festivals in France and Spain.

One of the main reasons for re-launching the choir was that, following auditions held in London, David and I found a group of young singers who were able to blend very well in consort and also had the virtuosity and confidence required to sing convincingly the major roles in the productions we have planned for the future. It is wonderful that the choir includes some of the finest young singers in the UK, whom we are sure you will hear often in the future as their solo careers unfold.

Watch this space for more exciting developments for the choir, including possible recordings, providing we can successfully negotiate the right level of sponsorship for this ambitious project.