

# Friends of Florilegium

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

## RECORDING NEWS

The last Newsletter contained just the one review which had been published by that time of the latest CD. In addition to that **BBC Music Magazine CD Choice** review, **Gramophone** has now rated the disc as **Recommended**. Here is that and additional reviews of the Pergolesi disc, on which Florilegium were joined by soprano Elin Manahan Thomas and countertenor Robin Blaze.

The [Stabat Mater] opening is superb; the Virgin Mary, weeping by the cross, is represented by painful suspensions over a walking bass. Elin Manahan Thomas, Robin Blaze and Florilegium phrase it beautifully, bringing just the right amount of weight to tension and release. Excellent performances all round.

*Gramophone* (Recommended),  
September 2010

Both pieces [Stabat Mater and Salve Regina] get superb performances here from top-notch singers and a small instrumental ensemble, playing in a "historically informed" manner, but with warmth and emotional depth.

*The Absolute Sound*, September 2010

Florilegium's one-instrument-per-part ensemble captures a perfect counterpart in suggesting the intimacy of a chapel performance rather than a concert display. With all the recorded competition in this music, especially the *Stabat Mater*, it is pointless to compare them. Suffice to say that this newest presentation can confidently be placed among the top recommendations.

*American Record Guide*,  
November/December 2010

The singing and playing are superb. This disc ranks with the best versions available.

*Fantare*, November/December 2010

### Florilegium

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SPRING 2011

## Florilegium celebrates its 20th anniversary

Florilegium will be celebrating their 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary in their 'spiritual home', Wigmore Hall. The first concert will be on 31 March, in a concert of works by Vivaldi and Telemann with soprano Elin Manahan Thomas singing two Motets by Vivaldi, and bassoonist Jane Gower joining Ashley Solomon in Telemann's Concerto for Recorder and Bassoon. Tickets are now available from Wigmore Hall box office: 020 7935 2141 or online booking [www.wigmore-hall.org.uk](http://www.wigmore-hall.org.uk) or via the Florilegium website [www.florilegium.org.uk](http://www.florilegium.org.uk)

The highlight of the anniversary celebrations will be a weekend of concerts on Saturday 2 July and Sunday 3 July. The concerts will comprise the complete Bach Brandenburg Concerti and Orchestral Suites, with arias sung by guest artists Julian Podger (tenor) on Saturday and Dame Emma Kirkby (soprano) on Sunday. Amongst the ensemble will be the four original members of Florilegium. Neal Peres da Costa (harpsichord) and Daniel Yeadon (cello/viola da gamba) are coming from Australia to join the



Dame Emma Kirkby

group as well as Rachel Podger who will be guest Director for both concerts. They will play alongside the fourth Co-Founder and current Director, Ashley Solomon. Tickets are on sale, again via the Hall's or the Florilegium website, as above.



Rachel Podger

After the concert on Sunday 3 July there will be a Reception for Friends of Florilegium, in Wigmore Hall, hosted by Ashley Solomon with members of the ensemble. If you would like to join in this celebration and are not a Friend, you can join the Friends of Florilegium and, if you pay the annual subscription of £30 minimum now, that will be valid until October 2012. Please write to Florilegium (address shown in the box on this page) or email [friends@florilegium.org.uk](mailto:friends@florilegium.org.uk) and you will be sent an application form.

Friends will receive an invitation to the reception shortly, and the group look forward to welcoming you to this special event.

## Farewell James, welcome Terence!

The Wigmore Hall weekend in July will be the final concerts by Florilegium principal keyboard player, James Johnstone. James joined the group in 2001 and has made an invaluable contribution to the group. Florilegium thank James for everything he has done over the past ten years, and wish him well in the future.



James Johnstone at the 18th century organ in Santa Ana Bolivia, during the recording of Bolivian Baroque Vol.3

His place will be taken by Terence Charlston, who has already performed in a number of Florilegium concerts when James has been unavailable. Terence will introduce himself in a 'Player Profile' article in a forthcoming Newsletter.

## Please support Florilegium; become a Friend!

Florilegium is acclaimed worldwide for its performances and recordings. However the group receives no public funding; its finite resources comprise ticket revenue and the committed generosity of its loyal supporters.

We are very grateful to our Friends and hope you will consider joining them. From £30 per annum – roughly the cost of a concert ticket – you could become a Friend of Florilegium.

Florilegium prides itself on a close relationship with its audiences, expressed through Friends of Florilegium. Friends' benefits and privileges include:



- A free copy of Florilegium's limited edition compilation CD
- A regular Newsletter
- Priority booking for certain concerts promoted by Florilegium
- Complimentary or discounted CDs as they are released
- Social events providing opportunities to meet the members of Florilegium

### Director's Circle members

- receive up to 3 free CDs a year
- are acknowledged in Florilegium's concert programmes
- are invited to attend rehearsals

Please see left hand column for contact details.

## UK DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

24 Mar	Royal College of Music, London 18th century coaching session
31 Mar	<b>Wigmore Hall, London</b> Vivaldi and Telemann
1 Apr	Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester Vivaldi, Telemann and Handel
10 Apr	Royal Festival Hall, London The Bach Choir Bach: St Matthew Passion
14 Apr	Peak District (Edensor) <i>Symphonies for Six</i> (Haydn)
1 May	Oxford May Music Festival <i>Les Nations</i>
6 May	Royal College of Music, London 18th century coaching session
10 May	Chipping Campden Festival Complete Brandenburg concerti
12 May	Royal College of Music, London 18th century coaching session
19 May	Royal College of Music, London 18th century coaching session
9 June	Loseley House, Guildford <i>The Italian Connection</i>
10 June	Royal College of Music, London 18th century coaching session
20 June	St Magnus Festival, Orkney <i>Musical Offering</i>
22 June	St Magnus Festival, Orkney <i>Celebration of Bach</i>
1 July	Royal College of Music, London 18th century coaching session
2 July	<b>Wigmore Hall, London</b> <b>Florilegium 20th anniversary concert</b>
3 July	<b>Wigmore Hall, London</b> <b>Florilegium 20th anniversary concert</b> <i>A weekend of concerts comprising the complete Bach Brandenburg Concerti and Orchestral Suites</i>

See article on p1 of this Newsletter for details of 2-3 July

**For further details, and overseas concerts, please visit [www.florilegium.org.uk](http://www.florilegium.org.uk)**

## Knighthood for Vernon Ellis

Ashley Solomon sent congratulations to Vernon Ellis on his knighthood for services to music in January 2011. He and his wife have kindly hosted two Florilegium concerts in their beautiful South Kensington home in the last two seasons; a Fundraising concert with Dame Emma Kirkby and, more recently, the launch of the Bolivian Baroque Vol.3 CD.

## Winter woes

The final three concerts of 2010 will stay in Ashley's memory for a long time; all for the wrong reason! The first was in Lewes. Even before reaching the venue there were problems. Ashley's home is less than 60 miles from Lewes; yet his drive took 4½ hours. Bojan, who lives in Oxford, was caught up behind a lorry fire on the M40 and only managed to get to a (3.00pm) rehearsal at 5.00; Ashley arrived at 5.30!

The rehearsal was swift, but luckily the programme was well known to the players. The hall was warm and, at 6.30, everything was back on course. Unknown to the group the heating (which Ashley had specifically said should be left exactly as it was) was switched off. As the audience arrived they complained the hall was cold and the heating was put on, maximum.

Following the first work, Ashley, as usual, addressed the audience but this time asked that the heating be put back to its previous temperature. Although someone twiddled a dial, nothing happened and the strings become more and more out of tune. The violin and gamba were constantly retuning, but nothing could be done to the harpsichord until the interval. As the hall got hotter, the strings became flatter and when Terence tuned in the interval, one of his harpsichord strings snapped. The audience finally understood about the heat.

The following concert, 6 days later was in York, the day after it had started snowing

for the first time this winter. York was under about a foot of snow and most of the trains were cancelled. This included the one on which players had seats reserved. A few trains were running and with some helpful information from her undergraduate son at university in Scotland, Emma Kirkby ascertained where the unreserved seats would be found. She and Ashley dashed to the correct carriage and, luckily, managed to claim seats. From Peterborough the train was full, with many people knowing they would stand until Edinburgh! The concert however was performed to a packed concert hall, so the problems of travel there – and back – were minimised.

One week later the venue was Winchester for a performance of *Messiah*. The snow had gone, travel was smooth for everyone – no player was late (although four had cancelled during the week of the concert and had to be replaced). The conductor had thoughtfully emailed to warn that the cathedral would be cold. Players arrived with blankets, and rehearsed with them on their laps. The new, high-tech, computerised central heating was simply not working and the playing conditions were abysmal. The only good thing in this freezing temperature was that strings stayed in tune! The usual capacity audience in Winchester Cathedral thoroughly enjoyed our performance with the Waynfletes and we look forward to our return visit in December to perform another great masterpiece by Handel - *Israel in Egypt*.

## Vivaldi flute concerto discovered

Found among Marquess of Lothian family papers was a score of a flute concerto by Vivaldi that might not have been heard in 250 years. Vivaldi's *Il Gran Mogol* concerto was rediscovered in the family archives of a Scottish nobleman who was killed at the battle of Culloden.

Andrew Woolley, a musicologist, stumbled upon the work when he saw a reference to an unspecified Vivaldi score among papers belonging to the Marquesses of Lothian in the National Archives of Scotland in Edinburgh. It is thought that the *Il Gran Mogol* score was collected in the 1730s by Lord Robert Kerr, the son of the third Marquis of Lothian, during a "grand tour" of continental Europe. On

that tour, Kerr, a flautist, is also believed to have acquired three pieces found in the same folder as the concerto.

He died at Culloden in 1746 fighting for government forces against the Jacobites. His whereabouts between 1732 and 1739, when he was commissioned in the army, are not recorded.

*Il Gran Mogol* is believed to have been written by the Italian composer in the late 1720s or early 1730s as part of a quartet of short "national" concertos during his later period. The concerto referred to India, or the Mogul empire, and was written as part of a quartet some scholars suggest was the geographical equivalent to Vivaldi's

*The Four Seasons*. The other three pieces, *La Francia*, *La Spagna* and *L'Inghilterra*, remain lost.

Ashley Solomon will be recording this concerto with Florilegium on a CD of sacred and secular works by Vivaldi together with the soprano Elin Manahan Thomas who also featured on their recent release of Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater*.

First page of Vivaldi's manuscript

