

# Friends of Florilegium

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

## Florilegium's Brandenburg Concertos CDs highly acclaimed

Florilegium's 25th recording on the Channel Classics label, a 2-CD set of Bach's complete Brandenburg Concerts has received some wonderful reviews, and some awards.

A selection of the reviews include:

Rich, vibrant sonorities, sensible tempos, exacting ensemble playing, sublime solo performances, and an overall sense of these six works as the uniquely entertaining pieces that Bach intended.. you can't deny the feeling that you're right in the middle of these performances that faithfully capture the natural sound of an 18th-century instrumental ensemble and give a freshly polished, well-considered take on these beloved masterpieces. **Highly recommended.**

(Artistic Quality 10; Sound Quality 10 *classictoday.com*, Feb 2015)

A beautiful ripened performance by Florilegium led by the flutist Ashley Solomon, with a gorgeous warm string sound and subdued tempi. Florilegium puts down an impressive reading.

(*Luister 10 award*, Jan 2015)

The performances of all twenty one musicians heard here deserve the utmost praise...this new release from Florilegium should be at the top of anyone's shopping list.

(*Classical CD Choice CD Choice of the Month*, Jan 2015)

Florilegium ... goes at the top of the list. This set contains fleet performances that are at the same time scholarly informed and passionately performed.

(*RadsReferenceReviews*, 10 Jan 2015)

...there is a glow, richness and body to the sound that would be the envy of many orchestras. The insatiable public demand for new recordings of the Brandenburg Concertos apparently seems unstoppable, but, in spite of fierce competition, this new release from Florilegium should be at the top of anyone's shopping list.

(*Performance\*\*\*\*\*Sonic\*\*\*\*\* SA-CD.net*, Dec 2014)

Florilegium revels in the richness of their mixed target... the instruments seem to have a physical presence and tonal depth you can reach out and touch

(*BBC Radio 3 CD Review*, 28 Nov 2014)

This is consummate music-making that reflects the players' evident joy with this repertoire. And by adjusting the order and instrumentation, Florilegium has given us a particularly fresh and vibrant sounding reading.

(*Classic FM: Classic FM Drive Featured Album, 10 November 2014*; 10 Nov 2014)

Copies can be ordered direct from [www.florilegium.org.uk](http://www.florilegium.org.uk) - price £15 + £1 p-&-p

Florilegium and Ashley Solomon wish to thank all those who kindly contributed towards the Brandenburg Concertos recording: Jan Telensky, Julian and Annette Armstrong, Alan Sainer, Bill and Sue Blyth, Jill Shutt and other Friends of Florilegium.

### Florilegium

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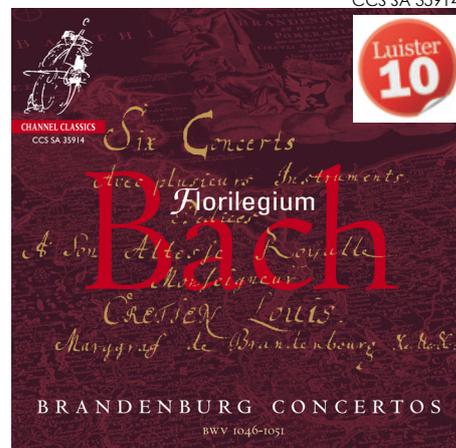
SPRING 2015

### SELECTED LONDON DATES 2015

Thur 21 May **Kings Place, London**  
Mozart Flute Quartet K285 in D  
Mozart Clarinet Quintet K581 in A (Colin Lawson, classical clarinet)  
Haydn Symphony No.101 in D 'Clock' (arr. Salomon)  
TICKETS NOW AVAILABLE:  
[www.kingsplace.co.uk](http://www.kingsplace.co.uk)

Wed 25 Nov **Wigmore Hall, London**  
Programme of works by Buxtehude, Tunder, Biber, Telemann and JS Bach including Cantata BW82 "Ich habe genug" (with Roderick Williams, baritone)  
TICKETS AVAILABLE SHORTLY:  
[wigmore-hall.org.uk](http://wigmore-hall.org.uk)

CCS SA 35914



Bojan Cicic, Ashley Solomon, Alexandra Bellamy and Richard Fomison (Brandenburg no.2)

### 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

## Player Profile: Alexandra Bellamy

I grew up in West London, in a family which loved music, including my Uncle Roger, who was an amateur oboist and sowed the seeds of what would bloom into a lasting passion and ultimately my career. I was nine years old when he let me have a go on his oboe and it was love at first blow. I was soon playing with as many local youth orchestras that would have me. By the time I went to The Queens College, Oxford to read Music, I was having lessons with Royal Academy oboe teacher Tess Miller and used my three years at university to play as much orchestral and chamber music as I could possibly fit in.

It was at Oxford that I was also first introduced to the concept of 'period instrument performance' and to the baroque oboe in particular. I remember being utterly bowled over by the deep and mellow sound that the baroque oboe makes and struck by how much closer it comes to the sound of the human voice (the ultimate instrument) in comparison to the modern oboe. From that moment on I knew what I wanted to do; having gained my degree I enrolled as a post-graduate student at The Royal Academy of Music to study baroque oboe with Sophia McKenna and Paul Goodwin.

After three years of study and a stint as principal oboe in the training orchestra The European Union Baroque Orchestra, I was ready for Florilegium.

Flori was one of the first professional groups that I worked for and, little did I know at the time, would become one of the most significant thanks to the professional (and non-professional) relationships that it helped me form.

When I started playing with Florilegium in 1995, it was with the founder members Rachel Podger, Ashley, Neal Peres da Costa and Danny Yeadon. Up in my Florilegium trips 'Hall of Fame' has to be the tour to Canada with Pieter Wispelwey as soloist. Apart from the particularly significant fact that this soloist ended up becoming my husband as a direct result of this tour (with a bit of help from Florilegium's in-house Cupid, aka Neal), it is also memorable for other reasons not least the fact that in a two week tour we only had to do four concerts allowing plenty of time for extra-curricular activities such as canoeing, swimming in lakes, mountain trekking, whisky drinking and tours of pizza restaurants. They don't make tours like that any more!

Even though Rachel and eventually Neal and Danny left the group for new pastures I've continued to collaborate with them in other set-ups; with Rachel in her group Brecon Baroque and with Neal and Danny last year in Sydney and Melbourne with their chamber group Ironwood.

My continuing relationship with Ashley and Florilegium has left me with many happy and amusing memories: the excitement for the Flori wind section going to play with The Australian Chamber Orchestra for several tours around Australia, the recording session of the Telemann Tafelmusik CD when Ashley had to leave the session in order to attend the birth of his second daughter. He was confident that it wouldn't take too long and sure enough he was back a couple of hours later so that we could carry on recording into the early hours!



The 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary concerts at the Wigmore Hall will also stay firmly embedded in my memory as very happy events for all involved.

Aside from Florilegium, I've played with most of London's period instrument groups and can be heard on many recordings of The King's Consort and The Gabrieli Consort. More recent work has been with The Dunedin Consort, Arcangelo and Barokksolisten. These days I reside in rural Holland with, all thanks to Florilegium, my husband Pieter and our two boys Caspar and Dorian. After long hours of reed-making I like to get my hands dirty in our big garden, run along the many dykes and 'ringvaarts' that characterise Dutch countryside and drink far too much coffee with the neighbours in a constant, but fairly futile, attempt to improve my Dutch.

## A fixing crisis

The Florilegium Administrator was set a real challenge, which, even with all her umpteen years of working in this business, she failed to achieve.

On Friday 12 December she was phoned at lunchtime by a violinist's husband, to be informed that his wife had a nasty bout of flu and was unable to play in the concert the following day.

Under normal circumstances that is tricky enough, but on this occasion the concert on 13 December was in Leeds. That meant either finding a player who lived 'up north', for whom it was an afternoon and evening's work, or a South-East based player, as most are, or based further afield who would have to have a much greater availability. There was a rail ticket available, but it meant being in Kings Cross at 09.45 on Saturday and only getting back there at 11.30 on Sunday.

To make matters worse, she already had 30 violinists who had earlier declined the concert because of other work, so she knew it was a very busy concert weekend,

and that most of the other early music groups also had concerts.

She started by contacting a player who although she had already said was not available, was based in Manchester and taught at the Royal Northern College of Music, so was asked for suggestions. This person replied speedily, and passed on the details of five baroque violinists based in the north and north-west. The details of one of these suggested players didn't include a mobile number, so he was emailed. Almost as soon as this was sent, Ashley Solomon phoned in reply to lots of texts and emails on this subject. When this player was mentioned it turned out, coincidentally, Ashley knew his home phone number as he had spoken to his wife (a wind player) earlier that day. So this violinist was phoned and, although not available, he was at that moment replying to the email with a suggestion of a player who was also a fixer. This person was then rung and also not available, but gave another set of names and contact details. So more texts were fired off, and they were also sent to the remaining violinists

on the Florilegium list.

In all, 19 violinists were contacted during that afternoon – not one of whom was free.

Ashley had the unenviable task of informing the conductor on arrival in Leeds. Luckily, it was David Hill, who was very understanding and a fine performance went ahead one player down. It was fortunate that it was a violinist who was ill; there would have been a real problem if it had been a wind or brass player.

## Florilegium on Twitter

You can follow Florilegium via Twitter. The Username is FlorilegiumUK; you can see what the group are doing by clicking the link on the Florilegium website home page, or, if you not yet a Twitter user, join via Twitter.com

 Follow @FlorilegiumUK