

## Meet our team: Kym Wilson

One of the pleasures of moving to Canberra was discovering Salut!. Getting to know them by recording their concerts for MBS radio has introduced a host of early composers and a growing list of first rate performers. My first attempt for ArtSound FM was a Salut! concert at Old Parliament House on Easter Monday, 2003. All of ArtSound's equipment was in use covering the National Folk Festival that weekend, so I was left to my own devices.

After my wife and I had moved from Adelaide to the ACT for my work, Liz resumed her interest in singing and began lessons. This led to me becoming involved in videoing concerts that she sang in. Digital cameras record audio to CD standard, and adding an external stereo microphone made a handy system. This was how my first Salut! experience was recorded for later broadcast by ArtSound. An encouraging start, that was repeated at some of the many events Canberra has to offer, which Annabel Wheeler then presented on her Saturday night "Concert Hall" program. After then trying a DAT recorder, next came a direct to laptop hard drive system.

A growing interest in the relationship of performance and venue led me to the historic halls and churches of the Organs of the Ballarat Goldfields Festival, held each January. From there, one thing led to another, and I found myself in an 11th century church in St. Imier in Switzerland, recording an organ and oboe CD. Another thing led to another, and a newer church, the 16th century S. Maria Nuova at Cortona. Here Liz and I joined Ruth Wilkinson (recorder and viola da gamba) and Cynthia O'Brien (baroque violin) in their search for the sound of the past. We spent ten pleasant days recording under the lofty domes of this exquisite acoustic environment, in between enjoying the sights and tastes of Tuscany. They have recently released their CD, "Concert à Deux", aptly subtitled "An Acoustical Pilgrimage".

Liz's singing teacher was involved in the 2006 ANATS conference in Canberra, and I was invited to video and produce DVDs of the sessions. This musical learning experi-



Kym Wilson with Ruth Wilkinson & Cynthia O'Brien

ence inspired me to develop use of the camera for performers' archival and demonstration work. All of the 2007 Ballarat Goldfields concerts were taped, as was the Past Echoes Autumn Festival of early music in Melbourne in May.

Having retired after 34 years of air traffic control, I moved with Liz back to Adelaide, and new recording opportunities. Works by local composers feature in concerts that I've enjoyed being able to do with such performers as Emma Horwood, the Zephyr Quartet and the Australian String Quartet. I continue sending program material to Annabel to be played in Canberra. With all the music written and played in this country, often presented to relatively small audiences, it is hoped that radio can spread appreciation a little wider. Also, preserved performances can be experienced again, as I've enjoyed hearing Salut!, from their beginning in 1996 until I carried on in 2003, thanks to Philip O'Brien who captured and presented most of their earlier concerts for ArtSound FM.

As Salut! don't play in Adelaide, this year I've been coming to Sydney. And as the Verbrugghen Hall is such a perfect setting for them, I'm back with the equipment I started with, camera and microphone, to continue recording Salut! for radio and on DVD for the archive. ☺

*Kym Wilson*  
Adelaide, June 2007

[Many of our audience will know Ruth Wilkinson and Cynthia O'Brien from their work with the early music ensemble *Capella Corelli*, who were at the forefront of establishing historical performance practice in Australia.]

## Support Salut! with a tax deductible donation

Making a donation to help support Salut! is also tax deductible. Your support allows Australian musicians to pursue their passion for performing baroque music. Donations can be made either by cheque or credit card.

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# Salut! NEWS

September 2007

## Welcome to our September edition of Salut! News!



With the sell-out of our first CD, *Italian Instrumental and Vocal Music from the 17th Century*, Salut! will be re-issuing the CD with a new booklet cover. The new look CD will be available at our November concerts.

The CD was named "Early Music CD of the Month" by the UK *Classic FM Magazine* (March 2000): "...the instrumentalists are Australian and their joie de vivre is irresistible..."

"The performers on this CD are uniformly superb. ...this CD is about as good as it gets." *Early Music News*, December 1998-January 1999

## Change of Venue Reminder:

Please note the change of venue for our **Canberra performance of *French Revolution*** due to storm damage in Llewellyn Hall. Our concert on Friday 28 September will now be held at University House, corner of Balmain Crescent & Liversidge Street, ANU. Subscription tickets and tickets already purchased for Llewellyn Hall are of course valid for this performance.

## Meet our Musicians: Daniel Yeadon

I was brought up in a musical family in a beautiful part of North Yorkshire in England. I am still inspired by the landscape there when I return to visit at least once a year. My mother is a cellist and my stepfather a violinist in an educational string quartet in Leeds. In my teens they regularly involved me in charity chamber music concerts with their professional colleagues and this is when my love of chamber music began in earnest. My father is an architect and cabinet maker and he is also passionate about classical music. He used to lie on his living room floor in tears, listening to his favourite pieces all night long. It was my father who advised me to study a subject other than music at tertiary level, effectively keeping my options open. So I applied to Oxford University to study physics and to my great surprise I got into Wadham College. My enjoyment of physics did not really manifest itself until my third and final year. Why? Because I spent my first two years playing chamber music with fellow students! The benefit of the Oxford environment was that I gained musical experience in an informal and non-judgmental atmosphere, unlike that of music colleges, which can be extremely intimidating.



After Oxford I had no idea what I wanted to do, despite my love of music. Fortunately a close friend put me in touch with an editor at Longman Educational Publishing Company in London and this led to a very stimulating job in the capital, working with authors, graphic designers and artists on scientific texts. I had fun getting to know London and meeting new people, but after a couple of years I realised something was missing in my life: music! At the time another friend from Oxford was doing postgraduate study in early music at the Royal College

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of Music in London. She invited me to attend a couple of masterclasses there and I was completely fascinated by sounds of the instruments I heard. At one of the sessions a student lent me a baroque cello to play on and I realised I was hooked. Within a month of visiting the College I had organised an audition and gained a place to study baroque cello as a postgraduate.

During my year of study in 1990 I had intensive lessons with Richard Tunnicliffe and I also joined the European Community Baroque Orchestra, a group set up to provide young musicians with an intensive training in early music. There was a strong interaction between music students from all the London colleges and in this environment the ensemble Florilegium was formed by the harpsichordist Neal Peres Da Costa and baroque flautist Ashley Solomon. Originally conceived as a small baroque chamber orchestra, Florilegium soon became distilled into a group of seven musicians: flute, two violins, cello, harpsichord and two lutes. We made a demo tape and sent it to the Dutch recording company Channel Classics. After an agonising delay of six months in which we assumed the company was not interested, we received an excited call from one of their producers, explaining that he had rediscovered our tape behind a chest of drawers at home and wanted us to make a CD as soon as possible. The rest, as they say, is history. Throughout the 1990s we made a CD every year and we toured extensively around the world. During our travels we met Sally and Tim and encouraged them to realise their dream of setting up an early music group in Australia. We were delighted when they announced the launch of Salut!

My love of baroque music was enhanced further when I heard the beautiful viola da gamba. I embarked on a set of lessons with Sarah Cunningham in London and as a member of Florilegium I soon plunged into experiences such as performing Bach's gamba sonatas in New York. Not long after this I was presented with another challenge. Three members of the Fitzwilliam String Quartet were hunting for a new cellist and I was invited to do an audition with them.



I remember arriving at the home of the viola player Alan George on a cold winter morning in York, England and playing a heady mix of Haydn, Borodin and Shostakovich! We got along extremely well as players and I was excited at the thought of exploring later repertoire, so I accepted the offer to join the quartet. From then on I led a wonderfully crazy and intense existence for several years, splitting my time between the two groups and touring constantly.

Back in 1990 when Florilegium was formed I also met my soulmate Neal Peres Da Costa. We lived together in London and visited his parents every year in Sydney. As time passed we dreamed more and more of moving to Australia, despite all the opportunities that Europe was presenting to us. The lure of the lifestyle and the weather was powerful and we were also beginning to tire of living out of a suitcase. We finally made the move in February 2002. Ironically, just before we left the UK, offers of work came in from many of the period instrument ensembles based in London, including the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and English Baroque Soloists. I still fly back regularly to work as a guest principal cello with these two groups.

I have played with Salut! on many occasions. I congratulate Tim and Sally for setting up a successful group and giving many musicians the opportunity to play baroque music within innovative programs. Salut! forms part of a rich tapestry of artistic experience in my life and I have been pleasantly surprised by the variety of cultural events taking place here in Australia. ☺

## Why the bass violin? PART 2

by Tim Blomfield

By 1995, the tercentenary of Purcell's death, the bass violin was enjoying a small renaissance in England. Thanks to *Les Arts Florissants* in Paris, recordings of Lully's and Charpentier's music were also appearing in record stores, replete with the sound of the bass violin. With the possibility of now hearing the full effect of the "corrected" fundamental sound at the bottom end of these ensembles and orchestras, my determination grew. Daniel Yeadon alerted me to the fact that once the "Purcell Year" had passed, cellists were doing what they had done in the 1710s and 20s – abandoning their bass violins for cellos. He drew my attention to two instruments that had become available.

When I was in London in 1997, I visited Richard Campbell in Twickenham. I took Sally Melhuish along as my auditor (and London tube guide!). Richard parked us in his living room and after a brief wait, shuffled back in with his bass violin. With my eyes popping out of their sockets, I set forth putting bow to string, and played the entrancing bass part to *Oft she visits this lone mountain* from Purcell's *Dido & Aeneas*. I played what I knew without doubt to be not cello music but bass violin music. I was enraptured; Sally grinned as she sat on the sofa. The long awaited fundamental bass tones of the 17th century had finally come home to both of us that day. No longer would I have to endure the "weedy" sound of the cello when I performed music from a time when the cello was yet to exist.

We jumped on another train and went to visit another bass violin on the other side of London. It was the first instrument, however, that had won our hearts, which was a happy coincidence; its maker, David Rubio, was a friend of John Hall. Relief and jubilation were to hand, knowing that my sixteen year journey to find a Pieter Claesz look-alike was almost at an end.

A couple of days later, Sally and I needed to go to The Hague, but my bass violin did not have a flightcase and the only seat available for it on our flight was in business class, for which I had to pay full fare. Arrangement was made with Richard Campbell to hand over final payment in a brown-paper envelope at Hounslow station on our way to Heathrow. Timing was critical – we desperately needed to be back on the next train to Heathrow in order not to miss our flight to Holland. Feeling a bit like a drug runner, I left Sally with all the luggage in the pouring rain up on the platform while I ran down to meet Richard, take delivery of my bass violin and hand over the money. Needless to say, poor Sally, and our luggage, was saturated by the time the deed was done – but I had a beautiful instrument in my clutches which more than compensated for our bedraggled looks.

As the three of us flew over the North Sea, I did enjoy the sight of the flight attendant bringing my bass violin – perched ever so upright in its seat – a business class luncheon!

Having brought my precious cargo safely from Hounslow to Holland, the next task was to prepare the bass violin for its journey to Australia. Gerhard Landwehr, who was making me several bows at the time, including one for the bass violin, was my man. I explained my situation to him at his workshop



in Heemstede, just near Haarlem. Ever obliging, he replied, "You'd better jump in the car and we'll go down to the local timber yard!" We arrived and he immediately explained that I needed a sturdy wooden box made for my instrument – one that would stand up to being sent to Sydney as unaccompanied baggage. "No problem", the timberman responded, "I can knock that up and have it ready for you in a couple of days." I handed over the required dimensions; it was to be wider at the bottom end than at the top, making it look somewhat like a coffin. I returned with Gerhard in two days time with the bass violin for its "fitting". Perfect – it snuggled in nicely.

Next stop was the Foam Rubber House, just to be sure the bass violin was well padded inside the box so that it didn't slide around. The foam rubber man was not quite as obliging as the timberman had been; he objected to us padding the box inside his shop. "You are taking up too much room," he pronounced. It was an unusually hot day in Haarlem, so we needed to find a shady spot to complete the task. We loaded everything into Gerhard's station wagon, and keeping our eyes open for that shady spot, we started driving down the road. We pulled over under a beautiful shady oak, unloaded the box onto the pavement, and completed the job of padding it with the foam rubber.

With the job completed, we started screwing down the lid. A woman standing nearby who had not been taking much notice of us until this moment, suddenly interjected in a very agitated fashion, "Excuse me gentlemen, but I certainly hope you have the authority to be doing that here".

Gerhard and I finally looked up; we were right outside the main gates of the Haarlem cemetery! ☺