

We have now happily discovered Trackdown Scoring Stage at Fox Studios, which is Australia's premier recording studio and a favourite for Hollywood film scores. (In fact we were asked to change our first choice of recording dates to accommodate a "VIP" client – we later discovered that we had made way for Baz and Nicole to film the famous Chanel advertisement.) We recorded our fifth CD "Food of Love" at Trackdown, and more recently, our seventh CD "Italians Abroad". The studio is an ideal place for an early music ensemble like Salut! to record. The not-overly-live but very accurate acoustic accommodates true to life transfer through the microphones.



with different ears. In some cases, you even have to play differently to ensure that the microphones (which can never accurately "hear" how your own ears hear) interpret the mixture of sonorities as faithfully as they can.

There's also the problem of dealing with the fluctuating climate inside the studio. Doors opening and shutting, allowing little draughts to creep in; lights making instruments hotter; and everything seeming to go out of tune far more often than it ever does on the concert platform! As it is usually necessary to record everything several times, it is crucial that the pitch remains constant so that one "take" can be dovetailed into another.

Once inside the studio, our first task is to setup for recording. If you have recorded in the studio before, it makes for a much faster start up process. You know just which walls bounce what sound; what the floor material will do to scatter or help contain the sound. A baroque ensemble such as Salut! needs surfaces that reflect the sound but don't distort it or make it what it never was. The whole experience teaches you to listen to yourself – and the ensemble as a whole – almost

We have finished the recording work of "Italians Abroad" and now begin all the other tasks associated with the whole process – editing, mastering, producing, designing the booklet and finally releasing the CD – all hopefully by late 2009.

The entire process, from the initial choice of music to releasing the CD, can take several years. But it is a wonderful feeling to complete each step of the process – and a great sense of joy and relief to see the final product!

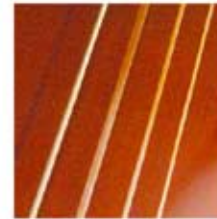
NEWS Salut!

May 2009

Spanish Splendour

Our May concert will focus on the unjustly neglected repertoire from the Spanish baroque period – music rich in melody, rhythm, colour and instrumentation. There were theatrical elements to the performances, which were by turns joyous, flirtatious, triumphant and tragic. But above all, Spanish composers sought to entertain.

We wish to particularly thank the Spanish Embassy for their sponsorship of this concert.



Congratulations to the winners of our special subscriber competition: Kay Britcliffe & Margaret Pitt (set of 6 Salut! CDs). Unfortunately we have had to postpone announcing the winner of a weekend for two at Orient Point House due to a fire at the guesthouse. The winners will be announced in our next newsletter. Our good wishes to Karella and John as they begin the process of rebuilding their beautiful house.

SALUT! BAROQUE

Meet our Musicians: Stephen Machamer

For our *Spanish Splendour* concert we are delighted to welcome percussionist Steven Machamer. Percussive instruments were an integral part of Spanish baroque music, adding to the important rhythmic and colour variations of the music. Composers explored different rhythms in the upper and lower voices, resulting in accents falling in different places within the same piece.



Steven was a scholarship student of Saul Goodman at The Juilliard School, and holds Bachelor of Music and Master of Music degrees. Throughout his 26 years in New York, Steven was a regular performer on timpani and percussion at Carnegie Hall with the American Symphony Orchestra, American Chamber Orchestra, Solisti New York, and at Lincoln Center with the Little Orchestra Society, The New York City Ballet, Metropolitan Opera and NYC Opera. He toured with the NYC Opera National Company for seven seasons as Principal Percussionist /Timpanist.

Steven's interest in authentic early music began as a pipe and tabor performer at the New York Renaissance Fair in 1982. He has since performed with American early music ensembles: The Grande Bande, New York Early Music Association, Sine Nomine Singers, The

Phillip Levin 18th Century Orchestra, Amor Artists, and Millennial Arts Production.

Steven has lived in Sydney since 2001. His performing career in Australia has included work in film, television, video sessions (most notably for The Wiggles), and concerts with the Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra, the Sydney Symphony, Sydney Philharmonic Choirs and Sydneian Bach Choir. He is on staff with the Sydney Conservatorium of Music Percussion Unit.

Steven is the author of works for snare drum and vibraphone. A compact disk titled *Vibrant Baroque* featuring chamber music for vibraphone, violin and piano was released in 1990, and received a rave review from *Percussive Notes*, the leading scholarly percussion trade journal. His publication of Bach's Suite for Lute in E minor BWV 996 transcribed for the vibraphone won equal praise. The recording of this work is available as *Baroque Vibes, Volume 1* through Amazon mp3, itunes, and other digital download sites.

Recording Venues

Finding a suitable recording venue is always a challenge, and a very important part of the recording process. Some musicians swear by a beautiful old church with the perfect acoustic. While this would be wonderful in theory, pragmatism often prevails. Along with the perfect acoustic, there is also the possibility of noise interference beyond our control – planes, rain, birds, just to name a few. Some groups try to work around this by recording in the middle of the night – but some wonderful recordings which include bat noises attest to there being no sure way around the problem of recording in a non-soundproofed environment.

Our first CD was recorded in a Sydney studio under the flight path. This wasn't so much a problem, as the building was quite well insulated and we only had to stop recording a few times for planes when they were directly overhead. But as we discovered, the insulation only appeared to be in the ceiling, not in the floor and walls. We realised quite quickly that noise from the furniture making workshop downstairs was going to have a rather detrimental effect on our recording, but the company wasn't very receptive to our pleas for them to stop work!

Our next attempt to find the ideal venue wasn't a great deal more successful. The venue was certainly soundproof to the outside world this time, however to the surprise of the recording studio owners, we could hear the air conditioning system running over the top of our recording. Nobody had noticed such a noisy air conditioning system before as the studio usually played host to rock bands. So, air conditioning turned off and problem solved. Until the following night of recording – one of Sydney's spectacular December storms brought the recording to a halt when lightning struck the entire computer system, forcing the recording to be delayed until the next day. On another occasion, while recording at the ABC Studios in Ultimo, construction of television studios next door and the dull, repetitive thud of a huge pneumatic drill meant stopping, waiting and wasting valuable recording time.



Our Sound Engineer, Bob Scott, in the control room overlooking the Recording Studio at Trackdown Scoring Stage

