

(sound familiar?). The lute was far too noble for such base activities! Of course the guitar also became a very popular and regular entertainment in the courts of France and Italy from the 17th Century on, as it had already been for some time in Spain where the instrument originated, and guitar players adopted the plucking technique of the lutenists, creating a wonderful mix of strum and pluck in their music. The guitar, one should also point out, has a history that is at least as old as the lute, so



the idea that the lute is the predecessor to the modern guitar is entirely false. A baroque guitar looks essentially like the modern instrument, except that its body is smaller, and it has only five courses, or sets of strings, that are all the same tuned to the same pitches as the modern instrument without the low E. In accompanying the guitar is strummed more often than not, providing an extremely dynamic rhythmic as well as harmonic support.

## August Concert: Folk meets Baroque

We are delighted to be joined again for our next concert by the wonderful sopranos Jane Sheldon and Anna Fraser, who will be singing music by Purcell, Monteverdi, Pergolesi, Dowland and Geminiani. Recent reviews for both singers include:



*"[Jane] Sheldon was superb, with a voice of penetrating beauty, precision and variegated colours..."*  
(Sydney Morning Herald, November 2009)

*"[Anna Fraser's] singing was elegant and delicately shaded...and her fabulous rendition of Mirinda's Vecchi, insensati...proved she's as stylish a comedienne as she is a singer."*  
(Prima La Musica, December 2009)

# NEWS Salut!

August 2010

## Albert Hall - Our New Canberra Venue

The recently refurbished Albert Hall will become our new Canberra venue. The Hall is an important part of Canberra's heritage.



After being opened by the then Prime Minister, Stanley Bruce on 10 March 1928, the Albert Hall was Canberra's only performing arts venue for its first forty years. It became the city's first concert hall and playhouse, the stage for the

touring Royal Ballet and the Australian Ballet, as well as art gallery space.



Like many Canberrans, Sally has fond memories of going to concerts and performing in eisteddfods in the Albert Hall when she was growing up. As an historic landmark, we are delighted to see it being brought back to its former glory.

## Meet Our Musicians: Simon Martyn-Ellis

In 2002 Simon planned to spend 3 months in Germany. Eight years later he is still there! Simon began playing the lute after finding the classical guitar repertoire too restrictive for ensemble performance: continuo accompaniment remains a mainstay of his activities. Simon completed an Honours degree at the University of New England in performance on the lute and related instruments in 1994, studying with Tommie Andersson. He has undertaken summer courses and private lessons with Hopkinson Smith, Jakob Lindberg and William Carter, and completed post-graduate study with Rolf Lislevand at the Trossingen Hochschule für Musik, Germany.

Since moving to Germany in late 2002, Simon has appeared frequently with the Akademie für

Alte Musik Berlin, Neue Hofkapelle München, Neue Düsseldorfer Hofkapelle, the Freiburger Barockorchester, La Cetra Basel, the Balthasar-Neumann Ensemble, Main Barockorchester, Erato Ensemble, the Accademia de Santa Cecilia Orchestra in Rome, as well as in a variety of chamber music performances. He is a co-founder of the prize winning ensemble Cadenza.

In Australia, Simon has appeared in the Melbourne and Adelaide International Festivals

with Collegium Vocale Gent and Ensemble 415, respectively. Simon has also appeared with leading Australian groups, including Opera Australia and the Adelaide and Melbourne symphony orchestras, and chamber ensembles such as the Elysium Ensemble and Salut! Baroque, with both of which he has recorded CDs.



## Simon Martyn-Ellis talks about his instruments

Lute players are by nature and necessity megalomaniacs when it comes to instruments. The necessity arises from the fact that the lute was an instrument that underwent enormous changes in the 17th and 18th centuries, resulting in a great diversity of types, tunings and uses. The nature is simply that lute players like to play every one of them!

I'll have two instruments with me on stage, a theorbo and a baroque guitar, that are incidentally my regular companions. The theorbo is a large lute with a marked extension to the neck, ending in a second peg-box. The second peg-box takes strings that are freely plucked bass strings, generally tuned to the notes in scale in which one is playing. It's in particular these bass strings that make the theorbo so special,

because they provide the same function as a double-bass (a regular double-bass' lowest pitch is only a third lower than that of the theorbo), but with a particular 'thwang'! The theorbo is an instrument that was born to accompany, indeed, its inception was integral to the development of monody, the genre that led to the paradigm shift from the Renaissance to the Baroque and the development of Opera at the turn of the 17th Century. Just how long the theorbo was used is hard for us today to ascertain.

The term "lute" itself was used willy-nilly at the time, and a determination of what exactly was meant is often impossible. Even the theorbo appears in text and surviving instruments in a variety of string configurations, sizes and tunings. A little extra, the theorbo and the chitarrone (in case

