

## Lathika Vithanage



study with baroque violinist, Anna McDonald and commissioned the making of a baroque violin through Simon Brown, a Sydney-based instrument maker who studied in Cremona, Italy.

In the last 3 years Lathika has established herself as one of Australia's up-and-coming baroque violinists with performances with groups such as Salut! Baroque, Orchestra of the Antipodes, Sydney Philharmonia Choirs orchestra and Ludovico's Band.

It was at the Urbino Early Music Festival in Italy in July 2009, where she was appointed concert master of the festival orchestra, that Lathika met Stefano Montanari, teacher and concert-master of the Accademia Bizantina. Stefano Montanari is at the forefront of period music performance in Europe and is gaining an international reputation for his virtuosic, unique and engaging approach to music making. He regularly performs and leads other European orchestras including Concerto Köln and Kammerorchester Basel, and has recently returned from being guest concertmaster with Tafelmusick, Canada. Stefano Montanari currently teaches at the International Academy of Music in Milan, and Lathika is planning on continuing her study with him in Milan in 2010/2011.

Lathika began studying violin in Brisbane at the age of 5 with Elizabeth Morgan and later Spiros Rantos. She participated in Australian Youth Orchestra programs from 2001 to 2007, including two European tours and a North America/Canada tour with Camerata Australia. In 2004 Lathika was awarded a scholarship to study at the Australian National Academy of Music in Melbourne.

Lathika was based in Canberra from 2005 to 2007 and was a regular performer with the Canberra Symphony Orchestra during this time and studied with Barbara Jane Gilby. It was here, through her exposure to such groups as the Haydn Bande, under the direction of Geoffrey Lancaster, that her interest in period performance practice was sparked. In 2007 she moved to Sydney to

# NEWS Salut!

May 2010

## An Italian Journey

For our next concert we will be performing two concertos by a composer who was the epitome of an Italian Abroad in his lifetime. Antonio Vivaldi was one of the most famous musicians of his day, well known throughout Europe both as a virtuosic violinist and as a prolific composer, enjoying great financial success and having a far-reaching influence on other composers.



Vivaldi wrote more than 500 concertos, including 230 for violin. The best known ones today are Summer, Autumn, Winter and Spring. JJ Quantz, who along with many others made a pilgrimage to Venice,

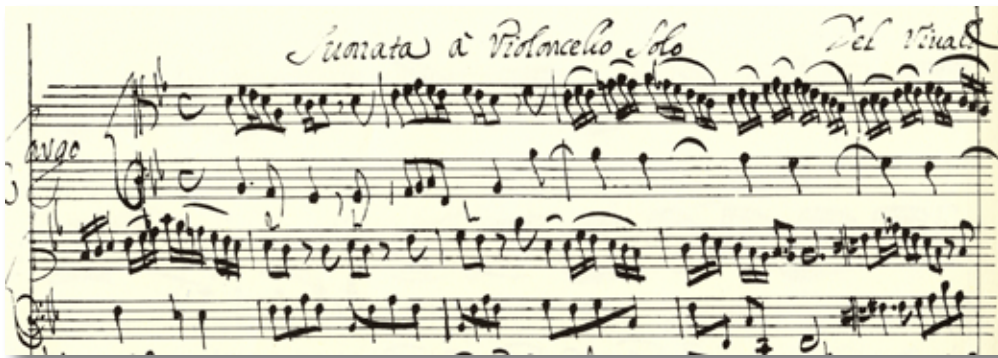
noted that Vivaldi was "lively and rich in invention and supplied almost half the world with his concerti". Some of the concertos were written for various virtuosi to play at private performances for the aristocracy in Venice and at the Saxon Court in Dresden. However, many of Vivaldi's concerto compositions were written for the orchestra at the Ospedale della Pietà in Venice, the school for orphaned girls which he was associated with for most of his life. The girls were obviously very talented and capable musicians, and Vivaldi was commissioned by the school to write two new concertos a month, and to rehearse and direct the performances of some of them.

Even when he was abroad Vivaldi ensured that the girls had some new music to perform and would post his latest compositions to the school.

Vivaldi wasn't well known as a cellist, but wrote 28 concertos for solo cello (that we know of – perhaps more), more than any other composer. Vivaldi also wrote one concerto for the unusual combination of two cellos, Concerto in G minor RV 531. The solo instruments imitate one another quite closely and are quite even in their 'division of labour'. The piece begins with an energetic Allegro, followed by a beautiful lyrical Largo, and finishes with a gregarious Allegro.

The Concerto in D minor RV 535 was originally written for 2 oboes but works very well for 2 descant recorders. It was also written for the school, and is an indicator of the 'next Age' of music that would soon consume Europe: the galante style and the rococo.

By the end of his life Vivaldi's popularity had declined and he died a pauper, almost forgotten. According to JJ Quantz, "... finally as the result of excessive daily composing, and especially after he had begun to write theatrical vocal pieces, he sank into frivolity and eccentricity both in composition and performance; in consequence his last concertos did not gain as much approbation as his first." Once again, however, Vivaldi has a reputation equal to the international fame he enjoyed during his lifetime.



**Congratulations** to the winner of our subscriber competition: Helen Pokorny has won a set of 7 Salut! Baroque CDs.



## Our Musicians

### Rachael Beesley & Lathika Vithanage

*We are delighted to welcome back Rachael Beesley and Lathika Vithanage as violinists for our Italians Abroad concert.*

#### Rachael Beesley



Rachael is one of Australia's most versatile and dynamic performers. Based in The Netherlands over the last 14 years, she has established an exciting career as concertmaster and soloist with the finest European orchestras specialising in Early Music. Now based in Australia, Rachael has made a resounding impact on the music scene in Australia, performing, educating and directing programs around the country. A Graduate from the Victorian College of the Arts with a Bachelor and Graduate Diploma of Arts in Music and a Master of Music from The Royal Conservatoire, The Hague, the Netherlands, Rachael is much in demand as a chamber musician and soloist,

performing with Ironwood, Salut! Baroque and La Compañía. Rachael appears as guest concertmaster with the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra, director and soloist with the Tasmanian Symphony and Melbourne Chamber Orchestras as well as concertmaster with Opera Australia, Victorian and Pinchgut Opera and has recorded over 50 CD recordings for Harmonia Mundi, BIS, Sony and ABC Classics. As a professor at the Royal Conservatoire in The Hague, The Netherlands, Rachael has developed unique courses on Historical Performance Practice and Practising In Flow. A devoted educator, Rachael teaches and guest lectures at the Conservatoriums of Music in Melbourne and Sydney and the Australian National Academy of Music.

