

## epa-festival

Elias Parish Alvars Festival

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**We would like to introduce the performing members of the Elias Parish Alvars Festival 2010. These musicians will be arriving in Teignmouth from around the world to celebrate Teignmouth's own Elias Parish Alvars and the year of the great virtuoso composers. Together these musicians will bring musical fire to Teignmouth that surely even Parish Alvars will want to join.**

### Jana Bouskova, harp



Jana Bouskova has to her credit some truly remarkable artistic triumphs, a record which has turned her to a much sought-after harpist and a regular guest of the world's foremost concert platforms, appearing both as a soloist and as the partner of the likes of Mstislav Rostropovich, Yuri Bashmet, Patrick Gallois, Maxim Vengerov, Janne Thomsen, Sharon Kam, Christian Tetzlaff, Gustav Rivinius, and others.

Jana Bouskova studied at the Prague Conservatoire and then pursued her schooling at the Ostrava University, in the class of Professor Libuse Vachalova. A Fulbright scholarship grant then enabled her to study at America's renowned Indiana University, with Professor Susann McDonald. Jana Bouskova is this country's sole harpist to have achieved the highest awards from the world's most prestigious competitions: gold medal from the International Harp Competition in the U.S.A., and second prize from the International Harp Contest in Israel. Her numerous other awards include victory in the Concours International de Musique de Chambre in Paris, which she won in 1989, in a duet with flautist Janne Thomsen. She is also the winner of first prize from the 1999 edition of the Torneo Internazionale di Musica in Italy. Her exceptional concert platform achievement and contribution to the development of harp playing earned her the 1999 Harpa Award in Switzerland, apart from which she became a laureate of the Juventus Festival in France. In this country, she received the 1996 Talent of the Year award, and in 2002, the Czech Music Council Award for her merits in spreading Czech music and representing Czech interpreting art on the international scene. As one of the Czech Republic's ten most distinguished women, she was the first ever classical music instrumental interpreter to receive the Lady Pro prize, which was handed over to her in the presence of the President of the Republic, Vaclav Klaus, in the Spanish Hall of Prague Castle, in the autumn of 2004.

Miss Bouskova appears regularly on prestigious domestic and international concert platforms and festivals. Doubtless her most notable achievements have included solo recitals at Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (New York), Paris' Châtelet, the Prague Spring Festival and the Berliner Festtage, as well as her appearance in the gala concert marking the 50th birthday of Yuri Bashmet in Moscow; plus a major tour of Israel and Europe jointly with the violinist Maxim Vengerov; work in the field of chamber music with many outstanding artists at the Spannungen Festival in Germany, Parry Sound in Ontario, Festival des Lautéats Juventus Cambrai and Elba Isola Musicale d'Europa; joint performance with flautists Emmanuel Pahude and Mathieu Defour, and harpist Marie-Pierre Langlamet at the Théâtre de la Ville; and major German tours with the flautist Patrick Gallois. As an orchestra soloist (with, among others, the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra, Prague Philharmonia, Chicago Sinfonietta, Amsterdam Sinfonietta, Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, MDR Symphonieorchester Leipzig, or Tokyo Chamber Orchestra), she has appeared in the concert halls of the Berlin and Cologne Philharmonic Orchestras, Tokyo's Suntory Hall, Leipzig's Gewandhaus, Chicago's Symphony Center, Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, Prague's Rudolfinum, and many others.

Jana Bouskova receives regular invitations to take part in international harp congresses and symposia, and to teach at numerous master classes in various parts of the world. In 2004 she sat on the jury of the International Harp Competition in the U.S.A., Lily Laskine Harp Competition in France, and International Harp Contest in Israel in 2006. In 1999 she was artistic director of the Seventh World Harp Congress in Prague. Since 2000 she has been a member of the Artistic Board of the Prague Academy of Music. In 2002 she received an invitation to take up a two-month lecturing assignment at Indiana University in the United States, and since 2005 she has held the post of principal harpist with the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra. Since 1993 she has been a professor of the Prague Conservatoire, in October 2005 she was appointed as the harp professor at the Brussels Royal Conservatory and in October 2006 also as the professor at the Academy of Music in Prague.

Jana Bouskova has to her credit over twenty CDs made for Czech and international labels, apart from which she has made programmes for various radio and television companies. Her extensive repertoire encompasses works of all styles and periods; a number of contemporary composers have dedicated their new works to her. Her list of world premieres includes among other titles the *Sonata for Cello and Harp* from Ravi Shankar, which she performed at the Rencontres Musicales d'Evian, in France, jointly with Mstislav Rostropovich; *Concerto for Flute, Violin, Viola, Harp and Orchestra* from Benjamin Yusupov, with the violinist Maxim Vengerov and others; and *Concerto for two Harps* from Jan F. Fischer, with Isabelle Moretti, first performed at the Seventh World Harp Festival in Prague, 1999.

Miss Bouskova performs on a harp built by the American firm, Lyon & Healy, which she acquired for her victory in the U.S.A. International Harp Competition in 1992.

## Florence Sitruk, harp



"One of the finest artists in her field", according to late pianist György Sebök, Franco-German Florence Sitruk has done pioneering work to the harp as a soloist, a teacher and festival director.

Born in 1974, she studied at the Paris Conservatory, and gained the Artist Diploma from Indiana University/USA with Susann McDonald and legendary pianist György Sebök whom she calls both decisive for her musical development. In addition, she holds degrees in musicology and philosophy from Freiburg University, and studied historical performance practice with Robert Hill, harpsichordist. Since her debut at the age of 15 with the Camerata Academica Salzburg under Sandor Végh, she concertizes regularly as a soloist with orchestras such as the Lucerne Festival Strings, the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra, the Dresden Philharmonic, the Freiburg Baroque Soloists, the Lithuanian Philharmonic and Lithuanian Chamber Orchestra, the Neusser Kammerakademie, the Festival Orquestra da Paz/Brazil, the Stuttgart Radio Orchestra or the Deutsche Symphonie-Orchester Berlin with which she gave her live broadcasted debut at the Berlin Philharmonic Hall, and has since been returning every year. Solo recitals have taken her to the Metropolitan Museum of Art New York, the Alte Oper Frankfurt, the Rudolfinum Prague, Opéra Bastille Paris, the Tower 101 Taipei or the Teatro da Paz/Belem, the Musikhalle Hamburg, to name a few; as well as in the season 2009/10 to the Glinka Hall/St. Petersburg, to Hongkong, Shanghai, the Muséiques Festival Basel/CH on invitation of Gidon Kremer, to Hobart/Tasmania, to the Niedersächsische Musiktage, with partners such as Albrecht Mayer, oboe, Daniel Hope, violin or Hartmut Rohde, viola, and as a soloist to the Gewandhaus Leipzig, to mark the musical friendship between Mendelssohn Bartholdy and harpist Elias Parish Alvars.

Florence Sitruk won more than seven national and international top prizes (Paris, Brussels, Indiana University), among which the 1<sup>st</sup> prize in the Rome International Competition Valentino Bucchi for Music of the 20th century put her immediately on the international platform. She went then on to win the selection of the "Debut at the DeutschlandRadio" at the Berlin Philharmonic as first German harpist ever. She was also the first harpist to be nominated for the Eurovision Contest of Classical Music in Brussels by the European Broadcasting Union. It is especially the music of the 20th and 21st century which is strongly supported in her repertoire and to which she is a dedicated and intelligent advocate through exquisite programming.

At the same time she is at the head of the revival of virtuoso Elias Parish Alvars (1808-1849) and consequently founded the EPA-festival in Teignmouth. She is also a festival director of the long-established St. Christopher Festival in Vilnius/Lithuania.

Florence Sitruk is professor of harp at the Haute Ecole de Musique of Geneva, and since her appointment in 2005 the youngest professor in her field. It is a position she also holds at the Lithuanian Music Academy Vilnius/Lithuania since the age of 26, where she has established in pioneering work a successful harp department. Her talent class set up one third of the international young top players at the Xth World Harp Congress 2008 in Amsterdam.

## Olga Polonsky, violin



Violinist Olga Polonsky performs extensively as soloist, duo recitalist, chamber musician and orchestra leader. She has appeared as soloist with the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Columbus (OH) Symphony Orchestra, Indian Hill Symphony (MA), Boston Philharmonic, Indiana University and Chamber Orchestras, Interlochen Arts Camp and Academy Orchestras, and the Boston Chamber Orchestra. Chamber music performances have taken her to Marlboro, Kuhmo, Sarasota, Prussia Cove, and Kronberg Academy festivals where she played alongside such distinguished musicians as David Soyer, Gidon Kremer, Lang Lang, Mitsuko Uchida, Yuri Bashmet, and Kim Kashkashian, among others.

She has appeared in Carnegie Hall and Bargemusic in N.Y., and in Boston's Jordan Hall. In December 2005, Ms. Polonsky was appointed to the position of associate concertmaster in the Deutsches Symphonie Orchester Berlin. This season she was one of the soloists with her orchestra in Vivaldi's and Piazzolla's "Four Seasons". In addition, she tours regularly throughout Europe and Asia with the Verbier Festival Orchestra under the direction of James Levine and other eminent conductors. She is a member of the Verbier Chamber Orchestra, a group which in collaboration with Maxim Vengerov released a critically acclaimed disc of Mozart's violin works for EMI. Notable past orchestral credits include serving as guest principal second violin of the London Philharmonic Orchestra, and as part-time member of the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

Born in Moscow into a family of musicians, Olga Polonsky pursued her violin studies at the Central Music School of Music affiliated with the Moscow Conservatory. At ten, she performed the Mendelssohn Violin Concerto with the Ukrainian Symphony Orchestra. After emigrating to the United States, she continued her studies with David and Linda Cerone at the Cleveland Institute of Music. She completed her Bachelor of Music Degree at Indiana University, where she studied with the renowned Russian violinist Nelli Shkolnikova, and received her Master's Degree from the Longy School of Music, where she studied with Joseph Silverstein.

## Jaap Kruithof, cello

Jaap Kruithof is professor of cello and chamber music at the Lemmensinstituut in Leuven, Belgium, and guest professor of cello and cello literature studies at the Royal Flemish Conservatory in Antwerp. Kruithof furthermore teaches at the Academy of Borgerhout (Antwerp) and the Academy of Oud-Heverlee (Leuven).



For many years Kruithof was a senior member of the faculty at the Cours International de Musique in Morges, Switzerland, working together with reknown musicians as Kati Sebestyén and Ervin Schiffer. In 2006 he established an international music course together with Sebestyén and Schiffer in Davos, Switzerland.

As performer Jaap Kruithof has been member of such reknown groups as The New Belgisch Kamerorkest, the Beethovenacademie, the Champ d'Action (ensemble for new music) and the "Viotti-strijktrio" together with violinist Thierry Marinelli and violist Ervin Schiffer. He currently performs in a piano trio together with pianist Anne Op de Beeck and violinist Nico Baltussen.

## Emma Graham, harp



Emma Graham is an accomplished professional musician who has been delighting audiences with her exciting, skilled playing and relaxed performing style for over fifteen years.

Emma's enthusiasm for her instrument is as obvious as it is infectious. Her relaxed and informal style, as well as her extensive repertoire make her a popular performer with audiences of all shapes and sizes. She lives in the tiny Devon village of Kenn, with three harps and a cocker spaniel, (himself a virtuoso performer on squeaky ball).

Emma began playing the harp at the relatively old age of 18 and immediately decided to spend the rest of her life with it! She studied at Exeter university and, after graduating, won a scholarship to study at Trinity College of Music in London with Sioned Williams and Imogen Barford on a specialist harp performers course. At Trinity, she won the United Kingdom Harp Association award and received sponsorship from the Arthur Anderson Trust to study for a further year.

Having decided that two years is long enough for a country girl to spend in London, Emma returned to Devon where she works as a freelance performer and teacher. She plays all over the country and beyond, in venues ranging from private back gardens to stately homes and grand concert halls to cruise liners! She is in demand both as a recital soloist and as a background performer at weddings and corporate functions as well as being a sought after orchestral player

Emma is a particularly enthusiastic teacher with pupils whose ages range from 8 to 80! Past pupils have gone on to study at Cheatams School of music, The Royal Northern College of Music, Trinity College of Music and The Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts.

Emma is keen to share her love of the harp with those who want to play or those who are just happy listening to its.

## Christoph Bunzendahl, cello

Christoph Bunzendahl began his studies at age six with Gerhard Pohl, cellist of the Nord Deutscher Rundfunk, Hannover. Between 1986 and 1990 he participated in the competition Jugend Musiziert, winning on regional and state levels. In 1990 he was accepted as student of Konrad Haessler, Professor at the Musikhochschule Hannover. In 1991 his family moved to Chapel Hill (North Carolina, USA), where he became a student of Brent Wissick at the University of North Carolina. In 1993 he received the first prize at the North Carolina Music Teacher Association Solo Competition. A year later he was invited to join the National Honors Orchestra of America.



In 1995 Christoph received a Faculty Scholarship to Indiana University in Bloomington where he joined the class of Helga Winold. In 1996 he was invited to the Aspen Music Festival becoming a student of Yehudi Hanani. He received his Bachelor of Music from Indiana University in 1999. After studying one year with Professor Klaus Heitz at the Musikhochschule Hannover, Germany, Christoph became a student of Jaap Kruithof at the Royal Flemish Conservatory in Antwerp, Belgium where he received his Master of Music in 2004.

He has performed in masterclasses for Stephan Kates, Daniel Groscurin, Janos Starker, Anner Bijlsma and Zara Nelsova. His orchestral experience includes playing with Berliner Symphoniker and has taken him as far as China and Korea. Christoph performs chamber music extensively in ensembles with harpist Florence Sitruk and pianist Kiyotaka Izumi. In 2008 he became one of the founding members and artistic advisor of the Elias Parish Alvars International Harp Festival.