



BUSKAID NEWS

HELPING YOUNG
BLACK MUSICIANS
IN SOUTH AFRICAN
TOWNSHIPS

2004

CONTENTS

Local news
Trip to Cape Town
South African Trust
Buskaid UK
Buskaid USA
What's happening in 2005
Stop Press!
Sponsors

A LETTER TO OUR SUPPORTERS

Dear Buskaid Supporters

Seasons Greetings!

Welcome to our final newsletter for 2004, with an update on recent activities and some news about Buskaid UK and Buskaid USA.

LOCAL NEWS

Here in South Africa we've all been kept very busy throughout August, September and October. Apart from our regular teaching activities, we presented a number of public concerts in Soweto, Johannesburg and Stellenbosch (near Cape Town). On September 4th, by popular request, we performed Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis* at Northwards House once again, with most of the same players as last year, including both Samson and Gilbert. We greatly appreciate the donation of this beautiful and very appropriate space by the Northwards Trust, and also the presence of SAFM who recorded the concert. This was followed a day later by a major public performance for Classic FM (SA) at a very different venue – the Maroela Ballroom at the Sandton Sun Intercontinental Hotel - where we played most of the repertoire we had performed a couple of months earlier in Europe. Particularly popular were Timothy Kraemer's exuberant pop arrangements we recorded in Suffolk in July. Both Classic FM and SAFM plan to broadcast material from these concerts in the coming months.

On the same weekend we experienced another highlight of 2004, a spellbinding visit to the Music School by Hugh Masekela, South Africa's legendary jazz trumpeter. Many years ago, when the British Trust was founded, Hugh became an honorary Board Member, and on more than one occasion commented that I never

asked him to do anything for Buskaid. Twelve years later I was able to remind him of this conversation and call in the favour! On his arrival at the School he was greeted by some rousing kwela, and, much to everyone's delight, spontaneously joined in with a virtuoso improvisation. He then gave a very inspiring talk to all 70 students about his life as a musician, with particular emphasis on the destructive effects of both drug and alcohol abuse. In a moving moment at the end of his talk, one of our students very bravely stood up and publicly acknowledged his own drug problem to the rest of the group. Since then, this student has Hugh Masekela's visit s visit "confronted the demon" on a daily basis and is showing positive signs of rehabilitation – a testament to Hugh Masekela's charismatic influence. Many of our students have identified this visit as one of the high points of 2004.

A few days later the Buskaid String Quartet and I were preparing to leave for the UK to complete the recordings for our pops CD. (Samson and Gilbert were in any case about to return to the Royal Northern College of Music). Unexpectedly, on the day we were leaving, Samson was suddenly taken ill and admitted to hospital. Typical of Samson however, he was determined not to miss the recording and very bravely undertook the journey to the UK the next day (and many thanks to Virgin for agreeing to change his flight!). The enjoyment of these demanding recording sessions, at Potton Hall once again with producer Nick Parker, was greatly enhanced by the presence of Bill Thorp, whose witty and creative arrangements comprised the quartet repertoire.

Samson and Gilbert then travelled to Manchester in time for the new academic year at the Royal Northern College of Music, where Samson is in his third and Gilbert, his second year. We are extremely grateful to those sponsors (listed below) who have made it possible for Buskaid to fund these two students' studies. Needless to say we were very sorry to say goodbye to them once again, particularly as they had been so involve vacation. Samson gave advanced theory classes and taught some of the senior students, whilst Gilbert introduced Dalcroze Eurhythmics to the beginners, which proved to be enormously popular.

TRIP TO CAPE TOWN

At the end of September we took a slightly reduced Ensemble to Cape Town for a community workshop and public concert, as part of the Stellenbosch Festival. The workshop in Kayamandi township was a vibrant - if slightly chaotic - morning of intense interactivity with young string players from various projects around the Cape Peninsula, with an audience of curious and

enthusiastic locals. As with all such workshops, part of the activity was spontaneous and included some extraordinary drumming in our Kwela performances by two very young Cape violinists. Their frenzied energy reminded us that perhaps even our Senior Ensemble members are beginning to feel their age!

Our concert in the Endler Hall, with its enviable acoustics (a larger version of which we desperately need in Johannesburg) was a great success. After we returned to Johannesburg, the Festival organiser Nana Wagner wrote

Our leading organ lecturer said that the Buskaid concert was the best of the entire festival. He also said that he had seldom heard such excellent intonation, musicality and interpretation of the works performed. For all of us it was a great inspiration and our music kids are very inspired! Thank you once more for such wonderful music making. The dedication of the Buskaid team is absolutely miraculous! We are dreaming of the next visit! You are all absolutely wonderful.

Greetings

Nana

In October, after a couple more performances, our youngsters returned to school to face the most challenging academic term of the year. Our last musical get-together took place on 10 October when we welcomed Darragh and Mary Morgan who presented an entertaining Irish workshop to the Ensemble. A couple of weeks later Sonja took her annual leave and retired to the Bush whilst I travelled to the UK to participate in some inspiring Purcell performances with Sir John Eliot Gardiner. In our absence Buskaid viola player Lesego Mokonoto, who is currently working for us as a trainee administrator, took full and capable charge of the office.

An update on the progress of our two decorators, Punch and Bafana: they have now completed the interior of the Music School and it looks superb! They have also painted the exterior of our new house in Soweto. They are available over the Christmas holidays and are highly recommended!

SOUTH AFRICAN TRUST

This year our chairman of some five years standing, Uwe Putlitz, the architect who designed our Music School, retired after having overseen many major developments in the Buskaid Trust and organisation. We are truly indebted to Uwe for all the time he has devoted to Buskaid since 1999 and happy that he has agreed to continue as a trustee.

I would also like to add a special word of thanks to Jill Richards and Stuart Stanton who join me once a month at 7.30am for those vital EXCO meetings which keep our financial machinery well-oiled. Father Kingston Erson continues to visit the School regularly, helping students and their families when called upon. All our thanks too to our Trustees, Valy Tlhoale, Lulu Makongoza, Sarah Buthelezi and John Reid Coulter for their continuing loyal support. Finally we should like to thank our lawyer Roger van Niekerk for his invaluable input throughout 2004.

BUSKAID UK

Many of you may not know that the original Buskaid Trust was founded in the UK in 1992 to support fundraising activities there. Since then we have benefited from the input of a number of very supportive UK Trustees. Recently the board was enlarged to include Andrey Kidel and Sara Kidel. Our longstanding chairman Sir John Curtiss retired earlier this year after many years of devoted service to the charity; we were very fortunate that Andrey Kidel agreed to become chair in his place. Our UK Trustees have been very proactive over the past 18 months or so and have presented three major fundraising concerts in the UK. Two of these, organised by Kati Debretzeni and UK Trustee Hetty Wayne, took place in 2003 and involved many of the original "buskers", highly distinguished period instrument musicians who gave inspirational concerts in London and Lewes in support of advanced students (such as Samson and Gilbert) undertaking tertiary study abroad.

In 2004 Sara Kidel organised a further very successful concert in London, at which the distinguished international cellist Raphael Wallfisch performed all the Bach Suites. This concert was introduced by our great supporter Janet Suzman and attended by the South Africa High Commissioner Lindiwe Mabuza. Through Raphael's generosity, the entire shortfall required to fund Gilbert's first year of study was raised. The tradition of UK professional musicians offering their talents to support our young African musicians continues, and is greatly appreciated.

A totally contrasting fundraiser - also for the Scholarship Fund - was the brainchild of three Gillian Anderson fans, Danielle, Louise and Victoria, who compiled a 2004 Calendar of favourite photographs of Gillian, and raised £4000. Gillian's supporters not only raise money but, whenever they can, attend Buskaid concerts and are our favourite "groupies"!

Recently, Sir John Eliot Gardiner, whose musical contributions to Buskaid since its inception in 1997 continue to inspire and inform us all, has, most appropriately, agreed to become the patron of the UK Trust. We are honoured that he has accepted this office.

Finally, two major donations, from the Linbury Trust and the Wingate Trust, were successfully motivated by the UK Trustees in 2003/4. These donations constitute a substantial contribution towards our teaching salaries, and as such are of invaluable help.

From our loyal support network in the UK we receive many generous donations which make a meaningful difference. We are also extremely fortunate to receive "donations in kind", mainly in the form of instruments and music, which our tireless honorary treasurer Tony Graham arranges to have packed and shipped out by Graham's Hi Fi. As a result we have an exceptional library of excellent string repertoire and, increasingly, instruments of a very high calibre. In particular we'd like to acknowledge a magnificent donation from the father of a musician friend of mine, an amateur collector who supported us by giving us ten very fine violins from his collection. We have received a number of other quality instruments this year and we are indebted to the donors. Not only are these instruments a source of great inspiration to our students, but they also significantly enrich the sound produced by the Ensemble.

BUSKAID USA

An exciting development in 2004 has been the founding of another partner organisation, Buskaid USA. This has come about only through the dedication of two very committed supporters, Brenda Shick and James Halliday, recently joined by Greville Ward who became aware of Buskaid through *60 Minutes II*. Brenda, James and Greville have already invested a great deal of time setting up the Trust and formalising its regulations. They now await confirmation of 501C3 status which will greatly facilitate US dollar donations.

These Trustees are already planning exciting fundraisers in the USA for Buskaid, news of which will follow. In October we receive a visit sponsored by Buskaid USA from photographer James Sparshatt who is preparing a portfolio of photographs in and around the Music School which will eventually be available for purchase to all our supporters, with proceeds reverting to Buskaid. We are also delighted to announce that

Gillian Anderson has agreed to become Honorary Board Member of Buskaid USA Inc.

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WHAT'S HAPPENING IN 2005

We have already received a number of tentative enquiries – all very exciting – to tour abroad in 2005. However I wholeheartedly support the request from some of our senior students to remain in South Africa next year, as they are sitting their matric examinations. We also intend to present a large number of candidates for practical and theory exams of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music. Since joining Buskaid, some of our youngsters have already spent the majority of their school holidays touring abroad (ten tours since 1999!) so a year “at home” will be very welcome. We shall of course be presenting a number of public performances of entirely new programmes both in Johannesburg and Soweto.

CHRISTMAS SHOPPING!

We'd like to remind you that CDs can now be purchased online (www.buskaid.org.za). *Tshwaranang*, our unique collection of the students' own township kwela, with its infectious rhythms, vibrant sounds and upmarket packaging makes a perfect Christmas present or stocking filler. Many thanks to my friend and colleague Roy Mowatt who facilitates the distribution of mail-order CDs.

Please keep an eye on the website for details of our next release *Buskaid Live!* which we hope will soon be available.

And finally our warm thanks to all of you for your contributions towards our ongoing successful development. The staff and students of Buskaid greatly appreciate your loyal interest and support, and wish you Compliments of the Season and all the very best for 2005.

Rosemary, Sonja and the Buskaid students

STOP PRESS

The latest (December) South African edition of ClassicFeel Magazine features Buskaid as seen through the camera lens of the legendary photographer Jurgen Schadeberg. We were very honoured to have been the subject of some wonderful photographs which Jurgen Schadeberg took over a period of time earlier this year. There is an entire portfolio of these photographs, of which signed copies are available for purchase. For more information please visit www.classicfeel.co.za or contact the editor Lore Watterson editor@classicfeel.co.za.

Sponsors supporting Gilbert and Samson through the Scholarship Fund

The Ernest Oppenheimer Memorial Trust Fund
Jonathan and Teresa Sumption
Gillian Anderson and her many supporters
Raphael Wallfisch
Jonathan Beare
The Charles Schwartz Foundation

Sponsors for 2004, to whom we are greatly indebted, are

National Lottery Distribution Trust Fund
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