

Francis took part in a radio broadcast concert during this year's Edinburgh Festival [1996]. One of the other artists was a skillful parodist: dressed in drag, he was an impersonator of female singers. Francis was enjoying his performance along with the rest of the audience, when he started singing an impersonation of Billie Holiday singing "My Man". Francis was nearly sick to hear such human sadness parodied and made a mockery of: all the worse for being so well done - the comedian being an excellent mimic.

Francis spoke of this afterwards: "If that isn't blasphemy, then this word can have no true meaning."

Francis' musical life began at an early age and at a high level: between the ages of 9 and 13, he was a chorister of St. George's Chapel, Windsor, and sang for the funerals of King George 6, and Queen Mary; and the Coronation of the Monarch who is in fact Queen Elizabeth 1 of the United Kingdom [the previous Elizabeth was Queen of England alone].

He was accepted as 'cellist with the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain when he was 15, and stayed till he was 18 - overlapping the start of his career in jazz.

This started through an invitation to work in London, where he quickly established a reputation in the London jazz scene as a phenomenal talent and fine musician - the fastest bass player in town! His virtuosic style on the bass was later to blossom into his wonderfully intricate, swinging guitar playing. Jazz was, and remained central to his life: the main thread running through his musical development and career. Already in these early years, he was privileged to play with great musicians such as Ronnie Scott, Pete King, Al Cohn, as well as Richard Rodney Bennett and Julian Bream, who encouraged Francis to make music his profession.

In 1966, an engagement took Francis and fellow musician Dave Castle to Stockholm, where Francis met Christina Juwel, and the following year they married each other. [Shortly after, Dave married Christina's friend Lena]. From their base in Stockholm, they travelled extensively for professional reasons, including for a 6 month engagement in Mexico City. Francis was greatly inspired from working with many great Brazilian musicians during this time. It was here also that Christina started the flute. She herself is such a greatly talented musician that on their return to Stockholm, only months later, she was ready to join Francis in forming what was to become a highly popular group with four other musicians. Thereafter, they remained in Stockholm with their group, touring all over Sweden both in solo performances, and backing many Swedish artists on tour and in the recording studio. Francis at this time was also engaged in writing for TV, film, and recordings.

About 20 years ago Francis and Christina returned to Scotland, where they continued working together and formed a group with Francis' sister, Lucy. They worked together from then on, as a flute, violin and 'cello trio but also often with other musicians to form a quartet or larger ensembles. One of their fellow musicians was violinist / viola player Janie Beeston: victim of the same fatal accident. [Christina and Lucy are determined to keep the ensemble going: with Michael as often as he can [he plays viola in the Edinburgh String Quartet]; or with Amy, their daughter, also a violinist / viola player; and Donald MacDonald on the 'cello: a rather special person who has had a close association with our family for many years, and who is himself extremely knowledgeable about music].

Francis became a well known, highly esteemed guitarist in Edinburgh and Glasgow Jazz circles, playing amplified guitar only when necessary: preferring the natural acoustic sound of the guitar. He was also a valued lute player in Edinburgh Early Music circles; playing solo and in ensembles: particularly recently with Ludus Instrumentalis. He was a fine cellist and chamber musician - with his appreciation of harmony, and, according to the musical "affect", the rhythmic drive or buoyancy that is the all important function of a well played bass line. [He used to lament of 'cellists not understanding this art of bass playing: having only been taught to play melodic, top-line playing]. Francis, as well as Jane and Lucy, also coached for a number of years at Pro Corda; and though teaching wasn't for him a major feature of his working life, he was a superb teacher of both guitar and 'cello, [and gave his sister Lucy, and no doubt others, heaps of valuable advice].

He was a man of great self discipline: his severest critic being himself. He was tireless in his dedication to producing music arrangements of quality, whatever the music and for whatever occasion. Always spurning the easy option, he would spend hours and hours if necessary - often through the night, rather than produce less than his best.

Francis had many future projects, including a recording of his jazz guitar repertoire scheduled for November. It is sad indeed that this can never be now; but while we sorrow over this, and other unfulfilled plans, let us rejoice in his many great and worthwhile achievements; and let us be thankful to him for touching so many lives in his own, unique way - and for resisting the temptation to lie down and sleep in the snow on that arduous trek in Greenland, so many years ago.



ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH, CAMPDEN HILL SQUARE, LONDON
TUESDAY OCTOBER 8 1996

IN CELEBRATION OF THE LIFE OF JANE COWAN
and of FRANCIS COWAN WHO DIED ON SEPTEMBER 20



- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Sarabande from the Suite in C for Cello
Odessa Reel (1972)
Steven Isserlis | <u>BACH</u>
<u>FRANCIS COWAN</u> |
| 2. Gavottes from the Suite for Two Cellos
Steven Isserlis : Steve Doane | <u>DAVID POPPER</u> |
| 3. 'Les Rois Mages' | <u>CASALS</u> |
| 4. Chorale Prelude : 'By The Waters of Babylon' | <u>J. S. BACH</u> |
| 5. 'Libera Me' (from the Requiem) | <u>FAURÉ</u> |
| 6. 'Gott in der Natur' | <u>SCHUBERT</u> |

Numbers 4, 5 & 6 arranged for Strings by Jane Cowan



Violins

Catherine Macintosh
Anne Morgan
Hilary Jane Parker
Rachel Isserlis
Christoffer de Graal
George Isserlis
Sally Campbell
M.E. Batstone
Pamela Spofforth
Adrian Butterfield
Margaret Lockhart Smith
Clare Ashby

Violas

Lucy Cowan
Harriet Longman
Richard Gwilt
Annette Isserlis
Flute
Christina Cowan

Cellos

Steven Isserlis
Steve Doane
David Waterman
Michael Martin
Clare Farthing
Richard Campbell
Charles Medlam
Donald MacDonald
Penelope Lynex
Shuna Watkinson
Dorothy Milner
Andrea Watson
Andrew Hoy
Victoria Seale
~~Anne Budgett~~
Graham Smallbone
Walter Otten
Elizabeth Wells
Fiona Smith
Julie Simmonds
~~Pippa Norrington~~
Emma Fenwick

A warm welcome to all on this list (and any who are not on it but ought to be)

Chris. Arthur Roberts, for one.

Justin Anderson
Mrs. Susan Andrews
Mrs. Judith Barnett
Mrs. M.E. Batstone

Charles Beare
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Beresford

Mr. & Mrs. Brodhurst (Housemaster of '1' House in our time)
Anne Budgett (Succeeded Manning as Cello teacher of Vppington)
Alison Bury

Mrs. Cara Byfield

Matthew Byfield

Mrs. Jennet Campbell

Richard Campbell

Sally Campbell

Emma Campbell

Archie Campbell Murdoch

Mr. & Mrs. Tim Coates

Oily Coates

Christopher Cowan

Lucy Cowan

Christina Cowan

Mrs. Polly Crossley-White

Mr. & Mrs. Steve Doane

Jenny Doctor

Cindy Doyle-Macrae (Andy's 1/2 sister)

Alice Dyson

Mrs. Anne Edgar

Mr. & Mrs. Farrell

Mr. & Mrs. Farthing (Clare Secretary)

Mrs. Margaret Fox

The Rev. Jeremy Francis (I don't think he was there)

Michael Freudenberg

Mr. & Mrs. John Gammell *

Mrs. Jean Gough

Jane Gough

Christoffer de Graal (Samuel)

Richard Gwilt (George's mother's eldest)

Simon Harcourt Williams

Mr. & Mrs. Peter Hoy

Dr. & Mrs. Andrew Hoy (Dr. Quivira: I hadn't seen him for 25 years! He has a beard now!)

Kathy Henderson

Tessa Henderson

Mrs. Pamela Hind-O'Malley

Mr. & Mrs. George Isserlis

Annette Isserlis

Rachel Isserlis

Steven Isserlis

Jean Jones

Trevor Jones

Mr. & Mrs. Robert Knox

Alexandra Knox

Catherine Knox

Antonia Knox

Mrs. Patricia Lane

Mrs. Margaret Lockhart Smith

Mr. & Mrs. Peter Lockhart Smith (Helen's)

James Lockhart Smith (Helen's)

Harriet Longman

Penelope Lynex

Michael Martin

Mr. & Mrs. Donald MacDonald

Catherine Mackintosh

Dorothy Milner

Anne Morgan

Lady Betty Moyne

Pippa Norrington

Mrs. Barbara Oldfield (Boo)

Christopher Oldfield

Katy Oldfield

Mr. & Mrs. Walter Otten

Mr. & Mrs. Oxnard & Boys (was Sarah Gosling)

Mr. & Mrs. James Peschek

Hilary & Ian Pressland

Mrs. Elizabeth Rivers (née Rothwell)

Joyce Scott

Victoria Seale

John Sergeant

Peter Senior

Mrs. Julie Simmonds (née Sergeant)

Mr. & Mrs. Smallbone

Mr. & Mrs. Julian Smith

Mrs. Jean Strutt

Michael Taylor (Jan's new boyfriend, and husband of 'A' Riville)

Mrs. John Thorn (Vernice)

Mrs. Valentine Thornhill

Mrs. Anita Wallfisch

Mr. & Mrs. Wardale

Dr. David Waterman

Mrs. Shuna Watkinson

Mrs. Elizabeth Wells

Mrs. Liz Wiggins

Mr. & Mrs. Andrew White (Tessa Tealeaves)

Mr. & Mrs. Henry Zarb

Emily Zarb

Irina Zarb

* Was Housemaster of '1' House (Hoyman) at Winchester, and then succeeded John Thorn as Headmaster of Repton when John came to Winchester.