
MENDELSSOHN- NEWSLETTER

OF THE FOUNDATION AND ASSOCIATION



FELIX-MENDELSSOHN-BARTHOLDY-STIFTUNG
PRÄSIDENT KURT MASUR

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INTERNATIONALE MENDELSSOHN-STIFTUNG

2012 – A Year Full of Plans and Success



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Dear members, supporters and friends,

on 29 September the annual festive concert and Mendelssohn-Award-ceremony took place in Leipzig again – an outstanding artistic and social highlight in Leipzig 2012. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all our supporters who made this evening possible. I'd particularly like to thank the audience who, with the purchase of their tickets, sustainably support our work.

Those present witnessed a seemingly minor issue on the agenda – the ceremonial presentation of the certificate of approval of the Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy Foundation's legal capacity and its authentication as a so-called *Stiftung bürgerlichen Rechts* (foundation under civil law). Dr Michael Feist, vice-president of the State Directorate of Saxony, Leipzig office presenting the document to mayor Burkhardt Jung was in fact a basic administrative act – yet what kind of act!

As early as 1991 the at that time all-male board integrated the term *Stiftung* (foundation) in the initiative's name because the establishment of a foundation was the 3rd goal besides 1: the preservation of the house and 2: the set-up of the museum. The idea itself was not exceptionally spectacular; many museums worldwide are run exactly this way. Yet, many people disapproved of this idea, probably due to the desaturated state of the house. Indeed, a huge amount of imagination was necessary at that time to picture a museum that would even be included in the bluebook issued by the German Government 10 years later. The bluebook comprises museums of high national significance and institutions in honour of outstanding personalities. Its aim is to provide orientation in the eastern German cultural landscape and emphasize its relevance in the context of the cultural heritage of Germany and Europe.

Later, in 1997, when the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the house successfully proceeded, the concept of a museum being governed by a foundation was applied to the Leipzig Bach-Archive. The association *Internationale Mendelssohn-Stiftung e.V.* however, had to struggle with most tense economical circumstances. This occurred at a time when Leipzig was meant to become an international centre of business and services. Due to this idea, Leipzig's cultural policy went through trials and tribulations that culminated in Kurt Masur leaving the city.

It was not until 2003 that the tension relieved slightly under mayor Wolfgang Tiefensee. The Leipzig City Council agreed with the formation of the legally dependent Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy Stiftung, a Limited Term Trust, aimed to settle the debts of Euros 1.4 million that occurred with the purchase of the house in 1994.

Thanks to the dedication of numerous people, institutions, and not least the City of Leipzig, this goal was reached in 2009.

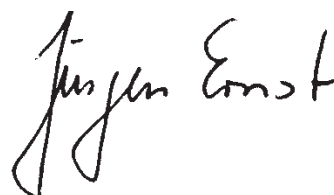
Since then the *Internationale Mendelssohn-Stiftung e.V.* and the City of Leipzig had endeavoured to form a legally independent foundation. These efforts were impeded for instance by the existing administrative structures, which could be altered only after a huge number of decisions and enactments by the city council, and after the necessary modification of the by-laws of the society.

Thus, this actually simple administrative act is indeed a most spectacular success after 21 years. Let me make clear why the set-up of the foundation is that important: A foundation is legally obliged to conserve its assets. Correspondingly, in our case, the founders, i.e. the board and the City of Leipzig, are obliged to preserve the Mendelssohn House for the future and thus make a lasting contribution to society. It is exactly the lasting a mere association cannot guarantee. There are various structural, financial and fiscal advantages, too, of course. It is now secured that this most valuable place will never be in such a horrible condition like before the restoration again and that this historical site, not far from the Gewandhaus, is capable of carrying out the versatile and extensive task of communicating Mendelssohn's heritage. At the same time the Mendelssohn-House thus contributes to the City of Leipzig's image cultivation as music city, whose cultural identity is significantly influenced by Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy.

The establishment of the legally independent Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy Foundation has motivated us tremendously. We are full of energy and excited to take the next challenge: the extension of the museum in 2013.

May all the wonderful events reviewed in this issue inspire you too, dear readers.

This I wish you from the bottom of my heart, as well as a Merry Christmas and all the best for the coming year.



Call for donations for the extension of the museum in the Mendelssohn House

Dear members, supporters and friends of the Mendelssohn House,

We have been discussing the partial modification and the extension of the museum for a while now. To keep up with the demands towards the modern museum and with the visitors' expectations the extension is absolutely necessary: The entrance area on the first floor for instance, is much too narrow.

When we started with our work in the museum, fifteen years ago, the very small cloak room there still could provide enough space for our guests' cloaks during guided tours or concerts. Today, however, especially in the winter, it is almost impossible to place people's coats without the use of additional mobile cloak racks – a very positive development, indeed, but still a situation that requires remedial measures.

Those who have visited us know how narrow the space in that area is and how merely two or three people at once can look about in our little shop, which is in fact meant to be a place to roam undisturbedly. This, however, is rarely possible, especially not for tour groups that have to stick to their tight schedules.

Another problem surfaces in the course of the discussion on our educational tasks. Our work with adults has always been evaluated „above average“. Yet, to be able to appropriately provide activities for children, additional space is urgently necessary. The bright room on the ground floor in the former coach house might suit the respective requirements. It is, currently, used by the music department of the University of Leipzig as a lecture room.

Meanwhile the respective applications for support have been sub-

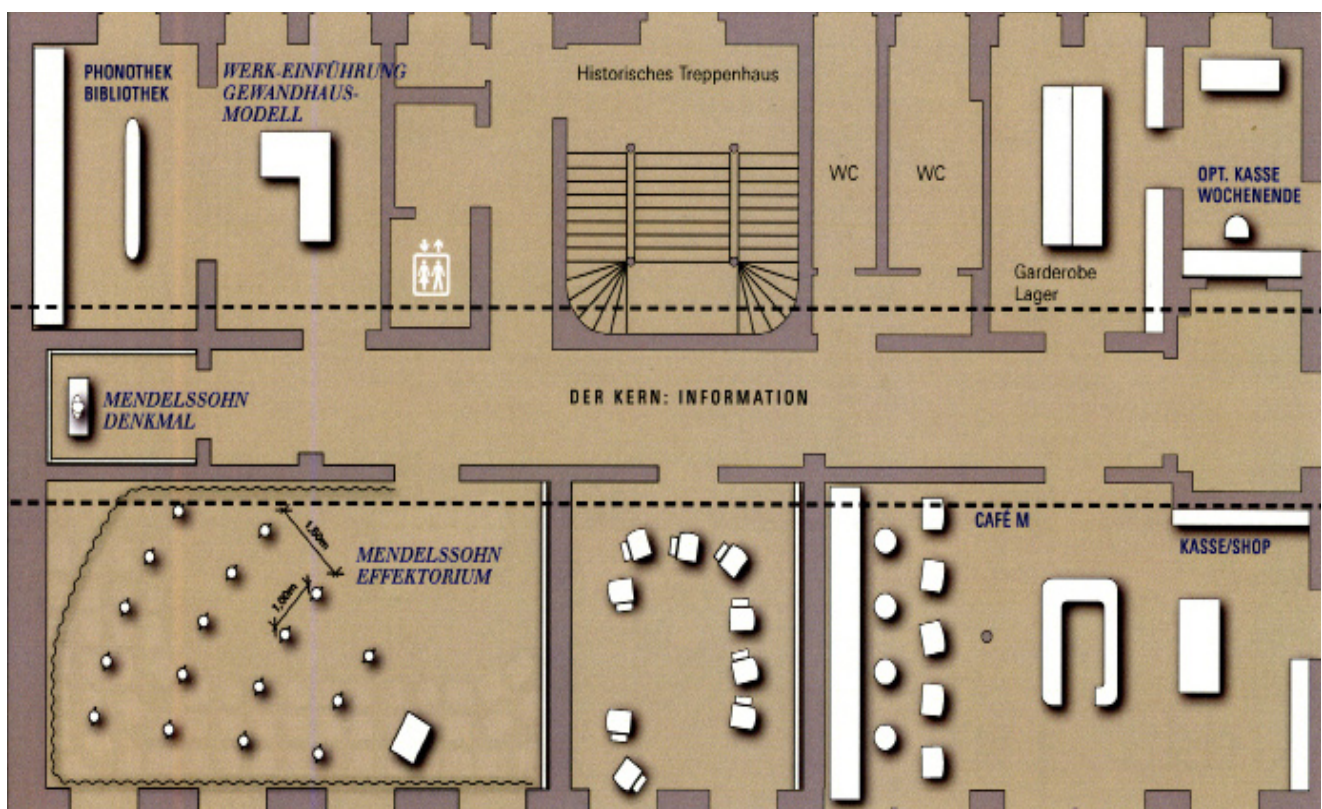
mitted to the Free State of Saxony and to the Federal Government, so the necessary preparations may start soon. In the summer, after the University will have moved out, the actual construction work will begin.

To cover the equity stake of around Euro 250.000 the house strongly depends on benefits. Therefore we kindly ask for your support:

Please help to make the museum even more attractive to younger and older visitors, so both the ambience of the residence may be preserved and the demands towards a modern museum can be met.

Any contribution helps. Thank you very much!

bottom picture: compendium for the expansion of the museum on the ground floor of the Mendelssohn House: a big cloak room, separate cash desks, one for the shop and one ticket box for the weekends, a more widespread range of goods in the shop, and a cafe invite to stay and browse through our product range comfortably.



Leipzig International Mendelssohn Prize for the St Thomas Choir of Leipzig and its Cantor and for Harald Schmidt

This year's award of the Leipzig International Mendelssohn Prize by Lord Mayor Burkhard Jung took place in the distinguished setting of a gala concert in the Gewandhaus. The concert was at the same time dedicated to Maestro Kurt Masur, who this summer celebrated his 85th birthday.

The Gewandhaus-Orchestra, Armin Mueller-Stahl & Ensemble, Sarah Chang (violin) and Lauma Skride (piano), the Gewandhaus-Quartet and members of the Orchestre National de Paris all performed to honour the prize-winners – the St Thomas Choir of Leipzig, its Cantor Georg Christoph Biller, and the actor and entertainer Harald Schmidt.

The world-wide renowned boys Choir received the prize, because it had made a decisive contribution to the 800-year history of the music city of Leipzig and its destiny. Traditionally the Choir is firmly linked with the city. Through its performances in the city, numerous concerts in Germany, and its world-wide tours, the St Thomas Choir has become a highly treasured and internationally respected ambassador for the music city of Leipzig.

The Choir has also given outstanding service to the music of Mendelssohn – through varied and close links between the Choir and the Gewandhaus-Kapellmeister Mendelssohn, and through performances in the St Thomas Church and joint musical activities in the city.

Especially in recent times the Choir and its Cantor Georg Christoph Biller have served the music of Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, with regular worldwide performances. The organisation of the Leipzig

Mendelssohn Festival Days since 2009 follows an initiative by Cantor Biller. The St Thomas Choir of Leipzig and its Cantor Georg Christoph Biller received the Leipzig International Mendelssohn Prize 2012 in the music category. They expressed their thanks through the music of Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy.

Harald Schmidt was honoured with the prize in the social engagement category. Harald Schmidt is closely linked with German culture as a church musician, actor, cabaret artist, writer and moderator. The entertainer achieved recognition throughout Germany through television, reaching out to many people through his humour and also his critical irony. He often created public sensation, drawing attention to public grievances for which solutions should be sought. Harald Schmidt's broadcasts promulgated knowledge and information about German culture and also music. He is often seen on the stage in a musical capacity, whereby he presents the wide-ranging cultural value of classical music to a broad selection of people of different age groups. His CD recordings confirm his intensive relationship with classical music.

Harald Schmidt has frequently brought recognition to Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, Johann Sebastian Bach, the St Thomas Choir and the music city of Leipzig. He did this outstandingly in 2007 for the greatly respected Mendelssohn Gala for Maestro Kurt Masur's 80th birthday, which received wide media coverage, and which he moderated with factual knowledge of and great personal empathy with Mendelssohn's legacy. His appeal on that occasion for funds for the Felix-Mendelssohn-Bartholdy-Foundation contributed greatly to the liquidation of the debts of the Mendelssohn-House Leipzig, and to the expansion of the world-wide work of the Foundation. Since then he has continued to work to support the personality and music of Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy.

We are most grateful for all donations and support.

Prize-winners 2012: v.l.n.r: Harald Schmidt, Maestro Kurt Masur and two boys of St Thomas Choir of Leipzig, Cantor Georg Christoph Biller and Mayor Burkhard Jung





Illustrations:

top left – St Thomas Choir Leipzig singing its musical thanks.

middle left – Mayor Burkhard Jung (l.) and prize-winner Harald Schmidt

bottom left – Sarah Chang and Lauma Skride

right – Armin Mueller-Stahl plays with his ensemble for Maestro Kurt Masur.

Small images:

top – Maestro Kurt Masur and Cantor Georg Christoph Biller

underneath – Happy prize-winners: the boys of St Thomas Choir

underneath – Jürgen Ernst, Director of the Mendelssohn House (l.), and Gewandhausdirektor Prof Andreas Schulz (middle) congratulate Harald Schmidt.

underneath – Gewandhaus-Quartet and members of the Orchestre National de Paris

Successful Mendelssohn Festival Days, 7 – 16 September 2012

The Mendelssohn Festival Days this year took place in many Leipzig musical institutions – the Gewandhaus, the Mendelssohn House, the Schumann House and the Bach-Museum were the main venues which attracted an interested public.

The Mendelssohn House hosted the 2012 prelude. Young prize-winners, including young string-players and pianists from the Mendelssohn Competition in the Hoch-Taunus and Main-Taunus regions, gave a concert. Thanks to the good cooperation with the Mendelssohn Society of Main-Taunus, this could now take place for 3rd time.

In addition, the prize-winners from the European Round of the Young Concert Artists Auditions could be heard in a Sunday concert – sustained applause thanked the young artists for their enormous achievements.

Following the example of a Goethe musical-literary salon, Dr Hans-Günter Klein (reading), Stephan Heinemann (baritone) and Konstanze Hollitzer (piano) inspired a large audience over coffee and cakes with a portrayal of Mendelssohn, the poet and their family links.

A “Reformation Symphony” concert took place with a chamber-music setting, which although unusual today, was quite usual in the 19th century. Hellen Weiß (violin), Tobias Bätz (‘cello), Eva Sperl and Miki Wada (both piano) performed sonatas and the Symphony No.5 (Reformation) BWV N 15 in this arrangement – and received enthusiastic bravos.

A successful Sunday lieder-matinée with Dorothee Rabsch (mezzo-soprano) and Angela Mayer (piano), as well as a festive concert with a special flavour, rounded off the programme in the Mendelssohn House.

In recognition of the Chinese cultural year in Germany, Lu Jianguo (Chinese fiddle, “gourd”-flute and xun) as well as Friederike Frey (piano) gave an impressive performance of traditional Chinese compositions, and adaptations of European music – which astounded the guests in the Summer House of the Mendelssohn House.

We look forward to seeing Mendelssohn friends again for the Festival days in 2013. The next Festival will take place between 12th and 22nd September 2013, with the theme “Mendelssohn and Goethe”.

Illustrations: above – Young string-players and pianists from the Mendelssohn Competition in the Hoch-Taunus and Main-Taunus regions: Nico Köhs, Janna und Clara Hampel.
bottom – For their performance of the “Reformation Symphony”, the four musicians, Eva Sperl, Miki Wada, Hellen Weiß and Tobias Bätz received enthusiastic applause.



A group photo of four people standing indoors. From left to right: a man in a grey checkered suit and red shirt, a man in a grey suit and purple striped tie, a woman in a red strapless dress, and a man in a black suit and striped tie. They are standing in front of a white wall with a statue and a window.

Master class in conducting at the 2012 International Mendelssohn Academy in Leipzig

The International Mendelssohn Academy in Leipzig has been honing the conducting skills of scholarship winners since back in 2008. In the past, the young conductors have always been invited to Leipzig after first being selected by a jury and sponsored by the Academy's Friends in the USA and Japan, but now for the first time it has been possible to offer the conducting course to a wider public. As a result, Tong Chen from China, Jacomo Bairos from Portugal and Vladimir Kulenovic from the USA attended this year after winning scholarships from the American Friends of the Mendelssohn Foundation, while Kah Chun Wong (Singapore) applied externally and was admitted to the course by Prof. Masur. Once again, the students were offered a full and broad-based educational programme, which this year lasted from 7 to 30 September: excursions took the young conductors to Beethoven's House in Bonn, the former homes of Goethe, Liszt and Schiller in Weimar, and finally to the Mendelssohn Archive of the State Library and the Mendelssohn carriage house in Jägerstrasse, Berlin, where they received a warm welcome and attended demanding teaching sessions.

Back in Leipzig, the scholarship winners were invited to rehearsals and performances of the Gewandhaus Orchestra, as well as to concerts at the Mendelssohn House and in St. Thomas Church, were shown autograph scores by Mendelssohn at the College of Music and Theatre and other valuable documents in the splendid library, and learned about the traditions of this venerable institution, which was famously founded by Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy. They also received private tuition from Maestro Kurt Masur, Prof Karl Suske, Dr Michael Ladenburger and Prof Peter Gülke. The programme of activities was completed by walking tours and visits to a number of museums. In short, it was a study

programme which can have few rivals anywhere in the world in terms of its breadth and depth.

The high point of their stay in Leipzig was, however, the master class for conductors under the capable supervision of Prof Masur from 21 to 23 September, during which the conductors had an opportunity to meet the dedicated members of Leipzig Symphony Orchestra in Böhlen arts centre near Leipzig, and to work together on Mendelssohn's Symphony No. 5, better known as the Reformation Symphony (MWV N 15), the overture to Ruy Blas (MWV P 15) and the overture to A Midsummer Night's Dream (MWV P 3). At the closing concert in Böhlen on 23 September, which was open to the public, Maestro Masur, the four scholarship winners and the orchestra which has its home there with regular conductor Frank-Michael Erben, were greeted with almost frenetic applause by the large audience.

Quite serendipitously, a group from the American Friends of the Mendelssohn Foundation had arranged to attend this year's Mendelssohn Gala, and was therefore able to meet the scholarship winners they were sponsoring. When asked about their activities and about the opportunities provided by the educational programme, the scholarship winners expressed their warm gratitude to their supporters, the American Friends, as well as to the Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy Foundation and the Mendelssohn House in Leipzig. They also described the benefits of the programme for their future work, and how it has been influenced by what they had experienced and learned. The members of the American Friends were given a first-hand demonstration of the good use to which their donations had been put: to the cause of education and the promotion of understanding between people through music, both of which would have been dear to the heart of Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy.

Illustrations: The closing concert of the conducting master class on 23 September 2012 in Böhlen;
top left – Jacomo Bairos
on the right – Tong Chen
below left – Vladimir Kulenovic
on the right – Kah Chun Wong

underneath: Maestro Masur and his four happy scholarship winners thank the audience
below: Leipzig Symphony Orchestra and Maestro Kurt Masur as the successful master class draws to a close



Mendelssohn Academy offers course for semi-professional conductors

In addition to the master class organised by the Summer Academy, the International Mendelssohn Academy in Leipzig offered another public course from 5 to 7 October 2012 which is of considerable interest.

General Music Director Georg-Christoph Sandmann, who supervised the course with assistance from répétiteurs, an instrumental ensemble led by Agnes Reuter and a vocal ensemble led by Stefan Kringel, pursued an ambitious goal with the seven hand-picked participants: a performance of Hymn of Praise op. 52 by Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy (MWV A 18). The course was aimed at semi-professional conductors, and focused on preparing and arranging the score, with due consideration for the importance of understanding its context. Other key areas included theoretical aspects of rehearsal technique and their implementation in practice, and conveying background knowledge with a view to improving the quality of the performance. But another area to which particularly close attention was paid concerned that most fundamental tool of the conductor, namely his baton technique, including associated problem areas such as indicating an upbeat, a fermata, or a transition to a different time signature or tempo.

The participants, one of whom was a train driver whilst others came from the fields of music, medicine and politics, all had experience of working with ensembles of various kinds and had applied for the course online. On the evening of 5 October 2012, they were given a warm welcome by Georg Christoph Sandmann at the Chamber Music Room of the summer house at the Mendelssohn House, and were familiarized with the upcoming programme – Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy's challenging Symphonic Cantata No. 2, the Hymn of Praise. Each of the seven participants was allotted one section of the piece. They now had to develop their initial ideas about how to perform it in practice.

The following day, work on the music began – initially with two répétiteurs. Georg Christoph Sandmann meticulously dissected the baton technique of each individual participant. The répétiteurs later received reinforcements in the form of soloists, a choral ensemble comprising members of the MDR Radio Choir and volunteer singers. Georg Christoph Sandmann made an excellent job of addressing the different requirements of the music and the physical skills of the conductor, providing very practical assistance, motivating all concerned, and encouraging the musical dialogue between conductor and ensemble with no little humour. Excerpts from the Hymn of Praise rang out until 10 at night, such as 'Alles was Odem hat, lobe den Herrn', with the wonderful antiphony between the soprano solo and the choir, and the majestic chorus, 'Die Nacht ist vergangen', followed by 'Nun danket alle Gott'. Since the windows of the Chamber Music Room were slightly ajar, the neighbours on all sides of the Mendelssohn House were able to appreciate the private concert.

On the third day, members of the MDR Radio Orchestra, the Gewandhaus Orchestra and other musicians who had travelled to Leipzig for the occasion completed the studio ensemble. The wind instrument part was played by the two excellent répétiteurs.

The next few hours were devoted entirely to exhaustive rehearsals. As the high point of the course, each participant conducted 'his' section one final time in a quasi-performance setting. This was followed by a detailed evaluation of the weekend, so that each individual had another opportunity to reflect on what he had achieved under expert tuition.

Physically drained but mentally buzzing, in good spirits, and with the music of Mendelssohn's Hymn of Praise still resonating in their ears, each of the conductors set off for home.

This successful project will definitely not be a one-off. Indeed, it is set to continue next year, when Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and his Requiem Mass in D Minor, KV 626, will be under the microscope from 18 to 20 October – a work which is frequently performed not only in concert halls but also by church choirs.

Anyone who wishes to apply to take part can do so from now on; the necessary information and forms can be found at the Mendelssohn portal (Akademie-Meisterkurse/Angebot, Herbstseminar).

Illustrations:

Top – Studying the score, the essential first step to a successful interpretation of the piece

Centre – The conductors learn to coordinate instruments and vocalists

Bottom – Orchestra, répétiteurs, soloists and choir; it's hard getting everything just right!



Mendelssohn at the Classic Open

The first weekend of this year's Classic Open was devoted to Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy and his music, with a large orchestra performing at Saturday evening's concert – not something you see every day at the Classic Open.

There wasn't a vacant seat in Leipzig's Market Square as Frank-Michael Erben ascended the podium to conduct the Leipzig Symphony Orchestra in an enthusiastic and musically brilliant performance of the overture to *A Midsummer Night's Dream* as well as the composer's *Italian Symphony*. Actually, the evening had also been supposed to feature the premiere of an adaptation of Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto for electric guitar, band and orchestra with the Chinese rock musician Guitar Gao, which had been long in the planning, but sadly the soloist fell so ill during rehearsals that there was no question of him performing.

As we reported in the last newsletter, Guitar Gao had had his adaptation of the violin concerto printed on a precious 'golden silk roll', which he presented to the Mendelssohn House in 2009, so it had seemed only natural to plan to stage its world premiere in Leipzig, and to do everything possible to make this plan a reality. The idea was greeted with enthusiasm by a number of our partners, and our thanks go out to the organisers of the Classic Open, the Leipziger Volkszeitung newspaper and fairnet, as well as to our longstanding associates, Lufthansa and the Hotel Fürstenhof.

Although it was a great let-down when Jürgen Ernst appeared before the public at the beginning of the concert to announce that Guitar Gao and the Flymen Band had had to cancel, the audience members were nonetheless delighted by the purely classical concert on offer, and this wonderful evening of Mendelssohn's music will long remain in their memories.

Museum concerts for interaction and discovery



The inquisitive chambermaid sticks her nose into Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy's life – this was the title given to three concerts staged with considerable success in the Mendelssohn House on successive days in August and again in October: what one might call interactive concerts for children. The idea behind them was to give the children as realistic and vivid a glimpse as possible into the personality, world and music of Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy amidst authentic surroundings, whilst at the same time promoting their active appreciation of music by allowing them to join in such activities as singing and dancing. The events were produced in period costume for the enjoyment, amusement and entertainment of the children. The concert educator Anna-Barbara Schmidt took on the role of a chambermaid and accompanied the children on a journey to the 19th cen-

tury, into which an unsuspecting visitor (Thomas Kauba) had also stumbled. The children travelled back in time when, by furtively playing the grand piano in the museum's music salon, the visitor whisked them back to the age of Mendelssohn. Once there, the chambermaid provided him and the children with insights into the everyday life of the Mendelssohn family, and was caught in the act by the head of the household's sister, Fanny Hensel (Ivana Cirrincione). Fanny let herself be talked into performing a violin serenade, and was eventually carried away by the music, accompanying an exuberant dance in which all the children took part.

The popular series of museum concerts for interaction and discovery is to continue next year: a follow-up event is already at the planning stage.

The Mendelssohn Orchestral Academy

Since the 2004/2005 season, the Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy College of Music and Theatre in Leipzig and the Gewandhaus Orchestra have taken it upon themselves to add the final polish to the training of talented young musicians at the Mendelssohn Orchestral Academy.

This cooperation within the Orchestral Academy has breathed new life into the tradition established by Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy in 1843 of forming close ties between the teaching institution and the leading orchestra in Leipzig. This link is bolstered by their shared goal of training the next generation of musicians for top orchestras in general and the Gewandhaus in particular.

Students at the Academy, who are carefully selected and closely supervised by the orchestra's musicians, are able to join the Gewandhaus Orchestra at its three main homes – the Gewandhaus concert hall, the opera house and St Thomas Church – where they learn the idiosyncrasies of performing symphonic concerts, opera and church music. They also receive tuition in chamber music.

The young artists are able to show off the results of their chamber music work at matinees in venues which include the Mendelssohn House. The particular conditions to be found in the music salon of the Mendelssohn House enable the students to test their own abilities in the very special, intimate setting of a salon, which has its own tonal and creative peculiarities. This presents the students with specific challenges, not only when it comes to their choice of music, but also in terms of how they perform it; they receive valuable chamber music experience to add to that which they have acquired when performing at the College and at the Gewandhaus concert hall.

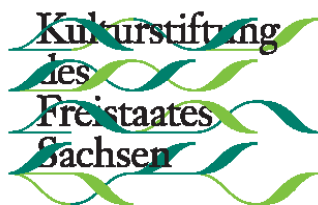
Hanns Eisler: 50th Death-Day

In honour of the German composer Hanns Eisler (* 6 July 1898 in Leipzig; † 6 September 1962 in Berlin) the Mendelssohn House hosted two special concerts on the occasion of his 50th death-day: On 1 December Julia Henning (soprano) and Steffen Schleiermacher (piano) performed songs by Stefan Wolpe, Paul Dessau and Hanns Eisler.

The 2nd concert on 2 December attracted numerous lovers of contemporary classical music. This time Steffen Schleiermacher soloistically performed works by Arnold Schönberg, Josef Matthias Hauer, and, again, Stefan Wolpe and Hanns Eisler.

Both concerts found favour with the multifaceted Leipzig music scene and were accordingly well attended. The committed artists sensitively and skilfully featured a variety of tone-colour and musical ideas, so the audience were conveniently entertained and, instead of leaving after the concert, sought to engage the musicians in conversation instead.

The project was financially supported by the Free State of Saxony.



Concerts of the Reinhold-Quartet in December 2012,
Mendelssohn House Leipzig,
Music salon:

22 December, 19 o'clock
Grand Evening Concert
Dietrich Reinhold, violin
Tobias Haupt, violin
Norbert Tunze, viola
Christoph Vietz, violoncello
Works by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
and Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy

23 December, 11 o'clock
Morning performance
Dietrich Reinhold, violin
Tobias Haupt, violin
Norbert Tunze, viola
Christoph Vietz, violoncello
Quartets by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
and Edward Elgar

Reinhold-Quartet: Concerts

Annual visit: The Reinhold-Quartet traditionally performs in the Mendelssohn House on one weekend in autumn every year.

Each time two concerts are on the schedule: one on Saturday evening and one on Sunday morning. The ensemble includes musicians of the Leipzig Gewandhaus orchestra and has made its mark by various concerts and CD recordings. Their concerts attract an ever-growing audience: For enthusiasts know about the musicians' passion for Mendelssohn and Mozart, the performance of whose works they always spice up with musical surprises like featuring soloists or including rarely played musical pieces in the programme.



Members' Trip – Swiss and Berlin Friends Meet in Leipzig

Not least due to the co-operations in 2009 the maintenance of the house's contacts with other associations and institutions cultivating Mendelssohn's heritage has developed beautifully during the recent years. Especially the exchange between the Berlin and Swiss friends is very active and wide-ranging. The Berlin Mendelssohn-Society for instance supports the Mendelssohn-Academy Leipzig by informing the stipendiaries extensively about the Mendelssohn family in Berlin and by instructing them on the work with the autographs treasured in the Berlin State Library.

The Swiss association is a long-term partner organizing concerts and lec-

tures together with the Mendelssohn-House.

Reason enough to invite the members of both societies to Leipzig for a weekend and retrace Mendelssohn's footsteps together. This year's Mendelssohn Festival appeared to be a suitable occasion for this. The guests attended a concert in the Gewandhaus where Mendelssohn's violin concert and Mahler's Symphony No. 6 were performed.

The next day a comprehensive guided tour through the Gewandhaus, a city tour to musically and historically important places in Leipzig and attending the *Motette* in St Thomas Church were scheduled.

On their third day in Leipzig our guests visited the Mendelssohn House. They were obviously deeply impressed by the ability of the winners of the Young Concert Artists International Auditions who performed that Sunday.

In the afternoon the ardent Mendelssohn-researcher Dr Hans-Günter Klein presented his latest publication *Goethe sein Vorbild. Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, der Dichter und ihre familiären Beziehungen* in the music salon.

Afterwards the guests went on their homeward journey taking along many new impressions.

UK Friends of the Mendelssohn Foundation

The UK Friends of the Felix-Mendelssohn-Bartholdy-Foundation have enjoyed a busy few months promoting their charitable objectives – supporting outstanding young musicians. A highlight was the “Rediscovering Mendelssohn” Festival at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London. The distinguished Mendelssohn scholar Eugene Asti compiled programmes for three public concerts of virtually unknown and for the most part unpublished songs by Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy and Fanny Hensel, interspersed with “Songs without Words” for solo piano – all performed by brilliant young Guildhall students and appreciated by an enthusiastic audience. The UK Friends sponsored the coaching of the young musicians. Full details can be obtained from the Chairman of the UK Friends Desmond Cecil on desmondcecil@dia1.pipex.com.

Another successful fundraising concert was organized at the lovely home of new UK Trustees Megan and Tom Tress. Anais Venkatasawmy, Peteris Sokolovskis, Amy Tress, Joseph Devalle, Alessandro Ruisi delighted the audience with their excellent performances of works ranging from Vivaldi to Shostakovich. The concert raised valuable funds for future charitable projects by the UK Friends.

When UK Trustees Ruth and Desmond Cecil visited Leipzig in September for the annual International Mendelssohn Prize concert with Maestro Kurt Masur, they discussed future possibilities with the Foundation in Leipzig.

In the meantime the UK Friends have agreed to sponsor “mentoring” at the 25th Anniversary of the “Mendelssohn on Mull” Festival in July 2013. In 1829, while overlooking the Scottish island of Mull, Mendelssohn found the inspiration for his Hebrides Overture. The Festival, whose Artistic Director is the distinguished string quartet leader Levon Chilingirian, every year “mentors” young musicians to prepare them for public performances of Mendelssohn chamber music during the Festival.



The Leipzig Mendelssohn-fever is contagious: on 27 September the Mendelssohn-memorial in Düsseldorf was inaugurated in the presence of many guests from the cultural, political and economical sector.

Thus Düsseldorf, where the composer had been „Städtischer Musikdirektor“ from 1833 to 1835, followed Leipzig: the Music City has already had a memorial for their former Gewandhaus-Kapellmeister since the year 2008.

2012 Mendelssohn Festival in Japan

This autumn, the Japanese branch of the Mendelssohn Foundation staged a week-long festival. Entitled, 'Bach in Mendelssohn', it gave Japanese music-lovers the welcome and enriching opportunity to learn a little about the extremely important relationship between Mendelssohn and Bach's oeuvre, through both musical and academic contributions. The Foundation invited as its main guest the organist Michael Schönheit, who has worked at the Gewandhaus for many years. He focused on Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy's work as an organist and master of improvisation.

On 9 October, the festival opened with a symposium, with Michael Schönheit delivering the first talk. Another guest was the conductor and winner of this year's Bach Medal Prof Masaaki Suzuki, who was working on Mendelssohn's oratorio *St. Paul* at the time and who explained the important role played by the chorales in this work. The last speaker was musicologist Prof Hiromi Hoshino, who pointed out the areas in Mendelssohn's music where Bach's unmistakable influence was apparent. After the interval, the three experts held a round table discussion with Maestro Kurt Masur, and eventually came to the conclusion that Bach's chorales had been the driving force behind Mendelssohn's compositions. Their lively debate was attended by an enthusiastic audience of more than a hundred. All those taking part in the symposium were later able to continue their animated exchanges at a reception.

With the gracious support of Tohoku Gakuin University, a benefit concert could be held on 11 October in the city of Sendai, which had been so devastated by the earthquake on 11 March 2011. The concert set itself the challenging task of reconstructing an organ recital by Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, who organised the same benefit concert in Leipzig's St Thomas Church on 6 August 1840 to raise funds

for a memorial to Bach in front of the church. As we know, this project was a success. 172 years later, Michael Schönheit captivated his audience in Sendai with his re-enactment of it. The 250 audience members demonstrated their appreciation with enthusiastic applause.

On the following day, Michael Schönheit held a master class at the College of Arts in Tokyo. One of those to be impressed by the considerable maturity demonstrated by the organ students was Maestro Kurt Masur, who had made time in his full schedule to attend.

At the beginning of the final concert on 14 October, Michael Schönheit testified once again to Mendelssohn's passion and aptitude as an organist and improviser. Included in his talk were quotations from a number of sources in which Mendelssohn was described as a talented organist and steward of Bach's legacy. He then performed a programme of works which illustrated the strong connection between the two musicians.

The event included a discussion with Maestro Kurt Masur, which the audience found both interesting and informative. The 2012 Mendelssohn Festival drew to a close amidst an enthusiastic ovation.



Ties Strengthened Between the Rentaro Taki Museum and the Mendelssohn House in Leipzig

From 19 to 22 October 2012, Jürgen Ernst, Executive Board Member of the Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy Foundation and Director of the Mendelssohn House, visited Taketa in Japan in order to make plans for the future aimed at strengthening the long-established ties between the town, which is home to the museum dedicated to composer Rentaro Taki, and Leipzig. One motive behind the trip involved the 66th national Rentaro Taki singing competition, which is one of the more prestigious in the long list of such competitions in Japan.

The composer Rentaro Taki (1879-1903) is highly esteemed in Japan. He was the first Japanese to study music in Europe, and was registered as a student at the Leipzig Conservatory from 1901 to 1902. On the 100th anniversary of his death and with the active participation of the Japanese Mendelssohn Society and the Rentaro Taki Monument Foundation based in Yokohama, a monument honouring the composer was unveiled at his former home at 7 Ferdinand-Rhode-Strasse in Leipzig. The project was supported by the Rentaro Taki Monument Foundation, and by Dr Kazoi Watanabe in particular, as well as by the Mendelssohn House and the City of Leipzig with its then mayor Wolfgang Tiefensee.

The vocalist Koya Yamada won first prize in this year's Rentaro Taki singing competition in Taketa, the composer's home town. Jürgen Ernst presented him with the Leipzig Mendelssohn Prize of the Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy Foundation and the City of Leipzig for his outstanding achievements.

Jürgen Ernst then met Katsuji Shuto in Taketa, where the latter serves as mayor. The two men agreed a cultural exchange, which will encompass not only the singing competition, but also concerts and master classes in Taketa and Leipzig.

Before taking his leave, Ernst visited the Rentaro Taki monument in Taketa, which was erected by Dr Kazoi Watanabe, who was also behind the Takimonument in Leipzig. Dr Watanabe from Yokohama (who died in 2010) had been a strong supporter of the Mendelssohn House for many years, as well as endowing a prize for young artists and academics who have made a valuable contribution to the legacy of the composer Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy. The prize is named after Dr Watanabe and is awarded every year. It now also commemorates his own life.

The Mendelssohn House has received financial support from all over the world to help pay for the renovation and preservation of the composer's home. And that includes Japan. As a token of gratitude and of our close bond, a specimen of the rose cultivated in honour of Mendelssohn was sent from the garden of the Mendelssohn House to Dr Watanabe in Japan, who donated it in turn to the Taki Museum in Taketa. There it is flourishing magnificently in the museum garden.

Large images; below left – Mayor Katsuji Shuto and Mr Jürgen Ernst seal their plans for forthcoming concerts with a handshake.

Below right – The Rentaro Taki monument in the garden of the house in Taketa where he was born


Illustrations:

Small images; top – Jürgen Ernst is welcomed to Taketa with great honour not only by the town's mayor, Katsuji Shuto, as well as the great granddaughter of the composer Rentaro Taki.

Below – Mr Koya Yamada, the winner of the 66th Rentaro Taki national singing competition in Taketa, Japan, is presented with the Leipzig Mendelssohn Prize, a statuette of Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy



What an inspiration! To step on his floor....
the stairs... the atmosphere and the aura of
the walls... A great experience!


L. KAVAKOS
4/5/2012

Time and again popular musicians have visited the museum in the Mendelssohn House throughout its history.

Some, like Isaac Stern, came accompanied by Professor Masur and his wife, Tomoko, some by members of the Gewandhaus Orchestra, mainly by Eberhard Spree who unwearily emphasizes what jewel of music history can be found so close to the Gewandhaus. Anyway, all came to inform themselves, to experience the dwelling's authentic ambiance, to get inspired or perform in the music salon of the Mendelssohn House.

Recent visitors were the Greek violinist Leonidas Kavakos, the Czech conductor Jiri Belohlavek, also the German violinist Isabelle Faust and clarinetist Karl Leister, whose enthusiastic guestbook entries reflect their appreciation of the museum.

Karl Leister who performed together with the Trio Ecco(!) on 4 November will come back again. The date is already fixed: it is the festive concert at Easter, 31 March 2013, 11:00 am.



Exhibition in Honour of the 85th Birthday of Maestro Kurt Masur

From 27 September to 26 October, a major exhibition in the concert foyer at the Gewandhaus in Leipzig was dedicated to 'Kurt Masur – A Life in Music'. The exhibition highlighted some of the most important stations in the life of Kurt Masur – through pictures, the words of the man himself, as well as reports and letters from some of the people the composer had met along the way. Kurt Masur's Silesian homeland, his parental home, the long period he spent directing the Gewandhaus Orchestra in Leipzig, his time in New York and his orchestra there, the training he provided for young musicians, but above all for the next generation of professional musicians... all of these subjects were covered in depth in a way which not only aficionados, but also the public in general would find fascinating.

One separate section of the exhibition focused on the Maestro's commitment to Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy and the Mendelssohn House, explaining in great detail the struggle to preserve this historically important home, its renovation, and the success achieved thus far.

A bilingual catalogue in German and English has been published by Kamprad to accompany the exhibition – this is a chunk of contemporary history, a document which not only illustrates the history of music in Leipzig, but also covers a long period of great historical interest, and travels extensively to places of musical importance. The exhibition and catalogue were the result of close cooperation between the New York Philharmonic Archives and the Kurt Masur Archive in Leipzig, with contributions from the Gewandhaus archive and the Mendelssohn House as well as from many contemporary witnesses, all of which has created a truly vibrant portrait of the highly productive life of Maestro Kurt Masur, a man whose first love has always been music.



Illustrations:

above – View of the exhibition 'Kurt Masur – A Life in Music', which was staged to mark the 85th birthday of the Maestro: here, the section dedicated to his life in New York.

below left – Moved and delighted, Maestro Kurt Masur expresses his gratitude at the opening of the exhibition in the Leipzig Gewandhaus on 29 September 2012 to all the contributors, many of whom are present in the audience. They didn't want to miss the opportunity of travelling to Leipzig to join in the birthday celebrations.

below right – Leipzig's mayor is one of the well-wishers. In his birthday speech, he praises the virtually uncompromising dedication of Kurt Masur to the cause of music, which the Maestro encouraged those around him to share, always pursuing the highest possible standards in the interests of art.



Music Projects from Leipzig and Central Germany – Out and About on the Music Trail, the Music Highway, and Collaborative Projects

Bach-Mendelssohn-Schumann

In 2001, Dr Gerti Peters, the then Head of the Department for Music attached to the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and the Media (BKM), was keen for a special project to be launched which would highlight the diverse musical heritage of Leipzig. That is how the Bach-Mendelssohn-Schumann collaborative project came about, whose second aim was to enhance the position of the musicians' museums in Leipzig. The Bach Archive, the Mendelssohn House and the Schumann House joined forces to research the many links between the composers, and presented their findings to the public at conferences and in publications, as well as at special exhibitions and during guided tours and themed concerts. This cooperation was made possible thanks to funding from the BKM and the Saxon State Ministry for Science and the Arts.

The long-term nature of the funding meant that the large number of sources of importance to cultural history as well as museum artefacts could be subjected to close scrutiny. In 2012, the funding agencies and their partners were able to establish that their original objectives had been met. This claim is supported not least by the opening of the Leipzig Music Trail.

Some projects, such as the shared home page, the representation of the musicians' museums at Leipzig Book Fair, and the publication of a joint annual programme, are set to continue. The impressive results of ten years of work will continue to be sponsored by the Federation and the Free State, partly because of the major contribution they make towards reminding a broad international public of the historic importance of Leipzig as a centre of music; something which slipped into obscurity when Europe was partitioned after the Second World War.

Music Highway

The association 'Music Highway' hosted its second summer music festival entitled in June/July 2012. The association was founded three years ago to pay tribute to the wealth of treasures from the history and culture of music to be found in Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt and Thuringia, some of which are little known. The association's work has yielded impressive results, with more than 1,200 composers and a large number of instrument makers being identified in 300 central German locations. Appropriately for a year in which Martin Luther is being celebrated, the 18 concerts organised as part of the music festival were held in locations associated with the Reformer; for its patron, the festival was fortunate enough to attract the world-famous chamber musician Menahem Pressler. Thus little-known Protestant choral music was performed in Halle, little-known Romantic compositions in Eisleben, and little known cello sonatas in the music salon of the Mendelssohn House on 30 June 2012. The cellist Matthias Wilde and the pianist Olga Gollej performed works by Robert Schumann and lesser known compositions by Julius Klengel, Carl Reinecke and Julius Röntgen. All of these composers had close ties with the music of Mendelssohn, and either worked in Leipzig, the 'City of Music', or else had their musical roots there. Carl Reinecke arrived in Leipzig in 1843 for three years on a music scholarship, where despite his heavy workload, Mendelssohn found time to look over his compositions. It was here too that Reinecke first made Schumann's acquaintance. Thirteen years after Mendelssohn's death, he became Director of Music at the Gewandhaus and taught at the Leipzig Conservatory. Under his direction, the famous musician Julius Klengel occupied the position of solo cellist at the Gewandhaus. His cousin, Julius Röntgen, was a pupil of Reinecke. Thus the circle of the little known cello sonatas was completed.

Music Trail Discovery Passport

Since last May, stainless-steel inlays in the pavement have guided those with an interest in the history of music to the locations in Leipzig which were considered particularly worthy of inclusion in the Music Trail. Now the Music Trail Discovery Passport, which was only recently published, is inviting children to set off on a journey of musical discovery. It features a shortened version of the Leipzig Music Trail, which leads them to selected destinations from the full-size version. Both begin at the Gewandhaus, before the children head off to the Mendelssohn House, the Graphic Quarter, Old St Nicholas School, and the studios of the MDR radio station on Augustusplatz. Curiosity and an inquiring mind are required, because at each of the total of thirteen stop-off points, there is a puzzle to solve in the passport. For instance, in the garden of the Mendelssohn House, they have to discover which flower was named after the composer. If they answer the questions correctly, the young explorers will find a small reward waiting for them at the end. At twelve of the locations, the children can listen on telephones to dramatised scenes written specially for them, in which famous musicians and their children from Leipzig's past are brought to life. By the end of the tour, the children will know plenty of stories about the city's composers and musicians, and will have learned a lot of interesting facts about the opera and the radio, not to mention musical instruments, music printing and town musicians. The Passport can be purchased at the Mendelssohn House for a nominal charge of Euro 2.50.





Dear members, supporters and friends of the Mendelssohn-House,

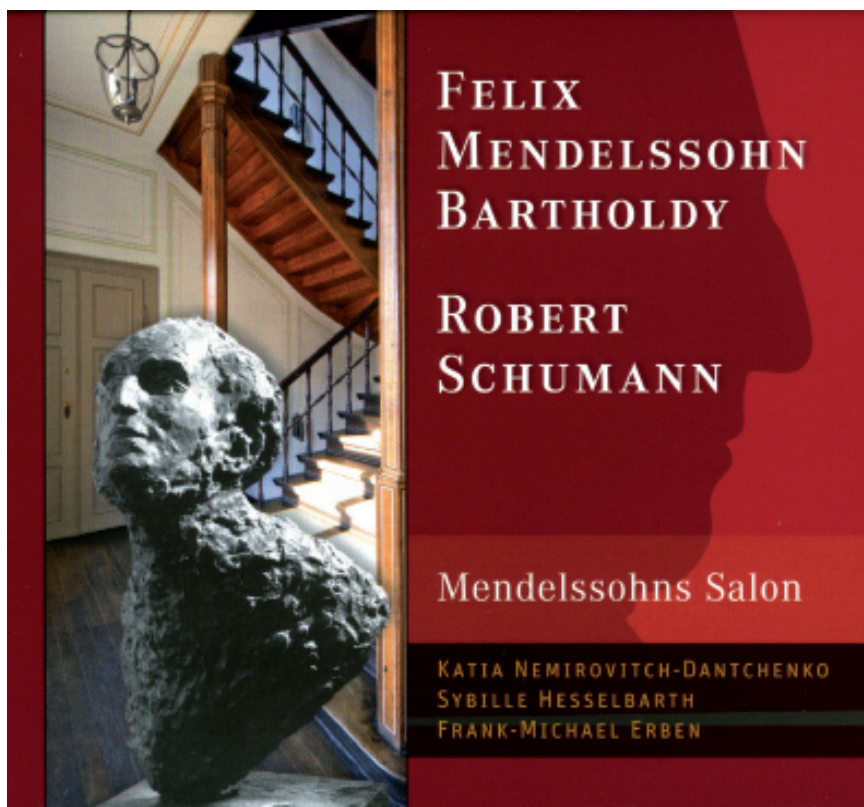
The year 2012 is drawing to a close, Advent has come with all its joys and the pleasant anticipation of Christmas. To all of you a blessed and peaceful holiday season.

Health, cheerfulness and success for all your private and professional intentions in 2013 but also persistent delight in music, which you can always find and enjoy in our house.

We are always happy to welcome you. Please stay with us in 2013.

After all, it is always the relationships with others
that make our lives worth living.
(Wilhelm von Humboldt)

Gift Recommendation for Christmas – the Fourth CD in the Mendelssohn-House Edition



The latest CD from the Mendelssohn House, with a festive red cover and a richly illustrated booklet, bears the title "Mendelssohn's Salon".

Listeners are invited into the Salon to hear Robert Schumann's *Abegg Variations* op.1, and the *Fantasy Pieces* op. 12. The master of the house, Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy is represented by the *Concertante Variations* op. 17, the *Rondo Capriccioso* op. 14, and the F-major Sonata for violin and piano (1838). Katia Nemirovitch-Dantchenko was playing at the piano, Sybille Hesselbarth let her wonderfully warm 'cello tone ring out, and Frank-Michael Erben's violin sang out in the major key.

The CD costs Euro 17.50 and can be obtained exclusively from the Mendelssohn House Leipzig – please ask in the museum or visit our internet-shop.

New Members of the Association Mendelssohn-Haus e.V. until December 2012

Herr Dr. Albert Hauser, Deutschland
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Ihnen ein herzliches Willkommen, wir freuen uns darauf, Sie kennenzulernen und hoffen auf eine gute Zusammenarbeit.



Many thanks to all our members

who, in addition to paying their membership contributions, have provided their support for the objectives of the Mendelssohn House:

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