

English country house concerts with The Frolick



The Frolick
Photo: Phil Taylor

To me, a concert is more than just seeing the musicians sit or stand and play good music, it has to be "*something for the eyes*" as well. So semi-staged performances are the thing for me, especially when there is a sense of fun in it.

When we recently discovered **The Frolick**, watching them transported us into an entertaining evening in a private home in Handel's times. Not with baroque costumes and a "*how it all was*", but with a lively show of a young 21st century band, captivating their audience and involving them in their spirited and lively performance. A really entertaining time.



The Frolick
Photo: Phil Taylor

A particular highlight for me is their period "*Social Media Song*" about twittering and joining Facebook... yes, they have written the lyrics to this, but the melody is original 18th century. It is their version of "*The Subscription Song*" by Thomas Arne which now nicely incorporates the pinging of social media sites.

Contralto Emma Curtis is really fun to watch when she floats easily across the stage and flirts with the audience. She brings a sense of real fun with her. Her enthusiasm for the music is obvious, and she transports the audience right back to the mood of the 17th and 18th centuries.

And it is not only fun watching **The Frolick** - their music is fresh and alive. Each of the musicians is truly excellent and they really breathe new life into the old music, making it accessible to contemporary audiences. Their instruments include not only baroque violins, cello, viola da gamba, baroque guitars and lutes, but also the triple harp, both Italian and Welsh.

Since their founding in 2005, **The Frolick** won a prestigious award with their debut album "Calliope", which features the most popular songs of Handel's London. They have a wide range of programs, with between 3 and 8 musicians playing music from the 17th and 18th centuries, and they also offer programs for special events.

They interweave baroque pieces with foot-stomping improvised music from the Irish, Scottish or Welsh traditions, creating a vivid kaleidoscope of music with a difference.

"Guests tell us that our shows make them feel as though they have gone back in time and really experienced these earlier times, and yet we are 21st-century musicians in modern clothes. For us this music is not for restaged historical enactment, it is entirely about the spirit of the time and the music - music for entertainment, humour, expression and fun"

The Frolick

[Monika Sim](#)

More information about **The Frolick** on their website:
thefrolick.com

This article is an excerpt from the
digital Early Music magazine
[Tempus Musicum](#), June/July 2011