

Julia Wedman's 2010/11 Grand Tour



Violinist Julia Wedman is spending much of this season in Europe, exploring the cities and cultures in which musicians lived and worked. She describes her plans in the first of a series of reports from her travels, below. Check the Tafelmusik website for future reports. Bon voyage, Julie!

September 4, 2010 / Irsee, Germany

In the 17th and 18th centuries, sons of English noblemen would undertake a “Grand Tour” of Europe as a kind of “life education,” or a rite of passage into adulthood. They travelled from England to France, Italy and other countries on the continent to learn about contemporary and ancient art, architecture and music, to learn new languages, explore new cultures and make new connections with people. Alison

Mackay developed a concert programme for Tafelmusik in 2002 based on this concept, and since then, I have always thought that it would be an amazing, life-changing experience to undertake a Grand Tour myself. So, this year you will not be seeing my blonde head as much on the concert stage at Trinity-St. Paul's because I will be on my long awaited “Julie's Grand Tour” of Europe!

As I write this message, we are just playing the last few concerts at Tafelmusik's summer festival in Irsee, Germany and instead of coming home with the rest of the orchestra, I will be embarking on the adventure of a lifetime. My first stop will be a much needed vacation in Spain (the Canary Islands), followed by some creative rejuvenation in Barcelona, one of my favourite places in the world. Then I will travel back to Germany for the first “official” leg of the tour, with stops in Bonn (Beethoven's birthplace), Leipzig (to visit Bach's church), Berlin, Dresden and other places that I have always wanted to go, but never had the opportunity. As I think of the adventure that awaits me I am filled with excitement, but I am saddened by the thought that I can't take you all with me! I will dearly miss my amazing colleagues in the orchestra, the staff, and all of the wonderful audience members and volunteers. I knew I couldn't last an entire year without playing Tafelmusik concerts, so I will be back in Toronto to play the Richard Egarr program in December, and our long-awaited performance of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony in April.

Until then, I send you all the best wishes for a fantastic season at Tafelmusik!

Julie