



Martha Ann Brookes Principal Trombone

Martha Ann Brookes (nee Wilson) was born in Dunfermline, Fife, Scotland. After two years of piano, she transferred onto the accordion at the age of 7. When 9, she started cornet in the local Salvation Army band. She moved on to trombone when she was 12 when the 2 boys who were the trombone section left. At Secondary School, Martha Ann continued brass lessons with Bill Owen – the jazz trumpet specialist, who took her through to grade 8 – won the Dux of Music, became Principal Trombone with the Fife Youth Orchestra and gained a place with the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland.

After representing Scotland in the British Accordion Championships twice, she decided to choose the trombone as her main instrument. During her 4 years of study at the Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, Martha Ann won the Governors' Recital Prize for Brass and the Diploma RSAMD in Teaching and Performance.

Further studies continued at the National Centre for Orchestral Studies, where she performed the Larsson Concertino. In that year, Martha Ann was chosen to represent Scotland in the Jeunesses Musicale World Orchestra, the first Scot to do so in over 20 years. Before finishing her studies at NCOS, she was offered a job with the L'orchestra Symphonie d'Europe in Paris. She started the job 2 days after graduating. After a year working in Paris, where she took part in concerts for the European Parliament, the French television programme version of Wogan, and performing at the French equivalent of the Oscars, Martha Ann became 2nd trombonist of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra.

After 2 wonderful years in Hong Kong, the lure of wedding bells brought her back to Britain to start a new life in Birmingham with husband Philip, a bassoonist. Martha Ann is now a busy freelancer and teacher. Besides being Principal Trombonist for sinfonia ViVA and also for Birmingham Opera Company, she works for many of the leading British orchestras. She also plays with In-Slide-Out Trombone Quartet and ViVA Brass Quintet.
