

*Tears of sorrow,
tears of joy*

Music for viols, lute and voice by

John Dowland

*with William Byrd and Anthony Holborne
and readings by their contemporaries*

being a celebration of the 450th anniversary of Dowland's birth

*7th December 2013
Collegiate Church of the
Holy and Undivided Trinity,
Stratford-upon-Avon*

I have of late, but wherefore I know not, lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercise; and indeed, it goes so heavily with my disposition that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory; this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire: why, it appears no other thing to me than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours.

Hamlet II.ii.301.

This evening's concert was conceived of after hearing a programme earlier this year on Radio 3 devoted to the life of John Dowland (1563-1628). His music has featured in various venues around the country since it is the 450th anniversary of his death. Surely we should celebrate the life of a near contemporary of Shakespeare here in Holy Trinity?

Dowland is best known for his lute songs – songs for singer and lute, which could indeed have been performed by one individual, so we have included some of his best-known for tonight's concert. However, he is also well known for his *Lachrimae* ('Tears') a series of seven pieces for a consort of five viols and a lute, which he published in 1604. These are all based on the song *Flow my tears*, with which we start this evening's programme. This song has a melancholy theme to it, as was fashionable in the late Elizabethan and Jacobean eras, and so I wanted to have some contrasting material to avoid an evening of unremitting gloom. I hope we have achieved this in some different and interesting ways.

First, being a musician, I looked for other instrumental works for viols by his contemporaries. Anthony Holborne (1545-1602) was a highly regarded composer in his day and was in the service of Queen Elizabeth – a position that Dowland craved but never achieved. The two men were known to each other; indeed, Dowland dedicated the first song of his second publication to Holborne. The dances here are simple tunes that could be danced to. There is none of the dense polyphony and agonised harmonies that characterise Dowland's work. It is amusing to know that a recording of one of them which we are playing tonight is hurtling towards outer space on the Voyager space probes which were launched in 1977.

*How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable
Seems to me all the uses of this world*

For my other musical contrast, I looked at the work of William Byrd (1540?-1623). He is better known for his vocal works – works for the church and consort songs (solo voice accompanied by viols). We include one of the latter and two vocal works. In fact, most of Byrd’s vocal works written in Latin could well have been performed with a singer and viols. As a Catholic, writing music for the Catholic rite and feasts, the majority of Byrd’s works would have been sung in the homes of recusant families. Many gentlemen (and gentlewomen) were skilled amateur musicians they might well have had skilful viol players at hand. The violin at this stage was the domain of the paid musician.

For a contrast in another direction – and with the connections that the church fosters with literature – I asked Tim Raistrick and Ursula Russell if they would select some readings from the period to complement the music, and allow the audience time to let the ideas of the poems inform the music.

I hope that you will enjoy visiting the various creative talents around 1600 in this glorious, historic setting.

Clive Letchford

John Dowland was born in 1563, probably in London, although there is little documentary evidence for his early life. He was recognised as one of the pre-eminent lutenists of his time. He spent many years abroad, notably in Paris as lutenist to the British ambassador Robert Cecil and in Denmark as lutenist to King Christian IV. He was unable to gain a position as lutenist at the court of Queen Elizabeth despite his wish to do so. It seems he was not an easy man to deal with. For example, he overstayed his leave of absence from the Danish court to oversee the Publication of his *Lachrimae*, which was subtitled *Seaven Teares, figured in Seavan Passionate Pavans, with divers other Pavans, Galiards, and Almands, set forth for the Lute, Viols or Violins, in five parts*. He was sacked soon afterwards! However in 1612, he did get his wish by being appointed to the court of James I.

*Ith'under Columne there doth stand,
Inamorato with folded hande.
Downe hanges his head, terse and polite
Some Dittie sure he doth endite.
His lute and bookes about him lye,
As symptomes of his vanity.
If this doe not enough disclose,
To paint him, take thy selfe by th'nose.*

Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1632)

FIRST HALF

Song: Flow my tears	Dowland
Lachrimae antiquae <i>(Old tears)</i>	Dowland
<i>Weep you no more sad fountains Lo, as a careful housewife runs to catch</i>	Anon Shakespeare
Lachimae antiquae novae <i>(Old new tears)</i>	Dowland
<i>Since there's no help, come, let us kiss and part One day I wrote her name upon the strand</i>	Drayton Spenser
Can she excuse my wrongs	Dowland
Heigh ho holiday	Holborne
Tarleton's Riserrectione	Dowland
Song: Though Amaryllis dance in green	Byrd
<i>To Her Dead Husband Leave me, O Love, which reaches but to dust</i>	Dyer Sidney
Lachrimae gementes <i>(Groaning tears)</i>	Dowland
<i>My Picture left in Scotland When my love swears that she is made of truth</i>	Jonson Shakespeare
Lachrimae tristes <i>(Sad tears)</i>	Dowland
As it fell on a Holie Eve The Night Watch	Holborne

SECOND HALF

Lachrimae coactae <i>(Forced tears)</i>	Dowland
Motet: Praise our Lord, O ye Gentiles	Byrd
<i>My True Love hath my heart and I have his</i> <i>If there were, oh! an Hellespont of cream</i>	Sidney Davies
Lachrimae amantis <i>(Lover's tears)</i>	Dowland
Motet: Laetentur coeli	Byrd
Song: Fine knacks for ladies	Dowland
A Fancy	Dowland
<i>The Passionate Shepherd to His Love</i> <i>The Nymph's Reply to the Shepherd</i>	Marlowe Raleigh
Lachrimae verae <i>(True tears)</i>	Dowland
Say love if ever thou didst find	Dowland
Sweet Kate	Jones
The Honey-suckle	Holborne
The Fairie-round	Holborne

And though the title doth promise teares, unfit guests in these joyfull times,
yet no doubt pleasant are the teares which Musicke weeps, neither are
teares shed always in sorrow, but sometime in joy and gladnesse.

from Dedication of Lachrimae to Queen Anne of Denmark

Laetentur coeli

Laetentur coeli, et exultet terra.
Jubilate montes laudem,
Quia Dominus noster veniet,
Et pauperum suorum miserebitur.

Let the heavens be glad, and the earth be glad.
Shout praise, o mountains,
For our Lord will come,
And will have pity mercy on the poor.

Orietur in diebus tuis justitia,
Et abundantia pacis.
Et pauperum suorum miserebitur.

Justice will arise during your days,
And abundance of peace.
And He will have mercy on the poor.

Flow my tears

Flow, my tears, fall from your springs!
Exiled for ever, let me mourn;
Where night's black bird her sad infamy sings,
There let me live forlorn.

The collection *Lachrimae* was published in 1604. It was not his first publication, which was the *First Book of Ayres* in 1597, which included *Can she excuse my wrongs*. The *Second Book of Ayres* of 1600 included *Flow my tears*, although there are reasons to think that it may originally have been an instrumental piece. It was certainly very famous, and recognisable from the opening phrase, a falling fourth which perhaps represents the falling of the tears. This fourth is a motif that helps link the seven pieces together and makes them a unified whole. Recent work has traced arrangements of this piece to more than 90 different sources across Europe. Certainly, it was Dowland's calling card. He even signed himself as *Jo. dolandi de Lachrimae* with word-play on the Latin word *dolens* – grieving.



The musicians

Viols

Treble Angela Cranmore

Tenor 1 Clive Letchford

Tenor 2 Mitch Phillips

Bass 1 Claire Horacek

Bass 2 Jenny Curtis

Lute Mike Ashley

Soprano Kathryn Ellis

Baritone Clive Letchford

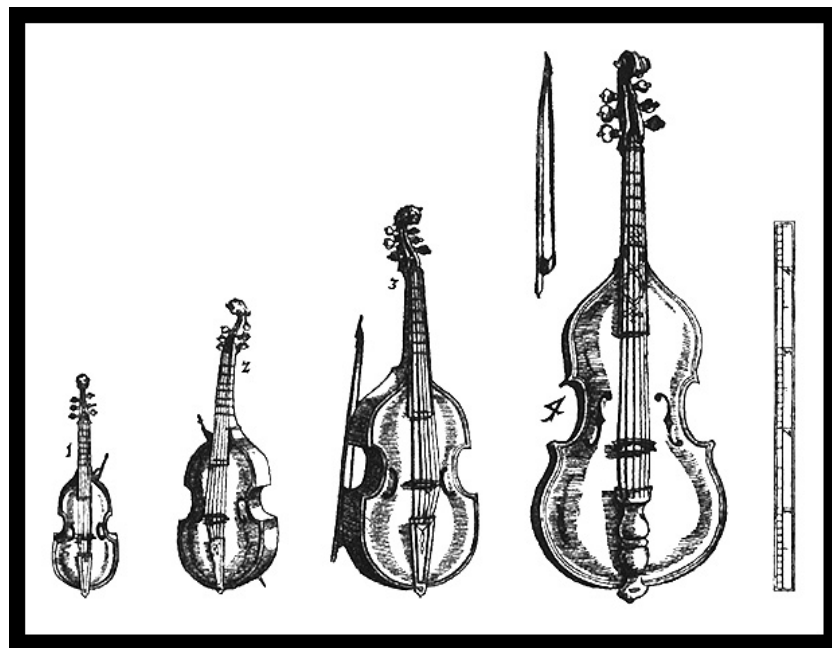
The readers

Ursula Russell

Tim Raistrick



The forlorn lover
The Anatomy of Melancholy



Various sizes of viol: Syntagma musicum (1618) Michael Praetorius

Cabinet of Curiosities

This group brings together a number of individuals from different backgrounds who share a passion for music from the renaissance and baroque eras and who have explored the instruments, technique and style of playing that help bring this music to life. Their founder and director is Clive Letchford who, when not playing can be found teaching Latin and Greek in the Classics Department at the University of Warwick.

The Cabinet of Curiosities was a term for a collection of objects encompassing diverse areas such as geology, archaeology, religious and historical relics and works of art – the forerunners of museums. Indeed, it was just such a collection that Elias Ashmole built up and which formed the basis for the Ashmolean museum in Oxford. As such, the name reflects the eclectic nature of the group which draws on a number of players depending on the works to be played.

If music and sweet poetry agree,
As they must needs, the sister and the brother,
Then must the love be great 'twixt thee and me,
Because thou lov'st the one and I the other.
Dowland to thee is dear, whose heavenly touch
Upon the lute doth ravish human sense;
Spenser to me, whose deep conceit is such,
As passing all conceit, needs no defence.
Thou lov'st to hear the sweet melodious sound
That Phœbus' lute, the queen of music, makes;
And I in deep delight am chiefly drowned
Whenas himself to singing he betakes:
One god is god of both, as poets feign,
One knight loves both, and both in thee remain.

Richard Barnfield
Poems in Divers Humors, 1598

Our thanks are due to the performers who have given freely of their time and expertise in preparing for this concert.

Thanks are also due to the Friends of the Music and in particular to Jane Hornby who is such a supporter of music at Holy Trinity in every practical way whenever it is needed.