

2022
BEVERLEY
& EAST RIDING
EARLY MUSIC
FESTIVAL

I Fagiolini

Draw on Sweet Night

St John of Beverley Catholic Church

Sunday 29 May 6.30 pm

Draw on Sweet Night

The Lady Oriana **John Wilbye** 1574–1638

Pavan **Orlando Gibbons** 1583–1625

Weep, O mine eyes **Wilbye**

Adieu sweet Amaryllis

Flora gave me fairest flowers

Thou art but young thou say'st

Cruel behold

The Galliarde for the Victorie **William Byrd** *c.* 1540–1623

I live, and yet methinks / There is a jewel **Wilbye**

Down in a valley / Hard destines are love

When shall my wretched life

'Fantastic' Galliard **John Bull** 1562/3–1628

Sweet honey-sucking bees / Yet, sweet,
take heed **Wilbye**

Weep, weep mine eyes

Where most my thoughts / Despiteful

thus unto myself

Galliard **Gibbons**

Lady, your words do spite me **Wilbye**

Draw on sweet night

Singing and dying: John Wilbye's madrigals

If there's one thing to regret about John Wilbye, it is that he composed so little. Around 75 pieces by him exist, but they are all miniatures; none lasts more than six minutes, and most are much shorter. Everyone agrees, though, that quality more than compensates for quantity. Time and again, in these exquisite cameos, Wilbye delivers what might be reckoned the ultimate madrigal experience.

The background to these works is only partly known. Some were probably written as gifts; others may have been commissioned; a few might have been crafted expressly for publication; but none bears the name of a recipient or a date of composition, and the only clues about context and chronology come from the two printed editions in which they first appeared. In 1598, at the age of 24, Wilbye published *The first set of English madrigals*; it contains 30 pieces, scored for between three and six voices. Eleven years later came its successor, *The second set of madrigals ... apt both for voyals [viols] and voyces* (1609); it adds another 34 works, again for three to six voices.

A few useful facts emerge from Wilbye's preface to the 1598 collection. It was written at 'Augustine Fryers', the London residence of his employers, the Kytson family of Hengrave Hall in Suffolk. This implies that Wilbye, while in his early twenties, was partly living in London. There, he seems to have joined parties of music-loving gentlemen and musicians, who met to sing madrigals either imported in printed editions from Italy

and the Low Countries, or newly composed to English texts. Thus Wilbye's early madrigals grow out of two contexts: first, the City of London, and second, Hengrave Hall, home of the Kytsons.

In London, the 'madrigal craze' was fuelled by two musicians from St Paul's Cathedral. Nicholas Yonge, a singing-man there, in 1588 published *Musica transalpina*, a set of largely Italian madrigals adapted to English words, and its prefatory page is packed with information: Yonge tells us that he regularly hosted music meetings at his house, attended by 'a great number of Gentlemen and Merchants of good accompt, as well of this realme as of forreine nations'. Not only did they sing madrigals; Yonge also sold them copies of music imported from abroad. Thomas Morley, an organist at St Paul's, then went a step further, by composing and printing new pieces in the Italian style, now set to English words. It was at meetings like these that the contents of Wilbye's *First set of English madrigals* were most likely sung when they were new, relished by those 'Gentlemen and Merchants', perhaps singing alongside boy choristers drawn from the choir of St Paul's.

What makes Wilbye's madrigals so special? To an extent it is because they are musically so memorable – striking works when first heard, hard to forget, once experienced. Wilbye's constant stream of invention is impressive – his judicious union of words with music, his unexpected harmonies, his thrilling textures. Above all, though, Wilbye shines because of his capacity to *develop* his musical ideas. His madrigals, especially from *The*

second set of 1609, often have the breadth and tread of a viol fantasia, and indeed the 1609 titlepage makes it plain that this was intended: its contents are '*apt both for voyals and voyces*'. Many of these madrigals sound superb even when stripped of their words; and if the words are kept in place, the effect is glorious.

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The Lady Oriana

Was dight all in the treasures of Guiana,
And on her Grace a thousand Graces tended,
And thus sang they – Fair Queen of peace and plenty,
The fairest Queen of twenty.
Then with an olive wreath for peace renowned,
Her Virgin head they crowned,
Which ceremony ended,
Unto her Grace the thousand Graces bended.
Then sang the shepherds and Nymphs of Diana:
Long live fair Oriana.

Weep, O mine eyes

Weep, O mine eyes, and cease not.
Your spring-tides – out, alas! – methinks increase not.
O when, O when begin you
to swell so high that I may drown me in you?

Adieu, sweet Amaryllis

Adieu, sweet Amaryllis.
For, since to part your will is –
O heavy tiding –
here is for me no biding.
Yet once again, ere that I part with you,
Amaryllis sweet adieu.

Flora gave me fairest flowers

Flora gave me fairest flowers –
none so fair in Flora's treasure.
These I placed on Phyllis' bowers:
she was pleased, and she my pleasure.
Smiling meadows seem to say:
'Come, ye wantons, here to play'.

Thou art but young, thou say'st

Thou art but young, thou say'st,
and love's delight thou weigh'st not.
O take time while thou may'st,
lest, when thou would'st, thou may'st not.
If love shall then assail thee,
a double, double anguish will torment thee
and thou wilt wish (but wishes all will fail thee):
'Oh me, that I were young again!' And so: repent thee!

Cruel, behold my heavy ending

Cruel, behold my heavy ending:
see what you wrought by your disdain.
Causeless I die, love still attending
your hopeless pity of my complaining.
Suffer those eyes which thus have slain me
with speed to end their killing power:
so shall you prove how love doth pain me,
and see me die still yowër. [yowër - yours]

I live, and yet methinks I do not breathe

I live, and yet methinks I do not breathe:
I thirst and drink; I drink, and thirst again:
I sleep, and yet I dream I am awake:
I hope for that I have; I have and want:
I sing and sigh; I love and hate at once.
O tell me, restless soul: what uncouth jar
doth cause such want in store, in peace such war?

Risposta (Answer)

There is a jewel which no Indian mines
can buy, no chymic art can counterfeit.
It makes men rich in greatest poverty,
makes water wine, turns wooden cups to gold:
the homely whistle to sweet music's strain.
Seldom it comes, to few from Heaven sent;
that much in little, all in nought: CONTENT.

Down in a valley

Down in a valley as *Alexis* trips,
Daphne sat sweetly sleeping;
soon as the wanton touched her ruddy lips
she nicely falls a-weeping.
The wag full softly lifts her,
and to and fro he sifts her.
But when nor sighs nor kisses moved her pity,
with plaints he warbles forth this mournful ditty:

'Hard Destinies, are Love and Beauty parted?
Fair *Daphne* so disdainful!
Cupid, thy shafts are too unjustly darted;
fond Love, thy wounds be painful.
But sith my lovely jewel
is proved so coy and cruel,
I'll live and frolic in her beauty's treasure
but languish, faint and die in her displeasure.'

When shall my wretched life

When shall my wretched life give place to death
that my sad cares may be enforced to leave me?
Come saddest shadow, stop my vital breath,
for I am thine: then let not care bereave thee
of thy sad thrall, but with thy fatal dart
kill care and me, while care lies at my heart.

Sweet honey-sucking bees

Sweet honey-sucking bees, why do you still
surfeit on roses, pinks and violets,
as if the choicest nectar lay in them
wherewith you store your curious cabinets?
Ah, make your flight to *Melisuavia's* lips:
there may you revel in ambrosian cheer,
where smiling roses and sweet lilies sit,
keeping their spring-tide graces all the year.

Yet, sweet, take heed, all sweets are hard to get.
Sting not her soft lips, O beware of that:
for if one flaming dart come from her eye,
was never dart so sharp, ah, then you die!

Weep, weep, mine eyes

Weep, weep, mine eyes, my heart can take no rest;
weep, weep, my heart, mine eyes shall ne'er be blest;
weep eyes, weep heart, and both this accent cry,
a thousand, thousand deaths, *Flaminia*, I die.
Now *Leander* to die I fear not;
death do thy worst: I care not!
I hope, when I am dead, in *Elysian* plain
to meet, and there with joy we'll love again.

Where most my thoughts

Where most my thoughts, there least mine eye is striking;
where least I come, there most my heart abideth;
where most I love, I never show my liking;
from what my mind doth hold, my body slideth;
I careless seem, where most my care dependeth;
a coy regard, where most my soul attendeth.

Despiteful thus unto myself I languish
and in disdain myself from joy I banish.
These secret thoughts enwrap me so in anguish
that life, I hope, will soon from body vanish
and to some rest will quickly be conveyed,
that on no joy while so I liv'd hath stayed.

Lady, your words do spite me

Lady, your words do spite me,
yet your sweet lips so soft kiss and delight me;
your deeds my heart surcharg'd with overjoying,
your taunts my life destroying.
Since both have force to spill me,
let kisses sweet, Sweet, kill me.
Knights fight with swords and lances:
fight you with smiling glances.
So, like swans of Leander,
my ghost from hence shall wander,
singing and dying.

Draw on, sweet night

Draw on, sweet night! best friend unto those cares
that do arise from painful melancholy.
My life so ill, through want of comfort, fares,
that unto thee I consecrate it wholly.
Sweet night, draw on! My griefs, when they be told
to shades and darkness, find some ease from paining.
And, while thou all in silence dost enfold,
I then shall have best time for my complaining.

I Fagiolini

Robert Hollingworth *director*

Rebecca Lea, Anna Crookes *sopranos*

Martha McLorinan *mezzo-soprano*

Matthew Long *tenor*

Charles Gibbs *bass*

with

Catherine Pierron *harpsichord*

I Fagiolini is internationally renowned for its genuinely innovative productions. Signature projects have included *The Full Monteverdi* by John La Bouchardière; *Tallis in Wonderland*, a new way of hearing polyphony with live and recorded voices; *Simunye*, the South African collaboration; *How Like An Angel (HLAA)*, with Australian contemporary circus company CIRCA for the 2012 Cultural Olympiad and performed at the Perth International Arts Festival, New York and in cathedrals across Europe; and *Betrayal: a polyphonic crime drama* (with John La Bouchardière), an immersive theatre piece sung to the music of Gesualdo with dancers and singers set in 'crime scenes'.

Recent projects have included five performances in the VOCES8 Foundation's online festival series *LIVE From London: Monteverdi (The Ache of Love)*, *Long, Long, Ago – Messe De Minuit* a joyous Christmas Eve programme of Charpentier, Howells and Dylan Thomas, *Re-Wilding The Waste Land* with Tamsin Greig narrating, *Au Naturel*, and *Angels and Demons* with Rachel Podger and Brecon Baroque. A podcast 'choral chat' collaboration, *Choral Chihuahua*, with The Sixteen's Harry

Christophers and Eamonn Dougan as well as a weekly educational and outreach series, *Sing The Score*, funded by Arts Council England and University of York which has been winning admirers globally. Upcoming performances include Cork International Choral Festival, Three Choirs Festival and St George's Bristol, among other summer festivals.

Recent disc releases include *Leonardo: Shaping the Invisible* and *John Wilbye Madrigals* on CORO Records. Previous Decca Classics discs include *Striggio: Mass in 40 parts* (2011 Early Music Gramophone and Diapason d'Or Award), *Amuse-Bouche – French Choral Delicacies*, and *1612 Italian Vespers*. The group is delighted to be Associate Ensemble at the University of York. I Fagiolini is managed worldwide by Percius: percious.co.uk

Catherine Pierron studied harpsichord with Kenneth Gilbert and Christophe Rousset at the Conservatoire Nationale Supérieur de Paris, obtaining her Premier Prix, before coming to London in 1994 to study further with David Roblou (financed by a bursary from the Ministère de la Culture). She was harpsichordist for the European Community Baroque Orchestra, and set up her own ensemble in the UK, The French Connection, to perform French seventeenth- and eighteenth-century repertoire. She has also played harpsichord and organ with Florilegium, The Brook Street Band, The English Cornett and Sackbut Ensemble and in many projects with I Fagiolini, including Handel, Bach and Purcell as well as their Decca recordings of *Striggio: Mass in 40 parts*, *1612 Italian Vespers* and *Monteverdi – The Other Vespers*.

Beverley & East Riding Early Music Festival is grateful to Canon David Grant for kind permission to use St John's Church for this evening's concert.

BEVERLEY & EAST RIDING EARLY MUSIC FESTIVAL is directed by Delma Tomlin MBE and administered by the National Centre for Early Music through the York Early Music Foundation (registered charity number 1068331)

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