York Early Music Festival 2024 6 – 13 July

Metamorfosi

Welcome to the 2024 Festival, celebrating musical creativity from the medieval to the Baroque. This year we do so through the human voice and song, the combination most prized for its power to communicate with us most directly; and through metamorphosis, the inspiration behind the creation, reimagination and reconstruction of music across time.

Vocal specialists joining us include The Gesualdo Six, Concerto Soave, The Sixteen, Vox Luminis and Cappella Pratensis, while other highlights focus on a series of chamber concerts curated by BBC New Generation Artist and Festival Artistic Adviser Helen Charlston and her guests who include the Consone Quartet, harpsichordist John Butt and mezzo-soprano Rebecca Leggett. As for reimagination, guest artists including the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, The Sixteen, Gawain Glenton’s In Echo and the Rose Consort of Viols will be revealing how much and how many composers have borrowed from each other and themselves. We are particularly delighted to welcome a new collaboration with artists and colleagues based in Flanders with support from the Alamire Foundation, AMUZ in Antwerp and the Flanders Government, and to host young ensembles from across Europe once again as they join us for our biennial International Young Artists Competition. Our thanks are due to Arts Council England, City of York Council, the Mayfield Valley Arts Trust and to the continued, and very vital, support of our NCEM Patrons and Festival Friends. Sincere thanks are also due to the Earl & Countess of Harewood Charitable Trust, Fortus, Harrowells Solicitors and the Shepherd Building Group. Delma Tomlin MBE Director, National Centre for Early Music

THE SINCEREST FORM OF FLATTERY?  
York Early Music Festival 2024: Event 1

Saturday 6 July 10.15am – 11.15am  
£12.00  
Venue: Bedern Hall

An introduction to one of the festival’s key themes of musical imitation and metamorphosis presented by John Bryan, Emeritus Professor of Music at the University of Huddersfield. Discover the ways in which composers and performers across the centuries built their own pieces by refashioning elements of works by their predecessors, elaborately decorating existing music, or re-purposing their own music in creative new ways.

CONCERTO SOAVE  
York Early Music Festival 2024: Event 2

Saturday 6 July 12.00pm – 1.10pm  
£22.00 (£20.00 concessions | £7.00 under 35)  
Venue: NCEM

Gabrielle Varbetian *soprano* Romain Bockler *baritone*  
Manon Papasergio *harp, viola da gamba* Jean-Marc Aymes *organ, harpsichord, direction*

Frescobaldi’s Arie musicali, published in the 1630s but less well-known than his famous keyboard pieces, are peaks of the rich vocal landscape of the early 17th century. In this exploration solos and duets are intertwined with instrumental pieces, stern meditations with lively balletti, and amorous complaints with variations of a thousand colours to paint a vibrant and colourful picture of Italy at the beginning of the Baroque.

*“Concerto Soave is an essential reference in the awakening of a baroque landscape all tense, virtuous, intimate*.” Classica

YORKSHIRE BAROQUE SOLOISTS  
York Early Music Festival 2024: Event 3

Saturday 6 July 4.30pm – 5.30pm  
£22.00 (£20.00 concessions | £7.00 under 35)  
Venue: NCEM

*directed by* Peter Seymour *harpsichord*

Bethany Seymour *soprano* Frederick Long *bass*  
Ian Hoggart *recorder*  
*with* Stephen Varcoe *reader*

Entertainment in 18th-Century London

London in the 18th century was, for those who could afford it, a city of pleasure. In this concert we visit the opera (“extravagantly lavish in its decorations, its only design to gratify the senses”), and take in the delights of the vibrant pleasure gardens at Ranelagh and Vauxhall. Music by Handel, Arne, Boyce, Chilcot, Fischer and Haydn joins with readings from Goldsmith, Carey, Burgess, “Hurlothrumbo”, Charlotte Papendieck and Burney.

*“Long caught that blend of youth and wisdom, every word so clear and vivid I felt as if I were really there*” The Times

THE SIXTEEN  
York Early Music Festival 2024: Event 4

Saturday 6 July 7.30pm  
Front nave: £35.00  
Rear nave: £30.00  
Side aisle: £15.00 (£10.00 under 35)  
Venue: York Minster

*directed by* Harry Christophers

Masters of imitation

plainsong Lauda Jerusalem Dominum (Psalm 147) 2.35  
LASSUS Osculetur me osculo oris sui 3.30  
CASULANA Morir non puo il mio core 2.00  
LASSUS Credo from Missa Osculetur me 8.00  
JOSQUIN Benedicta es caelorum Regina 6.15  
LASSUS Cantai, or piango 5.00  
LASSUS Lauda Jerusalem Dominum 7.10  
Interval  
CHATELET Benedicta es caelorum Regina (with si placet parts) 7.30  
LASSUS Salve Regina a6 7.00  
CASULANA Vagh’ amorosi augelli 2.00  
LASSUS Magnificat Benedicta es caelorum Regina 7.45  
Bob CHILCOTT Lauda Jerusalem Dominum (parody on Cantai, or piango) 9.10

In the late 16th-century Orlande de Lassus was the most celebrated composer in Europe. He was without doubt the most famous advocate of the technique of parody. This is when material is borrowed and reworked from another motet or chanson, sacred or secular, by the composer himself or someone else’s work. Our programme gives the listener a taste of this extraordinarily popular technique from the master himself, reworking his own pieces to parodies on another great master from almost a century earlier, Josquin des Pres. Moving onto the modern day, we have invited the extraordinarily inventive composer, Bob Chilcott, to write a sacred work parodying one of Lassus’s finest secular madrigals.

Maddalena Casulana (c. 1544 – c. 1590) was an Italian composer, lutenist and singer of the late Renaissance. She is the first female composer to have had a whole book of her music printed and published in the history of western music. Lassus is known to have conducted some of her works, making a nice link for inclusion of a Casulana madrigal in this programme

FLORILEGIUM  
York Early Music Festival 2024: Event 5

Sunday 7 July July 10.30am – 11.30m  
£22.00 (£20.00 concessions | £7.00 under35)  
Venue: NCEM

Ashley Solomon *flute*  
Reiko Ichise *viola da gamba*  
Siobhan Armstrong *harp*

Le Roi s’amuse: music for a king’s pleasure

Florilegium explore the intimate and elegant sound-world of France in the decades around 1700 and perform music by composers known to both Louis XIV and Louis XV, including works by some of the titans of this period in France – viol virtuoso Marin Marais and flute pioneer Jacques-Martin Hotteterre – as well as lesser-known names such as Jacques Morel, Jean-Baptiste Barriére and Michel de la Barre.

THE EARLY MUSIC SHOW  
York Early Music Festival 2024: Event 6

Sunday 7 July July 2.00pm – 3.00pm  
Admission is free but please book in advance  
Venue: NCEM

*Presented by* Hannah French

Join us for our annual broadcast of this popular Radio 3 show and meet selected guests from the Festival.

MINSTER MINSTRELS  
York Early Music Festival 2024: Event 7

Sunday 7 July July 4.30pm – 5.30pm  
£12.00 (£5.00 under 35)  
Free to NCEM Patrons and YEMF Friends  
Venue: Unitarian Chapel

*directed by* Nina Kümin

During the baroque period the compositional technique of antiphony (musical conversations between parts) was highly popular, particularly in chamber music. Inspired by this practice, the NCEM’s youth-music ensemble for school-age musicians offers a showcase of changing approaches to musical dialogue in 17th-century Italian chamber music. Alongside works by Castello, Frescobaldi, Gabrielli and Bononcini, the Minstrels will also perform compositions and improvisations exploring musical conversations of their own.

CUBAROQUE  
York Early Music Festival 2024: Event 8

Sunday 7 July 7.30pm – 8.40pm  
£25.00 (£23.00 concessions | £7.00 under 35)  
Venue: NCEM

Nicolas Mulroy *tenor*  
Elizabeth Kenny, Toby Carr *lutes*

Songs from two golden ages

An unusual, possibly unique, pairing of two glorious songwriting traditions, bringing together perennial favourites Purcell and Monteverdi with more modern songs from across South America.

Though separated by time and distance, they have in common a concern with love, loss, longing and the eternal elements of what it is to be alive, proving that what unites is more interesting than that which divides.

*“the sheer expressivity of (Mulroy’s)singing was a thing of wonder here. Every phrase, every word was turned over carefully so as to heighten the storytelling*.” The Times

*“the peerless lutenist Elizabeth Kenny*” The Guardian

DOMINO CONSORT & UNIVERSITY OF YORK BAROQUE ENSEMBLE  
York Early Music Festival 2024: Event 9

Monday 8 July 12.00pm – 1.00pm  
£12.00 (£10.00 concessions | £7.00 under 35 & full time students)  
Venue: NCEM

Asuka Sumi and Rachel Gray directors

Welcome to all the Pleasures!

Dive into the taverns of Purcell’s London, where merriment flowed as freely as the ale! Set your toes tapping with spirited dances from Purcell’s semi-operas The Fairy Queen and The Indian Queen performed by the University of York Baroque Ensemble, sooth your souls with airs sung by the postgraduate Domino Consort, and savour the harmonies of Welcome to all the Pleasures, a toast to the joys of life and music!

THE ORCHESTRA OF THE AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT  
York Early Music Festival 2024: Event 10

Monday 8 July 7.00pm – 8.15pm   
£25.00 (£23.00 concessions | £7.00 under 35)  
Venue: NCEM

*directed by* Steven Devine

An Evening at Zimmerman’s coffee house

From 1720 to 1741, Zimmerman’s Kaffeehaus in Leipzig was the home of the Collegium Musicum, a concert society originally founded by Telemann and later directed by JS Bach. Naturally its musical evenings often featured works by the two friends. The OAE presents an evening of music that may have featured at these coffee-fuelled gatherings, including a new reconstruction of a concerto of which JS Bach left only an intriguing eight-bar glimpse…

*“The secret? The OAE’s musicianship, camaraderie and mutual understanding*” The Times

HELEN CHARLSTON & REBECCA LEGGETT  
York Early Music Festival 2024: Event 11

Monday 8 July 9.15pm – 10.15pm  
£22.00 (£20.00 concessions | £7.00 under 35)  
Venue: Merchant Taylor’s Hall

Helen Charlston *mezzo-soprano*  
Rebecca Leggett *mezzo-soprano*  
John Butt *harpsichord*  
Jonathan Manson *basse de viole*

Couperin: Leçons de ténèbres

Many of the ‘songs’ we are hearing at this year’s festival naturally incline towards the secular, but tonight’s concert is about the sacred. Couperin’s Leçons de ténèbres are an exquisitely emotional depiction of that most human of sounds: the cry of mourning. Couperin stated that, while he wrote the Leçons for two sopranos, “all other types of voices may sing them”.

As a lower voice (!) I have long hoped to perform them, and I can’t think of a better team with whom to sharen this intensely personal and devotional work. Helen Charlston

*[Rebecca Leggett] “It was thrilling to see and hear a fine career blossoming before one’s eyes and ears.*” Sussex World

*[Helen Charlston] surely one of the most exciting voices in the new generation of British singers.*” Gramophone

JOSQUIN’S LEGACY REVEALED  
York Early Music Festival 2024: Event 12

Tuesday 9 July 10.30am – 11.30am  
£12.00  
Venue: Bedern Hall

An illustrated lecture by Owain Park and Guy James unveiling The Gesualdo Six’s response to Josquin’s legacy – exploring how echoes of songs and motets from the courts of Margaret of Austria and Anne of Brittany may have travelled with Josquin and his contemporaries via Ferrara to inspire Gesualdo’s compositions at his court in the hills east of Naples a century later.

CONSONE QUARTET  
York Early Music Festival 2024: Event 13

Tuesday 9 July 12.00pm – 1.00pm  
£22.00 (£20.00 concessions | £7.00 under 35)  
Venue: NCEM

Agata Daraškaite, Magdalena Loth-Hill *violins*  
Elitsa Bogdanova *viola* George Ross *cello*  
with Helen Charlston *mezzo-soprano*

‘On the wings of a song, I’ll carry you, my love, away…’

A festival celebrating song seems a wonderful opportunity to examine the intimate world of Schumann’s superb song-cycle Frauenlieben und-leben through a new lens: string quartet and voice. Though not written for this combination, it is at heart a piece of direct storytelling full of musical conversation and memory, and this arrangement by William Thorp puts the intimacy and directness of chamber music at the centre of the story, transporting us to a new world of life and love.

We also perform songs by Clara Schumann, and Felix and Fanny Mendelssohn. This programme began life as a set of recording sessions for radio broadcast when the Consone Quartet and I were BBC New Generation Artists, so it is wonderful to see it come to fruition for a live audience in York. Helen Charlston

“*I would happily listen to them all day*” Sir Roger Norrington

THE GESUALDO SIX  
York Early Music Festival 2024: Event 14

Tuesday 9 July 7.30pm – 8.40pm   
£35.00 (£33.00 concessions | £10.00 under 35)  
Venue: York Minster Chapter House

Josquin’s legacy: through the shadows

Courts in Renaissance Italy were meeting places for some of the to finest musicians from across Europe, the great Josquin Desprez among them. Tonight’s concert traces themes of teaching and patronage in northern Italy over 150 years, with highlights including responses to the Lamentations of Jeremiah by Pierre de La Rue and Antoine Brumel, and a work by Indian-American composer, Shruthi Rajasekar, commissioned by The Gesualdo Six in 2022.

“*An impeccably performed recital – it’s hard to think it could be better sung*.” The Guardian

ROSE CONSORT OF VIOLS  
York Early Music Festival 2024: Event 15

Tuesday 9 July 9.30pm – 10.30pm  
£22.00 (£20.00 concessions | £7.00 under 35)  
Venue: NCEM

*with* Martha McLorian *mezzo-soprano*

Songs of sweetness and suavity A concert focusing on the first great body of music to rework existing songs, from the years around 1500. At the courts of northern Italy and in the first published songbooks, settings of courtly love poetry were treated to highly inventive reworkings, sometimes with elegant textless parts suitable for the newly developed consort of viols. The Rose Consort plays a unique set of viols derived from a Bolognese painting of 1497 by Isabella d’Este’s court painter.

*[Martha McLorian] “a radiant soloist .. a powerful, intense performance*” The Guardian

APOTROPAIK  
York Early Music Festival 2024: Event 16

Wednesday 10 July 12.00pm – 1.00pm  
£22.00 (£20.00 concessions | £7.00 under 35)  
Venue: Holy Trinity Micklegate

Clémence Niclas *voice, recorders*  
Louise Bouedo-Mallet *vielle*  
Marie-Domitille Murez *gothic harp*  
Clément Stagnol *medieval lute*

Charles VII, music-lover

The presence in the records of Johannes Ockeghem as a “cantor and chaplain” at the King’s Chapel in 1453 testifies to Charles VII’s interest in music, as well as in the new generation of Franco-Flemish composers. Better known for his liturgical music, Ockeghem also wrote about 20 songs of extreme refinement and creativity. The concert features these alongside important contemporaries such as Binchois, Dufay and Busnois.

Apotropaïk were winners of the YEMF Friends prize in the 2021 Competition. Their concert in York last summer was a sell-out, and we are delighted to welcome them back to the city for this mini-residency

ENSEMBLE IN ECHO  
York Early Music Festival 2024: Event 17

Wednesday 10 July 7.30pm – 8.40pm  
£25.00 (£23.00 concessions | £7.00 under 35)  
Venue: St Lawrence Church

Gawain Glenton*cornetto* Oliver Webber *violin, viola*  
Rachel Byrt *viola* Gavin Kibble viol William Hunt *viol, violone*  
Emily White, Adam Crighton *sackbuts*  
Silas Wollston *keyboards*

Metamorfosi – Italian transformations

The Renaissance courts of Northern Italy were home to a playful musical culture in which madrigals were passed between friends, sometimes with knowing references to mutual acquaintances. The resulting imitations, parodies and transformations of these originals were created in the spirit of homage or witty riposte, and in this concert we hear friendly exchanges involving Van Eyck, Arcadelt, Rore, Striggio, Bassano, Banchieri and others.

*[In Echo] “you have that wonderful thing, a genuinely interesting, musically rewarding concert that leaves you understanding the period better too*” Robert Hollingworth

HELEN CHARLSTON mezzo-soprano TOBY CARR lute  
York Early Music Festival 2024: Event 18

Wednesday 10 July 9.30pm – 10.30pm  
£22.00 (£20.00 concessions | £7.00 under 35)  
Venue: Merchant Adventurer’s Hall

Dowland: Lend ears and tears, O hapless man

The world of song – from 19th-century art-song by Schumann to the biggest acts at Glastonbury, to songs heard at an open-mic night – started right here in the creativity of John Dowland and his contemporary, John Danyel, whose music we perform in our final concert. Dowland called on his audiences to “lend ears and tears” to give his art life, so we have lent his venerable combination of voice and lute to composers Anna Semple and Ben Rowarth, adding a vital 21st-century extension to this extraordinary lineage of song. I’m delighted to be returning to York with Toby Carr, following the performance of our Gramophone Award-winning Battle Cry programme last year HC

*[Toby Carr] “sensuous and vivid*” The Guardian

YORK INTERNATIONAL YOUNG ARTISTS COMPETITION INFORMAL RECITAL 1

Thursday 11 July 10.30am – 4.00pm  
£25.00 / £40.00 for both days (£5.00 under 35)  
Venue: NCEM

Over the next two days, we are delighted to welcome you to a series of friendly recitals presented by the young ensembles taking part in the Competition on Saturday 13 July. To help them settle in, and to ensure that you get to know them in advance of the judges, we are presenting these two days of informal concerts introduced by keyboard specialist and former YEMF Artistic Adviser Steven Devine.

The York Competition is recognised as a major international platform for emerging talent in the world of early music. The competition attracts musicians from all over the world, offering a major boost to young professional careers with opportunities for performance, recording, broadcasting and international exposure.

Details of who will be taking part this year will be available from yorkcomp.ncem.co.uk

VOX LUMINIS  
York Early Music Festival 2024: Event 19

Thursday 11 July 7.45pm – 8.45pm  
£35.00 (£33.00 concessions | £10.00 under 35)  
East End Alter Seating £20.00  
Venue: York Minster Quire

*directed by* Lionel Meunier

Sacro Monteverdi

In 1641 Monteverdi published his Selva morale e spirituali, a major retrospective a major retrospective that he produced of sacred works produced over nearly three decades as musical director at St Mark’s Basilica in Venice. Covering a wide range of styles and emotions, they make use of the expressive resources he had developed as a master of the church motet, secular madrigal and opera. Vox Luminis’s selection ranges from large-scale, colourfully accompanied motets to intimate creations for just a few singers and players.

*“Vox Luminis, whose name is enough in itself to spark a tingle of anticipation*” Gramophone

APOTROPAIK  
York Early Music Festival 2024: Event 20

Thursday 11 July 9.45pm – 10.45pm  
£22.00 (£20.00 concessions | £7.00 under 35)  
Venue: Merchant Adventurers Hall

Bella donna

For their second concert Apotropaïk focus on ‘La bella donna’, the idealised woman praised in the courtly love tradition, but also the sublime, poisonous flower well known to witches for the preparation of their potions. Starting from a canso de trobairitz (female alter ego of the troubadour) and progressing through monodic and polyphonic songs of the 13th and 14th centuries, the programme reveals a mosaic of fascinating female figures

UTOPIA  
York Early Music Festival 2024: Event 21

Friday 12 July 6.00pm – 7.00pm  
£22.00 (£20.00 concessions | £7.00 under 35)  
Venue: NCEM

Michaela Riener *mezzo-soprano* Bart Uvyn *countertenor* Adriaan De Koster *tenor*  
Lieven Termont *baritone* Guillaume Olry *bass* Jan Van Outryve *lute*

Salve Susato: treasures from Antwerp’s golden age

Flemish vocal ensemble Utopia invite you to meet Tielman Susato, a composer known today mostly for his instrumental works, but who flourished in 16th-century Antwerp as a publisher of vocal music by the likes of Josquin, Lassus, Gombert, Crecqillon, Clemens non Papa – and himself. His Missa ‘In illo tempore’ and motet Salve quae roseo (described as “a wonderful ode to Antwerp”) sit at the heart of this programme.

CAPPELLA PRATENSIS & I FEDELI  
York Early Music Festival 2024: Event 22

Friday 12 July 9.00pm – 10.00pm  
£35.00 (£33.00 concessions | £10.00 under 35)  
East End Alter Seating £20.00  
Venue: York Minster Quire

Wim Diepenhorst *organ, regal*  
Josué Meléndez & Catherine Motuz *artistic direction*  
*directed by* Stratton Bull

Jacob Obrecht and Jacobus Barbireau

Obrecht and Barbireau, two prominent representatives of Franco-Flemish polyphony with connections to the Church of Our Lady in Antwerp around 1500 (today’s Antwerp Cathedral), come together in this concert. In his masses and motets Obrecht was an innovative user of the cantus firmus technique in which polyphonic fabric weaves around an existing melody, as in his celebratory Missa Sub tuum praesidium. Osculetur me, Barbireau’s only surviving motet, completes the programme.

These concerts are presented in association with the Alamire Foundation and AMUZ with support from the Flanders Government.

YORK INTERNATIONAL YOUNG ARTISTS COMPETITION

Saturday 13 July 10.00am – 5.00pm  
£40.00 (£10.00 under 35)  
Venue: NCEM

The 2024 competition will be presented by Steven Devine and judged by Bart Demuyt (Director AMUZ/ Alamire Foundation); internationally acclaimed lutenist Elizabeth Kenny (Royal Academy of Music); producer and recording engineer Philip Hobbs (Linn Records); Lionel Meunier, (Director of Vox Luminis); and clarinettist/lecturer Emily Worthington (University of York).

The winners of the Competition will be announced at the end of the afternoon and will receive a professional CD recording contract from Linn Records, a cheque for £1,000 and opportunities to work with BBC Radio 3 and the National Centre for Early Music. In addition we offer prizes supported by the Cambridge Early Music Festival, the European Union Baroque Orchestra Development Trust and the Friends of York Early Music Festival.

If you are not already a Friend – but are interested in making your vote count on the day – please contact friends@ncem.co.uk and join in the fun