

BYRD 1588

Psalmes, Sonets & songs
of sadnes and pietie

Grace Davidson SOPRANO
Martha McLorinan MEZZO-SOPRANO
Nicholas Todd TENOR

ALAMIRE
FRETWORK
DAVID SKINNER



INVENTA

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Grace Davidson, soprano

Martha McLorinan, mezzo-soprano

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Alamire, directed by David Skinner

*Original order in 1588 publication
noted in square brackets*

William Byrd (1543–1623)

DISC ONE

Psalms

- | | |
|---|--------|
| 1. O God give ear [1] | [3:50] |
| 2. Mine eyes with fervency of
sprite [2] | [3:48] |
| 3. My soul oppressed with care
and grief [3] | [2:22] |
| 4. O Lord how long wilt thou forget [5] | [3:48] |
| 5. O Lord who in thy sacred tent [6] | [4:00] |

Sonnets and pastorals

- | | |
|---|--------|
| 6. O you that hear this voice [16] | [6:15] |
| 7. Ambitious love [18] | [2:29] |
| 8. Although the heathen poets [21] | [1:10] |
| 9. My mind to me a kingdom Is [14] | [6:02] |
| 10. Farewell false love [25] | [6:17] |
| 11. If women could be fair [17] | [3:44] |
| 12. Who likes to love [13] | [5:38] |
| 13. La Verginella [24] | [2:41] |

Songs of sadness and piety

- | | |
|---|---------|
| 14. Lullaby, my sweet little baby [32] | [15:30] |
| 15. All as a sea [28] | [2:09] |
| 16. Prostrate, O Lord, I lie [27] | [2:10] |

Funeral Song of Sir Phillip Sidney

- | | |
|--|--------|
| 17. Come to me grief forever [34] | [6:52] |
|--|--------|

Total playing time	[78:54]
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DISC TWO

Psalms

- | | |
|--|--------|
| 1. Even from the depth [10] | [1:48] |
| 2. Blessed is he that fears the Lord [8] | [3:51] |
| 3. How shall a young man prone
to ill [4] | [2:24] |
| 4. Help Lord for wasted are
those men [7] | [4:56] |
| 5. Lord in thy wrath reprove me not [9] | [4:04] |

Sonnets and pastorals

- | | |
|--|--------|
| 6. Though Amaryllis dance
in green [12] | [5:53] |
| 7. Constant Penelope [23] | [2:30] |
| 8. I joy not in no earthly bliss [11] | [3:40] |
| 9. As I beheld I saw a
herdman wild [20] | [4:59] |
| 10. Where fancy fond [15] | [5:19] |
| 11. What pleasure have great
princes [19] | [4:47] |
| 12. In fields abroad [22] | [5:39] |
| 13. The match that's made [26] | [5:05] |

Songs of sadness and piety

- | | |
|---|--------|
| 14. Why do I use my paper,
ink and pen? [33] | [7:12] |
| 15. Care for thy soul [31] | [1:48] |
| 16. Susanna fair [29] | [3:34] |
| 17. If that a sinner's sighs [30] | [2:02] |

Funeral Song of Sir Phillip Sidney

- | | |
|---|--------|
| 18. O that most rare breast [35] | [8:37] |
|---|--------|

Total playing time	[78:20]
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Sir Christopher Hatton (1540–1591)

Benigne Reader, heere is offered vnto thy courteous acceptation, Musicke of sundrie sorts, and to content diuers humors. If thou bee disposed to pray, heere are Psalmes. If to bee merrie, heere are Sonets. If to lament for thy sins, heere are songs of sadnesse and Pietie...

The words of William Byrd 'the most assured friend to all that loue or learne Musicke', in the preface to his first solo publication in 1588. It was back in 1575 when he and his mentor and friend, Thomas Tallis, were granted a monopoly of music printing in England by Elizabeth I which lasted for twenty-one years. The first to roll off the presses was the joint publication *Cantiones Sacrae* which included seventeen compositions each, dedicated to the queen and to promote English composition at home and abroad (some seven decades after the first Continental publications by Ottaviano Petrucci). Alamire released its recording of the entire collection, in the order of publication, back in 2011 (Obsidian, CD706), and after our recent forays into early sixteenth-century French music (*Spy's Choirbook*, CD712; *Anne Boleyn's Songbook*, CD715) and early Tallis (*Songs of Reformation*, CD716), we now return to Byrd's presses, which, in terms of his own music, had fallen silent for some thirteen years.

How the world must have changed for the composer since 1575. Thomas Tallis died

(1585); the poet Sir Philip Sidney, the subject of a number of Byrd's songs, was killed in battle (1586); the focus for Catholic sympathisers, Mary Queen of Scots, was executed at Fotheringhay (1587); and in 1588 the English were victorious over the Spanish Armada, and the country was at its most polarised, politically and religiously. In this year Byrd published songs that, it is thought, might aid to heal the divide and sooth the souls of both Protestants and Catholics alike. Byrd himself was famously of the latter disposition, with the majority of his published works intended not only for domestic use, but also for the private consumption of recusant Catholics, including proper and ordinary settings of the Mass.

Byrd was certainly not idle during this thirteen-year hiatus. Apart from several editions of the *Whole Booke of Psalmes*, at least four collections of music by other English composers were produced, including works by William Damon (1579), William Hunnis (1583), John Cosyn (1585) and Christopher Fetherstone (1587). Byrd's *Psalmes, Sonets, & songs* was registered with the Stationers' Company on 6 November 1587, and published in the following year. It therefore most likely predates another of Byrd's 1588 projects *Musica Transalpina*, a collection of works by Italian madrigalists 'Englished'. It was also during this period that Byrd would have been working on his two iconic collections of *Cantiones Sacrae*,

published in 1589 and 1591. He alludes to them in his preface to the 1588 collection, saying that he hoped that 'these poore songs of mine might yeeld some sweetnesse, repose, and recreation', and might encourage the production of 'some other things of more depth and skill to follow...'. These words were addressed to the patron of the 1588 collection, Sir Christopher Hatton (1540-1591).

Hatton, who became Elizabeth I's Lord Chancellor in the previous year, quickly rose in the ranks of the court and became exceedingly wealthy owing chiefly to the queen's fondness of him. It is not known whether he was one of Elizabeth's lovers, but in 1583 he embarked on an ambitious building project at Holdenby in Northamptonshire, which was to become the largest privately owned Elizabethan house in England. It was as large as Hampton Court palace, built on three stories and boasted some 123 enormous glass windows and complete with two state rooms: one for himself and the other for the queen. It is said that he refused to reside in the house until Elizabeth might visit and stay the night. She never did. Hatton himself was rarely in residence but was known to have had an extended stay in the summer of 1586 in order to recover his health, as he was then 'full of fever, with stitches, spitting of blood, and other accidents.' The summer

of 1589, a year after Byrd's collection appeared, was somewhat more jolly. It was the occasion of the marriage of Hatton's nephew and heir Sir William Newport (alias Hatton), where Hatton very much joined in the celebrations: 'my Lord Chancellor danced the measures at the solemnity', leaving his gown on a chair saying "Lie thou there, Chancellor". Of course where there is dancing, there is music, begging the question as to whether any of Byrd's works that he sponsored might have been performed by the musicians at some point in the proceedings. Indeed, as Lord Chancellor and being so close personally to the queen, one might suspect that the musicians would have been top notch, possibly including William Byrd himself as well as courtly musicians and other members of the Chapel Royal. Unfortunately no contemporary accounts of the wedding celebrations survive, so this must be left to pure speculation. In the end, the project at Holdenby bankrupted Hatton and on his death in 1591 he owed the queen more than £18,000 in arrears. The house was pulled down in the seventeenth century, and the reconstruction that took place, although magnificent, is but an eighth of its original size.

On the grounds of Holdenby House there still survives a fourteenth-century estate church dedicated to All Saints, where this recording took place. One important relic of the original



house which still survives in the church is a portion of an elaborately carved wooden screen which separated the great hall from the chapel, both undoubtedly venues for music-making in the house. It is enticing to consider that whatever music was played in the summer of 1589 reverberated in these panels, and voices and instruments once again resounded in front of this screen some 430 years later.

* * *

Byrd produced three collections of vernacular songs during his long publishing career. After 1588 his second offering, *Songs of sundrie natures*, was published in the following year, while his third, *Psalmes, Songs, and Sonnets*, appeared in 1611 (this also happened to be the final publication before his death in 1623). This is the first complete recording of Byrd's 1588 collection. It contains 35 songs, all for five voices, and grouped into four categories: 10 psalm settings, 16 sonnets and pastorals, 7 songs of sadness and piety, and 2 funeral elegies for Sir Philip Sidney. Byrd explains that the songs were 'originally made for Instruments to expresse the harmony, and one voyce to pronounce the dittie [= poem]', implying four viols and a single voice; however, for the publication he decided to adapt all the works so that they are 'now framed in all parts for voyces to sing the same [dittie]', or, more plainly, a consort of a cappella voices. He goes further to

suggest that the songs may equally be expressed by 'voyces or Instruments', so voices alone or viols alone. Essentially, whatever might suit. This is the path that we followed for this recording. Byrd here represents practically all levels of human emotion, and to programme its entire contents on to a double disc certainly came with certain challenges and decisions. The majority of songs have been performed in Byrd's original format for voice (where the 'first singing part' is indicated) and viols, while thirteen works were chosen which seemed best suited to pure vocal performance. Four were left to viols alone. This allowed for contrast in performing forces across the collection, which we have divided into two separate programmes, one per disc, each following Byrd's original categories. Most works have multiple verses, and it is interesting to consider how Elizabethans listened to such performances. The two songs that make up psalm 119 (*My soul oppressed* and *How shall a young man*), for example, would take some twenty minutes to perform. We therefore took liberty in cutting some verses of the psalms in particular, so that the majority of the other poetical works might be presented in their entirety.

While many of the poems remain anonymous, it is clear that Byrd was able to draw from the finest literary figures of his day, including Sir Walter Raleigh, Edward de

Vere (Seventeenth Earl of Oxford), Sir Edward Dyer and Sir Philip Sidney. We let the music speak for itself, and encourage following the provided texts so that Byrd's expert setting of each 'dittie' becomes more readily apparent. Those wishing to delve deeper into these songs are referred to *Jeremy Smith's Verse & Voice in Byrd's Song Collections of 1588 and 1589* (Boydell Press, 2016), which makes a fine companion to this recorded collection.

By 1588 Byrd was already a master contrapuntalist in all mediums, vocal and instrumental. He was particularly keen to promote the former to his 1588 audience and 'to perswade euery one to learne to sing'. In closing, his words are here shared with you:

First, it is a knowledge easely taught, and quickly learned, where there is a good Master and an apt Scholler.
2. The exercise of singing is delightfull to Nature, & good to preserue the health of Man.
3. It doth strengthen all parts of the brest, & doth open the pipes.
4. It is a singular good remedie for a stutting and stamering in the speech.
5. It is the best meanes to procure a perfect pronounciation, & to make a good Orator.
6. It is the onely way to know where Nature hath bestowed the benefit of a good voyce: which giuft is so rare, as there is not one among a thousand, that hath it: and in many, that excellent giuft is lost because they want

are to expresse Nature.

7. There is not any Musicke of Instruments whatsoever, comparable to that which is made of the voyces of Men, where the voyces are good, and the same well sorted and ordered.
8 The better the voyce is, the meeter it is to honour and serue God there-with: and the voyce of man is chiefly to bee employed to that ende.

*Since singing is so good a thing,
I wish all men would learne to sing.*

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Texts

Full texts from the 1588 publication, including verses omitted on this recording, can be found at www.inventarecords.com

DISC ONE

1. O God give ear and do apply
to hear me when I pray,
and when to thee I call and cry,
hide not thy self away.

Take heed to me, grant my request,
and answer me again;
with plaints I pray, full sore oppressed;
great grief doth me constrain

Because my foes, with threats and cries,
oppress me through despite,
and so the wicked sort likewise
to vex me have delight.

For they in council do conspire
to charge me with some ill;
so in their hasty wrath and ire
they do pursue me still.

*Psalm 55, vv. 1–4;
metrical translation by John Hopkins, d. 1570*

2. Mine eyes with fervency of sprite
I do lift up on high
to thee, O Lord, that dwellest in light
which no man may come nigh.

Behold, even as the servant's eyes
upon their master wait,
and as the maid her mistress' hand
with careful eye and straight

The mighty proud men of the world,
that seeks us to oppress,
have filled our souls with all contempts
and left us in distress.

Psalm 123, translator unknown

3. My soul oppressed with care and grief
doth cleave unto the dust;
O quicken me after thy word,
for therein do I trust.

My ways unto thee have I showed,
thou answerest me again;
teach me thy law, and so I shall
be eased of my pain.

The way of thy commandments, Lord,
make me to understand,
and I will muse upon the power
and wonders of thy hand.

My heart doth melt and pine away
for very pain and grief;
O, raise me up, after thy word,
and send me some

Psalm 119, part 1; translator unknown

4. O Lord, how long wilt thou forget
to send me some relief?
Forever wilt thou hide thy face
and so increase my grief?

How long shall I, with vexèd heart,
seek counsel in my spirit?
how long shall my malicious foes
triumph and me despite?

O Lord my God, hear my complaint,
uttered with woeful breath;
lighten mine eyes, defend my life,
that I sleep not in death,

Lest that mine enemy say: I have
against him, lo, prevailed.
At my downfall they will rejoice,
that thus have me assailed.

But in thy mercy Lord I trust,
for that shall me defend;
my heart doth joy to see the help
which thou to me wilt send.

Unto the Lord therefore I sing,
and do lift up my voice,
and for his goodness showed to me
I will always rejoice.

Psalm 13; translator unknown

5. O Lord who in thy sacred tent
and holy hill shall dwell,
even he that both in heart and mind
doth study to do well.

In life upright, in dealing just,
and he that from his heart
the truth doth speak, with singleness,
all falsehood set apart.

With tongue besides that hurts no man
by false and ill report,
nor friend nor neighbour harm will do
wherever he resort.

That hates the bad, and loves the good,
and faith that never breaks,
but keeps always, though to his loss,
the word that once he speaks.

Psalm 15; translator unknown

6. O you that hear this voice
O you that see this face,
say whether of the choice [= which one of this choice],
may have the former place [= may have pride of place].
Who dare judge this debate,
that it be void of hate?

This side doth beauty take,
for that doth Music speak,
fit Orators to make
the strongest judgments weak.
The bar to plead their right,
is only true delight.

Thus doth the voice and face,
these gentle lawyers, wage [= dispute],
like loving brothers cast
for father's heritage,
that each, while each contends,
itself to other lends.

For beauty beautifies,
with heavenly hue and grace,
the heavenly harmonies,
and in that faultless face
the perfect beauties be:
a perfect harmony.

Music more lofty swells,
in phrases finely placed;
Beauty as far excels,
in action aptly graced;
a friend each party draw,
to countenance his cause.

*Sir Phillip Sidney, 1554-1586;
Sixth Song from Astrophil & Stella*

7. Ambitious love hath forced me to aspire
the beauties rare which do adorn thy face.
Thy modest life yet bridles my desire,
whose severe law doth promise me no grace.
But what? May love live under any law?
No, no. His power exceedeth man's conceit
of which the Gods themselves do stand in awe,
for on his frown, a thousand torments weight.
Proceed then in this desperate enterprise,
with good advise, and follow love, thy guide,
that leads thee to thy wishèd Paradise.
Thy climbing thoughts, this comfort take with all,
that if it be thy foul disgrace to slide [= to slip],
thy brave attempt shall yet excuse thy fall.

8. Although the heathen poets
did Apollo famous praise,
as one who for his music sweet no peer
had in his days.

9. My mind to me a kingdom Is
such perfect joy therein I find
That it excels all other bliss
which God, or Nature, hath assigned.
Though much I want, that most would have,
yet still my mind forbids to crave.

No princely port nor wealthy store;
no force to win a victory;
no wily wit to salve a sore;
no shape to win a loving eye.
To none of these I yield as thrall.
For why? My mind despise them all.

I see that plenty surfeits oft,
and hasty climbers soonest fall;
I see that such as are aloft
mishap doth threaten most of all.
These get with toil and keep with fear;
such cares my mind can never bear.

I press to bear no haughty sway;
I wish no more than may suffice;
I do no more than well I may;
look what I want my mind supplies.
Lo, thus I triumph like a King,
my mind content with anything.

I laugh not at another's loss,
nor grudge not at another's gain;
no worldly waves my mind can toss;
I brook that is another's bane
[= I bear what harms others];
I fear no foe nor fawn on friend;
I loath not life, nor dread mine end.

My wealth is health and perfect ease,
and conscience clear my chief defence;
I never seek by bribes to please,
nor by desert to give offence
[= nor to offend others with merited success].
Thus do I live. Thus will I die.
Would all did so, as well as I.

*Attrib. Edward de Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford,
and Sir Edward Dyer*

10. **Farewell false love** the oracle of lies,
a mortal foe, and enemy to rest:
an envious boy [= Cupid], from whom all cares arise,
a bastard vile, a beast, with rage possessed,
a way of error, a temple full of treason,
in all effects contrary unto reason.

A poisoned serpent covered all with flowers,
mother of sighs, and murderer of repose,
a sea of sorrows from whence are drawn such showers,
as moisture lend to every grief that grows,
a school of guile, a net of deep deceit,
a gilded hook that holds a poisoned bait.

A fortress foiled which reason did defend,
a Siren song, a fever of the mind,
a maze wherein affection finds no end,
a raging cloud that runs before the wind,
a substance like the shadow of the Sun,
a goal of grief, for which the wisest run.

A quenchless fire, a nurse of trembling fear,
a path that leads to peril and mishap,
a true retreat of sorrow and despair,
an idle boy that sleeps in pleasure's lap,
a deep mistrust of that which certain seems,
a hope of that which reason doubtful deems.

Sir Walter Raleigh, c. 1552–1618

11. **If women could be fair** and never fond,
or that their beauty might continue still,
I would not marvel though they made men bond,
by service long, to purchase their good will;
but when I see how frail these creatures are
I laugh, that men forget themselves so far.

To mark what choice they make, and how they change,
how leaving best the worst they chose out still,
and how, like haggards wild, about they range,
[haggards: wild female hawks (cf 'from the fist' below)]
scorning after reason to follow will.
Who would not shake such buzzards from the fist,
and let them fly (fair fools) which way they list
[= desire].

Yet for our sport, we fawn and flatter both,
to pass the time, when nothing else can please,
and train them on to yield, by subtle oath,
the sweet content, that gives such humour
[= disposition] ease.

And then we say, when we their follies try,
to play with fools, Oh what a fool was I.

Edward de Vere, Seventeenth Earl of Oxford

12. **Who likes to love**, let him take heed,
and wot you why [= do you know why]?
Among the Gods it is decreed
that love shall die,
and every wight [= being/creature] that takes his part
shall forfeit each a mourning heart.

The cause is this, as I have heard.
A sort [= shortened form of 'consórt'] of dames
Whose beauty he did not regard,
Nor secret flames,
Complained before the gods above
That gold corrupts the God of love.

The gods did storm to hear this news
and there they swore
that sith [= since] he did such dames abuse
he should no more
be god of love, but that he should
both die and forfeit all his gold.

His bow and shafts they took away
before their eyes
and gave these dames a longer day
for to devise
who should them keep, and they be bound
that love for gold should not be found.

These ladies, striving long, at last
they did agree
to give them to a maiden chaste,
whom I did see,
who with the same did pierce my heart.
Her beauty's rare, and so I rest.

13. **La Verginella** è simile alla rosa,
ch'in bel giardin su la nativa spina
mentre sola e sicura si riposa,
né gregge né pastor se le avvicina;
l'aura soave e l'alba rugiadosa,
l'acqua, la terra al suo favor s'inchina:
gioveni vaghi e donne inamorate
amano averne e seni e tempie ornate.

*The virgin has her image in the rose
Sheltered in garden on its native stock,
Which there in solitude and safe repose,
Blooms unapproached by shepherd or by flock.
For this earth teems, and freshening water flows,
And breeze and dew down their sweets unlock:
With such the wistful youth his bosom dresses.
With such the enamoured damsel braids her tresses.*

*Ludovico Ariosto, 1474–1533; 'Orlando Furioso',
canto 1, octaves 42–43*

14. **Lullaby, my sweet little baby**
Lulla, la lulla, lullla lullaby,
My sweet little Baby, what meanest Thou to cry?

Be still, my blessed Babe, though cause
Thou hast to mourn,
whose blood most innocent to shed the
cruel king has sworn;
and lo, alas! behold what slaughter he doth make,
shedding the blood of infants all, sweet
Saviour, for Thy sake.
A King, a King is born, they say, which
King this king would kill.
O woe and woeful heavy day when
wretches have their will!
Lulla la lulla, lulla, lullaby, my sweet, etc.

Three kings this King of kings to see
are come from far,
to each unknown, with offerings great,
by guiding of a star;
and shepherds heard the song which
angels bright did sing,
giving all glory unto God for coming of this King,
which must be made away — king
Herod would Him kill.
O woe and woeful heavy day,
when wretches have their will.
Lulla la lulla, lulla, lullaby, my sweet, etc.

Lo, lo, my little Babe, be still, lament no more:
from fury Thou shalt step aside,
help have we still in store;
we heavenly warning have some other soil to seek;
from death must fly the Lord of life,
as lamb both mild and meek.
Thus must my Babe obey the
king that would Him kill.
O woe, and woeful heavy day,
when wretches have their will.
Lulla la lulla, lulla, lullaby, my sweet, etc.

But thou shalt live and reign,
as sibyls hath foresaid,
as all the prophets prophesy,
whose mother, yet a maid
and perfect virgin pure,
with her breasts shall upbraid [= nurture]
both God and man that all hath made,
the Son of heavenly seed,
whom caitiffs [= wretch] none can
'tray [= betray], whom tyrants none can kill.
O joy, and joyful happy day,
when wretches want their will.

16. Prostrate, O Lord, I lie
behold me, Lord, with pity;
stop not thine ears against my cry,
my sad and mourning ditty
breathed from an inward soul,
from heart heartily contrite,
an offering sweet, a sacrifice,
in thy high heavenly sight.

17. Come to me grief forever
come to me tears day and night,
come to me plaint, ah, helpless:
just grief, heart tears, plaint worthy.

Go from me dread to die now,
go from me care to live more,
go from me joys all on earth:
Sidney, O Sidney is dead.

He whom the Court adorned,
he whom the country courtiesied
[=admiringly regarded],
he who made happy his friends,
he that did good to all men.

Sidney, the hope of lands strange [= foreign],
Sidney, the flower of England,
Sidney, the spirit heroic:
Sidney is dead, O dead, dead.

Dead? no, no, but renomèd [= renowned],
with the anointed onèd [= united],
honour on earth at his feet:
bliss everlasting his seat.

Come to me grief for ever,
come to me tears day and night,
come to me plaint, ah, helpless:
just grief, heart tears, plaint worthy.

DISC TWO

1. Even from the depth,
unto thee Lord,
with heart and voice I cry:
Give ear O God unto my plaint
and help my misery.

Psalm 130; translator unknown

2. Blessed is he that fears the Lord;
he walketh in his ways
and sets his great delight therein
the length of all his days.

His seed, and those which of him come,
mighty on earth shall be;
the race of such as faithful are,
men blessed them shall see.

Plenteousness within his house,
and want there shall be never:
his righteous and upright dealing
[en]dure shall for ever.

In misty clouds of troubles dark,
which do the just oppress,
the Lord, in mercy, sends them light
and easeth their distress.

Psalm 112; translator unknown

4. Help, Lord, for wasted are those men
which righteousness embrace,
and rarely found that faithful are,
but all the truth deface.

Each to his neighbour falsehood speaks
and them seeks to beguile
with flattering lips, and double heart,
when smoothest he doth smile.

All flattering lips, the Lord our God,
in justice will confound,
and all proud tongues, that vaunt great things
he will bring to the ground.

Our tongues say they shall lift us up;
by them we shall prevail.
Who should us let [=hinder], or stop our course,
that thereof we should fail?

For the destruction of the just,
and such as be oppressed,
and for the mournings of the poor,
that likewise be distressed,

I will rise up now, saith the Lord,
and ease their grief and care,
of those which he full craftily,
hath drawn into his snare.

Psalm 12; translator unknown

5. Lord in thy wrath reprove me not
though I deserve thine ire,
nor yet correct me in thy rage,
O Lord, I thee desire.

For I am weak; therefore, O Lord,
of mercy me forbear,
and heal me, Lord. For why? Thou knowest
my bones do quake for fear.

My soul is troubled very sore,
and vexed exceedingly;
but, Lord, how long wilt thou delay
to cure my misery?

Lord, turn thee to thy wanted grace;
some pity on me take.
O save me, not for my deserts,
but for thy mercies' sake.

For why? No man among the dead
remembereth thee at all;
or who shall worship thee, O Lord
that in the pit do fall?

So grievous is my plaint and moan,
that I grow wondrous faint;
all the night long I wash my bed
with tears of my complaint.

*Psalm 6; metrical translation
by Thomas Sternhold, d. 1549*

6. **Though Amaryllis dance in green,**
like Fairy Queen,
and sing full clear,
Corinna can with smiling cheer;
yet since their eyes make heart so sore,
hey ho, 'chill [= I will] love no more.

My sheep are lost for want of food
and I so wood[= mad]
that all the day
I sit and watch a herdmaid gay
who laughs to see me sigh so sore.
Hey ho, 'chill love no more.

Her loving looks, her beauty bright,
is such delight
that all in vain
I love to like and lose my gain
for her that thanks me not. Therefore,
hey ho, 'chill love no more.

Ah, wanton eyes, my friendly foes,
and cause of woes,
your sweet desire
breeds flames of ice and freeze in fire;
ye scorn to see me weep so sore.
Hey ho, 'chill love no more.

Love ye who list, I force him not
[= I take no care of him]
sith God it wot, [= since, God knows,]
the more I wail
the less my sighs and tears prevail.
What shall I do but say, therefore,
hey ho, 'chill love no more.

7. **Constant Penelope,** sends to the
careless Ulysses:
Write not again but come,
sweet mate thy self, to revive me.
Troy we do much envy,
we desolate lost Ladies of Greece;
not Priamus, nor yet all
Troy can us recompense make.
Oh, that he had when he first
took shipping to Lacedemon, he: Paris
that adulter[er], I mean, had been
overwhelmed with waters.
Then had I not lien now all alone,
thus quivering for cold,
nor used this complaint,
nor have thought the day to be so long.

*In English hexameters; based on Ovid,
Heroides, Letter 1*

8. **I joy not in no earthly bliss**
I force not [=care not for]
Croesus' wealth a straw,
for care, I know not what it is;
I fear not Fortune's fatal law;
my mind is such as may not move
for beauty bright, nor force of love.

I wish but what I have at will;
I wander not to seek for more.
I like the plain, I climb no hill;
in greatest storms I sit on shore
and laugh at them that toil, in vain,
to get what must be lost again.

I kiss not where I wish to kill;
I feign not love where most I hate;
I break no sleep to win my will;
I wait not at the mighty's gate;
I scorn no poor, nor fear no rich,
I feel no want, nor have too much.

The Court and cart I like nor loathe;
[= I neither like the court nor loathe
a peasant's life]
extremes are counted worst of all.
The golden mean between them both,
doth surest sit and fear no fall.
This is my choice. For why? I find,
no wealth is like the quiet mind.

*In imitation of 14; attrib.
Sir Edward Dyer, 1543–1607*

9. **As I beheld I saw a herdman wild**
with his sheephook a picture fine deface,
which he sometime, his fancy to beguild [sic],
had carved on bark of beech in secret place,
and with despite of most afflicted mind,
through deep despair, of heart, for love dismayed,
he pulled e'en from the tree, the carvèd rind,
and weeping sore these woeful words he said:
Ah Philida, would God thy picture fair
I could as lightly blot out of my breast;
then should I not thus rage, with great despite,
and tear the thing sometime I likèd best,
but all in vain, it booteth not, god wot
[= it brings no benefit, God knows],
what printed is in heart, on tree to blot.

10. **Where fancy fond** for pleasure pleads,
and reason keeps poor hope in jail,
there time it is to take my beads,
and pray, that beauty may prevail,
or else despair will win the field
where reason, hope, and pleasure yield.

My eyes presume to judge this case,
whose judgment reason doth disdain,
but beauty with her wanton face
stands to defend; the case is plain,
and at the bar of sweet delight
she pleads that fancy must be right.

But shame will not have reason yield
though grief do swear it shall be so,
as though it were a perfect shield
to blush and fear to tell my woe
where silence force will, at the last,
to wish for wit when hope is past.

So far hath fond desire outrun
the bond which reason set out first,
that where delight the fray begun,
I would now say, if that I durst,
that in her stead ten thousand woes
have sprung in field where pleasure grows.

I must, therefore, with silence build
the Labyrinth of my delight,
till Love hath tried in open field
which of the twain shall win the fight.
I fear me reason must give place,
if fancy fond win beauty's grace.

11. **What pleasure have great princes,**
more dainty to their choice,
than herdmen wild, who careless,
in quiet life rejoice,
and fortune's fate not fearing,
sing sweet in Summer morning.

Their dealings plain and rightful,
are void of all deceit;
they never know how spiteful [=shameful]
it is to kneel and wait
on favourite [= a court favourite]
presumptuous,
whose pride is vain and sumptuous
[= exorbitant].

All day their flocks each tendeth,
at night they take their rest,
more quiet than who sendeth
his ship into the East,
where gold and pearl are plenty,
but getting very dainty
[= but success in finding them rare].

For lawyers and their pleading,
They esteem it not a straw;
they think that honest meaning
is of itself a law;
where conscience judgeth plainly,
they spend no money vainly
[i.e. on lawyers' fees].

O happy who thus liveth,
not caring much for gold,
with clothing which sufficeth,
to keep him from the cold.
Though poor and plain his diet,
yet merry it is and quiet.

12. **In fields abroad**
where trumpets shrill do sound,
where glaives [= lances] and shields,
do give and take the knocks,
where bodies dead do overspread the ground,
and friends to foes are common butcher's blocks,
a gallant shot, well managing his piece,
in my conceit [= in my view] deserves a golden fleece.

Amid the seas, a gallant ship set out,
wherein nor men nor yet munitions lacks,
in greatest winds that spareth not a clout
[= a shred (of sail?)],
but cuts the waves in spite of weather's wracks,
would force a swain that comes of coward's kind,
to change himself and be of noble mind.

Who makes his seat a stately stamping steed,
whose neighs and plays are princely to behold,
whose courage stout, whose eyes are fiery red,
whose joints well knit, whose harness all of gold,
doth well deserve to be no meaner thing
than Persian knight whose horse made him a king.

By that beside, where sits a gallant Dame,
who casteth off her brave and rich attire,
whose petticoat sets forth as fair a frame
as mortal men or gods can well desire,
who sits and sees her petticoat unlaced,
I say no more: the rest are all disgraced.

13. **The match that's made** for just and true respects,
with evenness both of years, and parentage,
of force [= necessarily] must bring forth
many good effects.
Pari iugo dulcis tractus [Progress is sweet
with an equal yoke].

For where chaste love and liking sets the plant,
and concord waters with a firm good will,
of no good thing there can be any want.
Pari iugo dulcis tractus.

Sound is the knot that chastity hath tied,
sweet is the music unity doth make,
sure is the store that plenty doth provide.
Pari iugo dulcis tractus.

Where chasteness fails, there concord will decay;
where concord fleets, there plenty will decrease;
where plenty wants, there love will wear away.
Pari iugo dulcis tractus.

I Chastity restrain all strange desires;
I Concord keep the course of sound consent;
I Plenty spare, and spend as cause requires.
Pari iugo dulcis tractus.

Make much of us, all ye that married be,
speak well of us, all ye that mind to be,
the time may come, to want and wish all three.
Pari iugo dulcis tractus.

14. **Why do I use my paper, ink and pen,**
and call my wits to counsel what to say?
Such memories were made for mortal men;
I speak of Saints whose names cannot decay.
An Angel's trump were fitter for to sound
their glorious death, if such on earth were found.

That store of such were once on earth pursued
the histories of ancient times record,
whose constancy great tyrants' rage subdued
through patient death, professing Christ the Lord,
as his Apostles perfect witness bare,
with many more that blessed Martyrs were.

Whose patience rare and most courageous mind,
with fame renowned perpetual shall endure;
by whose examples we may rightly find
of holy life and death a pattern pure.
That we, therefore, their virtues may embrace,
pray we to Christ, to guide us with his grace.
(Henry Walpole, 1558-1595)

16. **Susanna fair** some time assaulted was
by two old men, desiring their delight,
which lewd intent they thought to bring to pass,
if not by tender love, by force and might,
to whom she said: If I your suit deny,
you will me falsely accuse, and make me die,

and if I grant to that which you request,
my chastity shall then deflowered be,
which is so dear to me, that I detest
my life, if it berefted be from me,
and rather would I die of mine accord,
ten thousand times, than once offend our Lord.

18. **O that most rare breast,** crystalline sincere,
through which like gold thy princely heart did shine,
O sprite heroic, O valiant worthy knight,
O Sidney, prince of fame and men's good will.
For thee both kings and princesses do mourn;
thy noble tomb, three Cities strange desired;
foes to the cause thy prowess did defend;
beware the day that crossed thy famous race.
The doleful debt due to thy hearse I pay,
tears from the soul, that aye thy want shall moan,
and by my will my life itself would yield,
if heathen blame ne might, my faith disdain.
O heavy time, that my days draw behind thee;
thou dead dost live, thy friend here living dieth.

Attrib. Sir Edward Dyer

Alamire

Emma Walshe, soprano
Helen Charlston, mezzo-soprano
Steven Harrold, tenor
Nicholas Todd, tenor
Timothy Scott Whiteley, baritone
Robert Macdonald, bass

Alamire boasts some of the finest consort singers in the world under the directorship of David Skinner. Inspired by the great choral works of the medieval and early modern periods, the ensemble expands or contracts according to repertoire and often combines with instrumentalists, creating imaginative programmes to illustrate musical or historical themes. The ensemble was formed in 2005 by three friends and early music experts: David Skinner, Rob Macdonald and Steven Harrold.

Performing extensively throughout Europe and the USA, the consort recorded for several years with Obsidian Records, founded by Martin Souter, for whom they have won a number of awards. In 2015 they received the coveted Gramophone Award (Early Music) for *The Spy's Choirbook*, while *Anne Boleyn's Songbook* was nominated for a BBC Music Award, and was CD of the Year (Choral & Song) in Australia's *Limelight*

Magazine. Thomas Tallis: Songs of Reformation was met with widespread media acclaim, being featured on various media outlets including BBC Breakfast Television. The project commemorated the beginning of the European Reformations, famously initiated by Martin Luther on 31 October 1517, and offered new perspectives on Thomas Tallis, Queen Katherine Parr and the advent of the English Reformation.

The ensemble continues under label Inventa Records, dedicated to early music performances with the same underlying principles of offering rich, historically informed projects that not only shed light on rarely performed repertoire but also on the historical events surrounding them.

www.alamire.co.uk



David Skinner

David Skinner divides his time equally as a scholar and choral director. An engaging presenter he has worked extensively for BBC radio, appearing in and writing a variety of shows on Radio 3 and 4. He acted as music advisor for the Music and Monarchy series on BBC 2 with David Starkey, and was Music Consultant for the BBC4 documentary Evensong with Lucy Worsley. He has published widely on music and musicians of early Tudor England, and his latest publications include an historical introduction for a facsimile publication of Royal College of Music, MS 1070 — The Anne Boleyn Music Book — as well as a collected edition of Tallis's Latin church music for Early English Church Music (Stainer & Bell).

David is Fellow and Osborn Director of Music at Sidney Sussex College in the University of Cambridge where he teaches historical and practical topics from the medieval and renaissance periods. He directs the Choir of Sidney Sussex College, with whom he has toured and made highly acclaimed recordings, and is frequently invited to lecture, lead workshops and coach choirs throughout Europe and the USA.

Grace Davidson

Grace grew up in a house whose hallway was entirely filled by a grand piano which was being stored for a friend of the family – music was physically unavoidable. She learned the piano and the violin but it was singing that she loved best. And it was her singing that won her a scholarship to the Royal Academy of Music where she won the Early Music prize.

Since then she has worked as a soloist with leading Baroque ensembles, under the batons of Sir John Eliot Gardner, Paul McCreesh, Philippe Herreweghe and Harry Christophers.

Grace's purity of tone has attracted many of the leading contemporary composers to write for her, most notably Max Richter, who chose her as the solo singer for many of his works, such as *Sleep*. This piece – lasting all night – has now been performed all over the world, including a performance in 2019 on the Great Wall of China.

Martha McLorinan

Martha trained at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, and has won prizes at the Thelma King Award and Royal Overseas League. She enjoys a career of oratorio, opera, consort and recording work. Her discography includes Garcia's *Missa Pastoril*

(Ex Cathedra/Jeffrey Skidmore, Hyperion) and Bingham's *The Drowned Lovers* (Tenebrae/Nigel Short, Bene Arte). Future plans include a recording of songs by Alec Roth.

Nicholas Todd

Nicholas began his musical career as a chorister at Salisbury Cathedral, and then from Uppingham School to King's College Cambridge where he sang as a choral scholar. Moving to London in 1995, he quickly found himself immersed in an international choral scene, performing, touring and recording widely with groups such as Polyphony, The King's Consort, The Sixteen and The Cardinal's Musick. In 1997, he began singing and recording with The Huelgas Ensemble, performing all over Europe as a consort singer and soloist. Poliziano's *Orfeo* was one of his most prominent roles, which he performed on Dutch national radio.

Nicholas became a regular member of the Tallis Scholars between 2000 and 2007, and then moved into teaching, working as Head of Singing at the King's School Canterbury, a position that he holds to this day. He continues to perform and record frequently with Alamire, The Cardinal's Musick and Tenebrae.

Fretwork

This year, Fretwork celebrates 35 years of performing music old and new, and they look forward to a challenging and exciting future as the world's leading consort of viols. Fretwork have expanded their repertory to include music from over 500 years, from the first printed consort music in Venice in 1501 to music written this year. And, in between, everything that can be played on a consort of viols – Byrd and Schubert, Purcell and Shostakovich, Gibbons and Britten, Dowland and Grieg.

This great musical adventure has taken them all over the globe, from Russia to Japan to North America to Australia. Audiences have responded enthusiastically to the extraordinary sound world that Fretwork create and to the consistently high standards that they achieve. The future sees many exciting projects based on the thrilling juxtaposition of old and new; making the experience of old music new and bringing the sensibilities of past ages to bear on contemporary music.



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Performing pitch: A=415

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