

Early Music Hawaii
presents

Les Voix humaines

Jeffrey Thompson, tenor
Nigel North, lute

Les Voix humaines Consort of Viols

Les Voix humaines Consort of Viols

Melisande Corriveau, Felix Deak, Susie Napper

Marie-Laurence Primeau & Benoît Vanden Benden, violas da gamba

Lachrimae
John Dowland



Wednesday, February 15, 2023 • 3:30 pm
Queen Emma Community Center
Kealahou

Saturday, February 18, 2023 • 7:30 pm
Lutheran Church of Honolulu
1730 Punahou Street. Honolulu

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Conseil des arts du Canada Canada Council for the Arts

WESTAF

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Les Voix humaines

Program

Lachrimae

*Lachrimae, or seaven Tears figured in seaven passionate Pavans
set forth for the Lute, Viols, or Violons, in five parts (1604)*

Shall I Strive/M. Henry Noel his Galiard—Voice, viols & lute
Flow my Teares—Voice & lute

Lachrimae Antiquae (Old tears)—Viols & lute

My Thoughts are Wing'd with Hopes—Voice & lute
Sir John Souch his Galiard—Viols

Lachrimae Antiquae Novae (Old tears renewed)—Viols & lute

All Ye Whom Love or Fortune Hath Betray'd—Voice, bass viol & lute
Captain Digory Piper his Galiard—Viols & lute
Clear or Cloudy—Voice & lute

Lachrimae Gementes (Sighing tears)—Viols & lute

Sir John Smith his Almaine—Solo lute

Can She Excuse My Wrongs—Voice & lute

The Earl of Essex Galiard—Recorders, viols & lute

Lasso vita mia—Voice, treble & bass viols & lute

Lachrimae Tristes (Sad tears)—Viols & lute

Intermission

New work commissioned by Early Music Vancouver:

Stacey Brown (1976—)

Lachrimae Viventium (living tears, the tears of living)—Viols

Lorasirme Ryn their Galliard

In Nomine Farewell—Solo lute

I must complain yet do Enjoy my Love—Voice & lute

M. Giles Hobies his Galiard—Viols

Lachrimae Coactae (Forced tears)—Viols & lute

If My Complaints Could Passions Move—Voice & lute

M. George Whitehead his Almand—Viols

Lachrimae Amantis (A Lover's tears)—Viols & lute

Sweet Stay Awhile—Voice & lute

Lachrimae Verae (True tears)—Viols & lute

Les Voix humaines

Les Voix humaines Viol Duo performed worldwide for three decades. Their musical complicity was compared to the skill of a pair of trapeze artists or the telepathic communion of jazz musicians. Their many prizes and recordings are the foundation on which a new duo and consort is building a refreshing look at the huge repertoire for multiple viols. Their unique and controversial approach offer a new profile to consort playing in which rhythmic freedom and ornamentation play an integral role.

As well as the grand English consort repertoire, Bach's *Art of Fugue* and the Purcell *Fantasias*, the Consort performs lesser known discoveries by Cima, Trabaci, Lupo, Moulinier and Charpentier to which we bring years of experience and experimentation as viol, recorder, fiddle and bass violinists!

The Consort has toured in Canada, the USA, Mexico, France, Poland, Scandinavia and the Baltic States and recorded Bach's *Art of Fugue*, Purcell's *Fantasias*, Dowland's *Lachrimae* as well as their own, unusual arrangement of Vivaldi's *Quattro Stagioni* for four equal viols: 4 Seasons, 4 Viols.

John Dowland

Little is known about John Dowland's birth. Perhaps born in 1562, there are arguments for both London and Dublin as his place of birth. His international career started in 1580 when he became lutenist in the service of Sir Henry Cobham, Queen Elizabeth's ambassador to the French court in Paris, where he converted to Roman Catholicism.

He attributed his unsuccessful bid to serve at Elizabeth's court to his attachment to the Roman church. Elizabeth, a great admirer of Dowland's musicianship, described him as "a man to serve any Prince in the world but an obstinate Papist"! He was obliged to pursue his very successful career in Europe while his family remained in the Fairest Isle.

Highly sought after as the foremost lutenist of his time, Dowland's "heavenly touch upon the lute doth ravish human sense," wrote the poet Richard Barnfield. In 1598 Dowland became one of the highest paid servants to Christian IV of Denmark, who had created one of the most important musical courts of Europe. Dowland's huge salary allowed him to travel regularly to England to publish his latest volumes and to see his family, to the ire of the King of Denmark!

During his European adventure, Dowland, like other seemingly innocent musicians, was also involved in espionage. On top of his musical duties, he also acted as spy for Sir Robert Cecil, Queen Elizabeth's Secretary of State, and was even

offered a handsome sum by the Pope to spy on some heinous Roman intrigue! He turned down that attractive proposition through a sense of loyalty to his Queen.

Dowland was released in 1606 from his duties at court in Denmark, returning to England to serve as a member of James 1's musical entourage until his death in London in 1626.

The Songs

Dowland composed several books of exquisite songs with lute accompaniment. Melancholy was the most popular emotion of Dowland's time, and he captured both the sweet and bitter flavors in his highly expressive songs. Many of the songs have become iconic, the most well known being *Flow my Tears*, an early version of *Lachrimae* that is characterized by the falling tetrachord. This concert includes several such songs recomposed by Dowland for viol consort. They will be heard in both their vocal and instrumental versions.

Lachrimae

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

Dowland's *Lachrimae*, or *Seaven Teares Figured in Seaven Passionate Pavans*, featuring the saddest, descending tetrachord, is an iconic work that defies the 21st century concept of sound bites or tweets! Slow and rich in harmony with time for contemplation, the secret sonnet that the original song was set to, speaks of the pain of love lost. This beautiful collection also includes "*divers other pavans, galliards and allemands*" which, in our concert, alternate with the *Lachrimae*, pavans and exquisite lute solos on which Dowland's reputation was built.

Published in London in 1604, during Dowland's years in Denmark, the edition is dedicated to Anne, Queen of Denmark. The title page includes the epigram "*Aut furet, aut Lachrimat que non fortunavit beavit*" or "He whom Fortune has blessed either rages or weeps," and in the preface Dowland writes "Though the title doth promise teares, unfit guests in these joyfull times, yet no doubt pleasant are the teares which Musicke weepes, neither are teares shed always in sorrow, but some time in joy and gladnesse."

Dowland's *Lachrimae* has become canon in the annals of consort music. "Unfit guests in these joyfull times," these seven tears of extreme beauty are cried out by five viols and lute, Dowland's instrument.

This performance is significantly different than most in that the music is orna-

mented in a style appropriate to the period and in defiance of a certain modern Puritanism that demands total adherence to the written page. The embellishment adds expressive elegance and musical freedom that we hope enhances the audience's "joy and gladness"!

The program includes a new 21st century take on *Lachrimae* by Montreal-based composer Stacey Brown commissioned by Early Music Vancouver.

Jeffrey Thompson

American tenor Jeffrey Thompson completed his studies at the College-Conservatory of Music, University of Cincinnati, with William McGraw and was awarded first prize in the Concours Internationale de Chant Baroque de Chimay in Belgium under the direction of William Christie. He was selected to participate in the first edition of Jardin Des Voix with Christie's French baroque ensemble, *Les Arts Florissants*, in a concert tour of Europe's prestigious theaters. This resulted in a series of performances with *Les Arts Florissants*, including works by Handel, Charpentier and Rameau. Other early highlights of his career included roles in major works by Cavalli, Rameau, Monteverdi, Charpentier and other baroque composers, in Europe and the U.S.

As an avid recitalist, Jeffrey started working with one smaller French continuo ensemble, and having sung much French repertoire, he realized how much he missed exploring the repertoire of his native language, English. After recording the songs of Henry and William Lawes and Nicholas Lanier with harpsichordist Bertrand Cuiller, he started to sing mostly recitals of early English songs and much less opera. He later teamed up with the lute player Bor Zuljan to create and tour in Europe with a program of songs and fantasias by John Dowland. The culmination was at the Utrecht Early Music Festival at a midnight concert, after which he was told that Dowland and his singing were a perfect match.

Nigel North

Born in London, England, Nigel North has been a Professor of lute at the Early Music Institute, Bloomington (USA) since 1999. Previous positions included The Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London (1976–1996), Hochschule der Künste, Berlin (1993–1999) and the Royal Conservatory, Den Haag (2006–2009).

Initially inspired at the age of seven by the early 60's instrumental pop group "The Shadows," Nigel studied classical music through the violin and guitar, eventually discovering his real path in life, the lute, when he was 15. Basically self-taught on the lute, he has been playing and teaching for nearly 50 years.

After hearing one of Nigel's Bach recitals in London, Julian Bream recalled in

2002, “I remember going to a remarkable recital, one which I had the ability to give: it was one of Nigel North’s Bach recitals, and I was bowled over by how masterful and musical it was. A real musical experience, something you don’t always get from guitar and lute players and which, in general, is pretty rare.” Recordings include a four CD boxed set “Bach on the Lute” (Linn Records), four CDs of the lute music of John Dowland (Naxos), and a new ongoing series of music by Sylvius Weiss (BGS) and Francesco da Milano (BGS).



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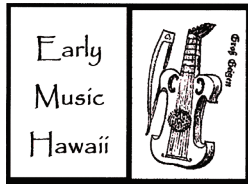
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Early Music Hawaii thanks the **Lutheran Church of Honolulu** and **Queen Emma Community Center** in Kealahou for continuing to host our concerts for more than a decade. Their spaces resonate with the fine acoustics and intimate aloha which suit the early music repertory so well.



Early Music Hawaii

Early Music Hawaii is a non-profit organization established in 2004 to promote the performance and enjoyment of medieval, renaissance and baroque music in our islands and to encourage historical performance practices. Each concert season, we present one major choral/orchestral concert and one chamber concert in Honolulu, all with local performers. We also present two leading professional early music ensembles from the mainland who perform in Honolulu and Kona as well as teach at workshops and provide outreach to schools when appropriate.

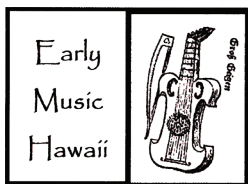
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