



Early Music Hawaii
presents

Melancholy and Mirth

The Music of John Dowland



The Early Music Hawaii Ensemble
Scott Fikse, director

Special Guests:
John Lenti, lute

Carrie Henneman Shaw, soprano

Andrea Maciel, Georgine Stark, soprano
Sarah Connelly, Amy Akana, alto
Joel Bevington, Nicholas Lee, tenor
David Webb, Keane Ishii, bass

Sienna Sonoda, alto recorder
Phillip Gottling, tenor recorder, dulcian
Anna Callner Pare, viola da gamba
Laurie Shimabukuro, violin
Peter Tourin, viola da gamba
Jean Twombly, viola da gamba



Saturday, March 21, 2026 † 7:30 pm
Lutheran Church of Honolulu

Program

Now is the Month of Maying	Thomas Morley (1557–1602)
Can She Excuse My Wrongs	John Dowland (c. 1563–1626)
Where Fancy Fond	William Byrd (1530–1623)
Zephiro torna, e 'l bel tempo rimena	Alfonso Ferrabosco I (1543–1588)
Flow My Tears	Dowland
Weep, O Mine Eyes	John Bennet (1575–1614)
Humor, Say, What Mak'st Thou Here	Dowland
Like Hermit Poor	Alfonso Ferrabosco II (1575–1628)
How We Walk in Gleeeful Step	Scott Warrender (21st c.)

intermission

La Danza	Vincenzo Ruffo (1508–1587)
Ahi, dispietata morte!	Lucca Marenzio (1553–1599)
Would My Conceit	Dowland
Clear or Cloudy	Dowland
Lasso vita mia (from A Pilgrims Solace)	Dowland
My Lady Hunsdon's Puffe	Dowland
Canzon da contadini	Giovanni Croce (1557–1609)
Now, O Now, I Needs Must Part	Dowland

Program Notes

Four centuries after his death, lutenist and composer John Dowland remains a household name in the world of early music. By sixteenth-century standards he was a musician of the highest calibre, but his career extended well beyond performance and composition. He was also a translator, publisher, scholar, and tireless traveler. In some respects his achievements have eclipsed those of many contemporaries, and many of his works hold a lasting place in the Western musical canon. Few Renaissance composers enjoy quite the same level of popularity, and it is no surprise that Dowland is often regarded as the first great songwriter in the English language.

Though his music resonates strongly with modern audiences,

Dowland was also very much a man of his own time. He lived in the same vibrant musical world as composers Thomas Tallis and William Byrd, whose influence helped shape the musical environment in which he worked. Dowland's own output—lute songs, madrigals, sacred works, and consort music—reflects this influence.

By the late sixteenth century the English madrigal tradition was in full swing, strongly inspired by Italian models. Alfonso Ferrabosco I had already brought the style to England during the reign of Elizabeth I, and the music of Luca Marenzio was imported in print through Nicholas Yonge's influential 1588 collection *Musica Transalpina*. English composers eagerly absorbed these continental sounds. Dowland himself drew inspiration from the Italian madrigalists, as did his Oxford classmate Thomas Morley, whose lively "Now is the Month of Maying" opens this program, and John Bennet, who paid homage to Dowland directly in "Weep, O Mine Eyes" by quoting his famous melody, "Flow, My Tears."

Ambitious and widely respected, Dowland nevertheless struggled at times to secure the prestigious court position he desired in England. In 1594 he left the country to seek opportunities abroad. He later claimed that his goal was to meet and study with Marenzio in Rome, though he took his time reaching that destination. A fruitful winter spent in Germany was followed by visits to several Italian cities before he finally arrived in Rome.

During his travels Dowland encountered some of the most important musical figures of the day. In Venice he likely met the renowned composer Giovanni Gabrieli, though in his writings he specifically mentions "that worthy Master Giovanni Croce...with whom I had familiar conference." In sixteenth-century Venice, music was woven into the fabric of daily life, and Croce's festive masquerades delighted audiences throughout the city.

Dowland's travels placed him at the crossroads of Europe's musical cultures, and the music on tonight's program reflects that rich exchange. Alongside Dowland's own works we hear the voices of composers he admired, encountered, or influenced—English and continental alike. Together they reveal a world of striking contrasts: courtly wit and playful humor alongside music of profound melancholy. In this balance of laughter and lament, we encounter

the full expressive range of Renaissance song—and the enduring artistry of John Dowland.

Texts and translations

Zephiro torna, e 'l bel tempo rimena

Zefiro returns and the good weather returns
and the flowers and the herbs, his sweet family
to garrir Progne to cry Filomena
and white and vermilion spring.
The meadows laugh, and the sky clears;
Jupiter is happy to look at his daughter;
the air and the water and the earth are full of love;
every animal to love is recommended.
But for me, alas! the most serious ones return sighs,
which he draws from the deepest heart
the one who took the keys to heaven;
and singing little birds and flowering meadows
and beautiful honest women sweet deeds
they are a desert and harsh and wild beasts.

Ahi, dispietata morte!

Ah, pitiless death, ah cruel life! One plunged me in grief, and bitterly quenched my hopes: the other holds me here against my will, and she who has gone I cannot follow: she will not let me. But, in every moment, my lady is seated in the centre of my heart, and what my life is now, she sees.

Canzon da Contadini

We Paduan farmers have come here because we have some extra food, to hold an all nighter. Little Francesco, Big Francesco, Big Ugly Francesco, Little Antonio, Big Antonio, Big Ugly Antonio, let's sing together, toot, toot, toot, toot, toot, toot. We've come here from Cazzago to see these masters of ours, and we've brought dishes of turnips and parsnips. We have food—a piglet, hens and capons, cheese, and some butter for our masters. Then we've brought some big sausages for our lady, huge platters of food to fill up her aching

stomach. Then for the daughters of the house we've brought some little birds that sing 'here, here, here,' so the pretty little ones will sing. So help us, we'd like to leave. God give you health; also stay merry with all this company of friends.

The Artists

Scott Fikse, Artistic Director

Scott Fikse is a second-year doctoral conducting student at the University of Washington and a multi-genre performer, teacher, and director. He currently serves as assistant conductor of the University of Washington Chamber Singers and teaches in the Program for Writing Across Campus (PWAC) as a graduate appointee. He has appeared as a guest lecturer with Seattle Symphony, Early Music Hawaii, Midsummer Musical Retreat, and Seattle University, among others, and is a regular contributor to the American Choral Directors Association's monthly Choral Journal. A scholar and active writer, his research explores early music performance practice as well as the evolution and intersections of early American and Hawaiian choral traditions.

The Chamber Singers and Instrumentalists

The Early Music Hawaii Choir was formed in 2013 under the artistic direction of Carl Crosier. The core group has since appeared in various guises as a chamber ensemble and larger groups as multiple soloists and choral singers. They are made up of Honolulu's finest early music performers, most of them recognized as veterans in this and other repertoires of the professional music world in Hawai'i.

The instrumental ensembles also draw on leading early music specialists who perform with major local institutions, including the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra and Hawai'i Opera Theater.

John Lenti

John Lenti specializes in music of the seventeenth century and has made basso continuo improvisation on lute, theorbo, and

baroque guitar the cornerstone of a career that encompasses chamber music, recitals, and work for opera companies and orchestras both modern and baroque. He has recorded, with various ensembles, some nice albums you can find on the various streaming services. He studied lute with Nigel North, Jacob Heringman, and Elizabeth Kenny. His favorite authors are Jorge Luis Borges and Iris Murdoch, though he's in the midst of more than casual twin manias for E. Lily Yu and Gina Berriault. When John's not on the road, he's mostly a stay-at-home dad in Seattle. John likes cheap wine, fancy sausage, and mid-level cheese.

Carrie Henneman Shaw

As a singer, Carrie Henneman Shaw engages in a wide variety of musical projects, but she focuses on early and contemporary music. In 2023, she was awarded a Royalty Research Fund grant to research and record experiments in vocal timbre with composer Mauricio Pauly and pianist Mabel Kwan. In 2024, she was awarded the Donald E. Petersen Endowed Faculty Fellowship for Excellence.

She appears in numerous recordings ranging from medieval sacred music to a video-game soundtrack, and before coming to the University of Washington, she has been maintaining a full university studio for the six years and participating in educational residencies for composers and performers around the country, including University of California Berkeley, Stanford, New York University, the University of Chicago, and beyond.

Sponsors and Contributors

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Early Music Hawaii thanks the Lutheran Church of Honolulu and Queen Emma Community Center in Kealakekua for continuing to host our concerts for the past 15 years. Their spaces resonate with the exceptional acoustics and warm aloha which suit the early music repertory so well.

Donations

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Early Music Hawaii

Early Music Hawaii is a nonprofit organization established in 2004 to promote the performance and enjoyment of medieval, renaissance and early baroque music in our islands, and to promote historical performance practices. Each concert season, we present two vocal and instrumental concerts in Honolulu, both with local performers. We also present two leading professional ensembles from the mainland who perform in Honolulu and Kona. Both local and visiting ensembles provide outreach to schools.

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