

WIGMORE HALL

Friday 28 January 2022 7.30pm

A Musical Banquet

Iestyn Davies countertenor Thomas Dunford lute

Charles Tessier (b.c.1600)

In a grove most rich of shade

John Dowland (1563-1626)

Mrs Winter's Jump

Richard Martin (fl.1610)

Change thy mind since she doth change

John Dowland

Preludium

Domenico Maria Melli (b.c.1609)

Se di farmi morire

Pierre Guédron (c.1570-1620)

Ce penser qui sans fin tirannise ma vie

Antony Holborne (1545-1602)

Pavan 2

My heavy sprite, oppress'd with sorrow's might

John Dowland

Lady if you so spight me

Pierre Guédron

Si le parler et le silence

John Dowland

Round Battle Galliard

Anon

O bella più

Robert Hales (fl.1583)

O Eyes leave off your weeping

Giovanni Girolamo Kapsberger (c.1580-1651)

Toccata No. 6

Joan Ambrosio Dalza (fl.1508)

Calata

Anon

Passava Amor su arco desarmado

Interval

Anon

Vuestros ojos tienen d'amor

O dear life, when shall it be?

John Dowland

A Dream

Anon

Sta notte mi sognava

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A Fancy

Anon

Go, my flock, go get you hence

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In darkness let me dwell

Giovanni Girolamo Kapsberger

Toccata No. 1

John Dowland

Far from triumphing court

Pierre Guédron

Vous que le Bonheur rappelle

John Dowland

Melancholy Galliard

Daniel Bacheler (1572-1619)

To plead my faith

Giulio Caccini (1551-1618)

Amarilli, mia bella

Dovrò dunque morire

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In 1610, the lutenist **John Dowland** contributed three pieces to *A Musically Banquet*, a collection of lutesongs by composers from England, France, Spain and Italy compiled and published by his 19-year-old son Robert, also a lutenist. The venture coincided with Dowland Senior's ending his peripatetic lifestyle at 47 and pieces collected on his travels were included. The *Banquet* is especially treasured as the source of his greatest song 'In darkness let me dwell'.

Davies and Dunford perform all the *Banquet's* songs interspersed with lute solos by Dowland Senior and others. Several of the poets were English aristocrats, their name printed beside the song title. The first, 'In a grove', is by Sir Philip Sidney, brother of the *Banquet's* dedicatee Sir Robert Sidney, who was Robert Dowland's godfather. The original 18-verse poem is from *Astrophel and Stella*, the first English sonnet sequence, published 1591. Stella was the poet's childhood sweetheart Penelope Devereux who married someone else; the mood is bittersweet. The name of the composer **Guillaume Tessier** appears on the second page with an optional bass viol part, a subordinate position for the servant class musician. Each song is credited similarly.

Dowland's lute solo *Mrs Winter's Jump* is a spritely dance with a leaping motif such as the Queen is enjoying in a famous painting at the Sidney home, Penshurst Place. 'Change thy mind' has lyrics critical of her by Penelope's brother Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, whom Elizabeth beheaded in 1601. The composer was **Richard Martin**, a lawyer, not known for anything else musically, but was Recorder of London.

The lute solo *Preludium* survives in a manuscript by Margaret Board, supposedly Dowland's, living near Penshurst. The Italian song 'Se di farmi morire' comprises a single verse with words and music by **Domenico Melli**, another lawyer and dilettante musician. 'Ce penser' is the first of three French songs ascribed to 'D'incerto' (Anonymous) but subsequently known to be by **Pierre Guédron**, director of music to Louis XIII. Its florid melody contrasts with the rich chordal accompaniment.

The lutenist **Antony Holborne** was best known for his dances like the *Pavan 2*, slow and in four. His patron was Mary Sidney, Sir Robert's sister, but he also worked for the Queen as gentleman usher and died aged 47 on official business. 'My heavy sprite' is one of two surviving songs by him, a setting of words on the agony of love by the Earl of Cumberland - a reckless adventurer and the Queen's champion jousting.

'Lady if you so spight me' is the first of the John Dowland songs, a setting of words translated from Italian and already used in the 1588 collection *Musica Transalpina* ('Music from across the Alps') which contributed significantly to the madrigal craze in Britain. Dowland sets the lines as a breathless monologue with a spiky written-out ornament on 'spight' and obsessive repetitions on 'kisse me sweet'.

Guédron's 'Si le parler' is distinctive by its warning refrain that love is a fickle god. Dowland's *Round Battle Galliard* is a dance in three-

time with crude repeated chords at the start of the Italian *stile concitato* ('agitated style'). The anonymous Italian song 'O bella più' contrasts syllabic pattering with melismas (or melodically extended syllables) ending with a seamless arch of quavers on 'core' (heart).

'O Eyes' is the only song composed by **Robert Hales**, Queen Elizabeth's favourite singer, who sang Dowland at her Accession Day celebrations. He would have decorated the four verses of his simple song.

The lute solo *Toccata No. 6* of 1611 by Venetian lutenist **Giovanni Girolamo Kapsberger** wanders around the fingerboard, ornamenting chords with trills, slides and tremolos. The son of a German colonel, he left Venice for Rome where he set the Pope's poetry and prospered. The dancing *Calata* by Milanese composer **Joan Ambrosio Dalza** dates from 1508. The anonymous Spanish song 'Passava Amor' is a short, fast and chordal conclusion to the half.

'Vuestros ojos' opens part two in jumpy Hispanic rhythms. 'O dear life' is the second of the Sidney settings, an agitated love-song with lively syncopations. Dowland's *A Dream* is a wistful pavan in three uneven sections, each repeated. 'Sta notte' features melismas in scales and shakes over simple chords. A Fancy is the name of several fantasia-like pieces by Dowland which grow from simple statement to elaborate counterpoint. 'Go, my flock' is a second item from Sidney's *Astrophel*, a love song in ten verses to Stella, fairest shepherdess - and cruellest.

Dowland's great 'In darkness' is a song both natural and extraordinary, with words (perhaps by Dowland himself) which spring organically from the music. Bitter dissonances illustrate 'weep', and 'woes', and piquant chromaticism 'my music hellish jarring sounds'. The end repeats the beginning, the vocal suspension resolving only when the last lute chord itself has resolved.

Toccata No. 1 is a second piece by the Pope's lutenist Kapsberger. Dowland's 'Far from triumphing court' has words by retired courtier Sir Henry Lee about a visit which Anne of Denmark, James I's queen, paid him in his coastal home en route to Copenhagen. The singer mourns Elizabeth with declamatory monotone, but later revels in the security of a new monarchical saint - Anne.

Guédron's 'Vous que le Bonheur' is as short as a courtly French bow. Dowland's *Melancholy Galliard* is a masterpiece of simplicity, bitter but passionate. A second lyric by the Earl of Essex, 'To plead my faith' has music by **Daniel Bachelier**, groom of Her Majesty's privy chamber. The song is an extended galliard: four sections, not three.

To contemporaries the *Banquet's* most famous piece was 'Amarilli', a snatch of operatic passion by Italian composer **Giulio Caccini**. His 'Dovrò dunque morire' aches with longing as the singer impales long held high notes on the single word *moro* - 'I am dying'.

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Charles Tessier (b.c.1600)

In a grove most rich of shade

Philip Sidney

In a grove most rich of shade,
Where birds wanton music made,
May, then young, his pied weeds showing,
New perfumed with flowers growing;

Astrophil with Stella sweet
Did for mutual comfort meet,
Both within themselves oppressed,
But each in the other blessed.

'Stella, sovereign of my joy,
Fair triumpher of annoy;
Stella, star of heavenly fire,
Stella, lodestar of desire;

'Never season was more fit,
Never room more apt for it;
Smiling air allows my reason;
These birds sing: now use the season.

'Astrophel,' said she, 'my love,
Cease, in these effects, to prove;
Now be still, yet still believe me,
Thy grief more than death would grieve me.

'If those eyes you praised, be
Half so dear as you to me,
Let me home return, stark blinded
Of those eyes, and blinder minded.

'Therefore, dear, this no more move,
Lest, though I leave not thy love,
Which too deep in me is framed,
I should blush when thou art named.'

Therewithal away she went,
Leaving him so passion, rent
With what she had done and spoken,
That therewith my song is broken.

John Dowland (1563-1626)

Mrs Winter's Jump

Richard Martin (b.fl.1610)

Change thy mind since she doth change

Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex

Change thy mind since she doth change,
Let not fancy still abuse thee.
Thy untruth cannot seem strange
When her falsehood doth excuse thee.
Love is dead and thou art free;
She doth live, but dead to thee.

Whilst she lov'd thee best awhile,
See how she hath still delay'd thee,
Using shows for to beguile
Those vain hopes that have deceiv'd thee.
Now, thou see'st although too late
Love loves truth, which women hate.

Love no more since she is gone;
She is gone and loves another.
Being once deceiv'd by one,
Leave her love, but love none other.
She was false, bid her adieu;
She was best, but yet; untrue.

Love, farewell, more dear to me
Than my life which thou preservest.
Life, all joys are gone from thee,
Others have what thou deservest.
O my death doth spring from hence;
I must die for her offence.

Die, but yet before thou die,
Make her know what she hath gotten.
She in whom my hopes did lie
Now is chang'd, I quite forgotten.
She is chang'd, but changed base,
Baser in so vile a place.

John Dowland

Preludium

Domenico Maria Melli (b.c.1609)

Se di farmi morire

Domenico Maria Melli

Se di farmi morire,
Con crudeltà pensate,
Certo che v'ingannate,

If you think to cause my death

If you think to cause my death
through your cruelty,
you are surely mistaken.

Che dalla crudeltà nascono l'ire,
E dall'ire lo sdegno,
Che scaccia amor dal suo
superbo regno.

For from cruelty springs anger,
and from anger disdain,
which unseats Love from his
proud throne.

Pierre Guéron (c.1570-1620)

Ce penser qui sans fin tirannise ma vie

Anonymous

Ce penser qui sans fin tirannise
ma vie
Se montre tellement contre moi
conjuré,
Que tant plus jé m'efforce à
dompter son ennuie
Et tant moins à mon bien je le
vois préparé.

J'ai quitté la beauté dont il a
pris naissance,
Espérant par l'oublie ses
charmes décevoir
Mais je trouve à la fin que la
venue et l'absence
Sont tous deux différents, et
d'un même pouvoir.

This thought that endlessly tyrannises my life

This thought that endlessly
tyrannises my life
is clearly conspiring against me,
to the extent
that the more I endeavour to
temper its torments,
the less I see it disposed to do
me any good.

I left the beauty who was its
very cause,
hoping that by forgetting her, I
could break the spell,
but I find that, in the end, though
being near and far
may be different, they wield the
same power.

Antony Holborne (1545-1602)

Pavan 2

My heavy sprite, oppress'd with sorrow's might

George Clifford, 3rd Earl of Cumberland

My heavy sprite, oppress'd with sorrow's might,
Of wearied limbs the burden sore sustains,
With silent groans and heart's tears still complains,
Yet I breathe still and live in life's despite.
Have I lost thee? All fortunes I accurse
Bids, thee farewell, with thee all joys farewell,
And for thy sake this world becomes my hell.

John Dowland

Lady if you so spight me

John Dowland

Lady if you so spight me,
Wherefore do you so oft kisse and delight mee?
Sure that my hart opprest and overcloyed,

May breake thus overjoyde,
If you seeke to spill mee,
Come kisse me sweet and kill mee,
So shal your hart be eased,
And I shall rest content and dye well pleased.

Pierre Guéron

Si le parler et le silence

Anonymous

Si le parler et le silence
Nuit à notre heur également,
Parlons donc ma chère espérance
Du cœur et des yeux seulement:
Amour ce petit dieu volage
Nous apprend ce muet langage.

Que le regard vole et revole
Messager de nos passions,
Et serve au lieu de la parole
Pour dire nos intentions.
Amour ce petit dieu volage
Nous apprend ce muet langage.

Mais si quelque âme est offensée
De nous voir discourir des
yeux,
Nous parlerons de la pensée
Comme les Anges dans les cieux.
Amour ce petit dieu volage
Nous apprend ce muet langage.

Ainsi par un doux artifice
Nous tromperons les courtisans,
Et nous rirons de la malice
De mille fâcheux médisants,
Qui n'en sauront pas d'avantage,
Ignorant ce muet
langage.

John Dowland

Round Battle Galliard

Anon

O bella più

Anonymous

Bene mio caro, cuore mio bella,
Chi parinansi de la mia patrona,
La freccia chi mi pass'il cuore.
Mi regina, dolce mi amore;

If speech and silence

If speech and silence
do equal harm to our fortune,
let us talk, dear hope,
only with our hearts and eyes:
Cupid, this little fickle god,
teaches us this silent language.

Let our gaze fly and return,
a messenger of our passions,
and let it serve instead of words
to express our wishes.
Cupid, this little fickle god,
teaches us this silent language.

But if some soul be offended
by seeing us discourse with our
eyes,
we shall speak with our thoughts
like the Angels in heaven.
Cupid, this little fickle god,
teaches us this silent language.

Thus by this sweet expedience
we shall dupe the courtiers
and we shall laugh at the malice
of a thousand tedious slanderers,
who will know nothing,
being ignorant of this silent
language.

Oh fairer than the stars

My dear beloved, my fair heart,
which shine before my mistress,
the arrow which pierces my heart.
my queen, my sweet love;

O bella più che le stelle Diana,
Pietà, cuor mio, pietà, non più
dolore.

Tu sei la mala morte mia,

Oh fairer than the stars of Diana
mercy, my heart, cause no more
sorrow.

you are the fatal cause of my death,

Robert Hales (b.fl.1583)

O Eyes leave off your weeping

Anonymous

O eyes, leave off your weeping,
Love hath the thoughts in keeping
That may content you.
Let not this misconceiving,
Where comforts are receiving,
Causeless torment you.

Clouds threaten but a shower;
Hope hath his happy hour,
Though long in lasting.
Time needs must be attended
Love must not be offended
With too much hastening.

But O the painful pleasure,
Where Love attends the leisure
Of life's wretchedness:
Where Hope is but illusion,
And Fear is but confusion
Of Love's happiness.

But happy Hope, that seeth
How Hope and Hap agreeth,
Of life deprive me;
Or let me be assured
When life hath death endured
Love will revive me.

Giovanni Girolamo Kapsberger (c.1580-1651)

Toccata No. 6

Joan Ambrosio Dalza (b.fl.1508)

Calata

Anon

Passava Amor, su arco desarmado

Jorge de Montemayor

Passava Amor, su arco desarmado,
Los ojos baxos, blando y muy
modesto;

Love passed, his bow unstrung

Love passed, his bow unstrung,
his eyes downcast, gentle and
oh so meek;

Dexava m'ya atras muy
descuidado.

Quam poco espacio pude gozar
esto.

Fortuna de embidiosa dixo
luego:

'Teneos, Amor; porque vays tam
presto?'

Bolui de presto a mi el nigno
ciego,

Muy enoiado enversé
reprehendido

Que no ay reprehension do sta
su fuego.

Ay prados, bosques, selvas, que
criastes,

Tan libre corazón como ere el
mio,

Porque tan grande mal no te
estorbastes.

he left me behind without a care
in the world.

How little time I was allowed to
enjoy that state.

All too soon, envious Fortune
spoke and said:

'Stop right there, Love. Where
are you going so quickly?'

Blind boy Cupid swiftly returned
to me,

ever so angry at being
reprimanded –

there can be no rebuke where
his flames hold sway.

Oh fields, woods, forests,
created by you,

a heart so free as mine once
was,

why did you not prevent this
great misfortune?

Interval

Anon

Vuestros ojos tienen d'amor

Anonymous

Vuestros ojos tienen

D'Amor no sé qué,

Que me yelan, me roban,

Me hieren, me matan, a fè!

Porque me mirays

Con tanta aflicción,

Y a mi corazón,

Me aprisionays?

Que si vos me mirays

Yo os acusare.

Your eyes have that je ne sais quoi

Your eyes have

that je ne sais quoi of Love;

they freeze and rob me,
wound and kill me, I swear!

Why do you look at me
with so much sorrow,
and put my heart

in prison?

If you should look at me,
you will stand accused.

O dear life, when shall it be?

Philip Sidney

O dear life, when shall it be

That mine eyes thine eyes may see;

And in them thy mind discover,

Whether absence hath had force,

Thy remembrance to divorce

From the image of thy lover?

Or if I myself find not,
By thine absence oft forgot :
Nor debarr'd from Beauty's treasure,
Let no tongue aspire to tell
In what high I shall dwell,
Only Thought aims at the pleasure.

Thought, therefore, will I send thee
To take up the place for me:
Long I will not after tarry:
There, unseen, thou may'st be bold,
Those fair wonders to behold,
Which in them my hopes do carry.

O my thought! my thoughts surcease,
Your delights my woes increase;
My life fleets with too much thinking:
Think no more, but die in me,
Till thou shalt revived be,
At her lips my nectar drinking.

John Dowland

A Dream

Anon

Sta notte mi sognava

Anonymous

Sta notte mi sognava
Ch'all inferno mestamente
n'andava,
Non per i miei peccati,
Ma per veder chi fanno i
dannati.

Stando la mi pareva,
Che nel mezzo Plutone si sedeva,
Tra quei spirit' infernali
Chi dan'al'alma tanti stragi
mali.

John Dowland

A Fancy

Last night I dreamed

Last night I dreamed
that I descended sadly into the
underworld:
not on account of my sins,
but to see how the damned
souls fare.

There I seemed to see
Pluto enthroned in the midst
of those infernal spirits
who cause our souls such evil
torment.

Anon

Go, my flock, go get you hence

Philip Sidney

Go my flock! go get you hence!
Seek a better place of feeding;
Where you may have some defence
From the storms in my breast breeding
And showers from mine eyes proceeding.

Leave a wretch in whom all woe
Can abide to keep no measure:
Merry flock! such one forego,
Unto whom mirth is displeasure:
Only rich in mischief's treasure.

Stella hath refusèd me!
Stella, who more love hath provèd
In this caitiff heart to be;
Than can in good ewes be movèd,
Towards lambkins best belovèd.

Why, alas, doth she then swear
That she loveth me so dearly?
Seeing me so long to bear
Coals of love that burn so clearly:
And yet leave me helpless merely?

No, she hates me, welaway!
Feigning love somewhat to please me:
For she knows, if she display
All her hate; death would soon seize me,
And of hideous torments ease me.

Then adieu, dear flock! adieu!
But, alas, if in your straying,
Heavenly STELLA meet with you:
Tell her in your piteous blaying,
Her poor slave's unjust decaying.

John Dowland

In darkness let me dwell

Anonymous

In darkness let me dwell, the ground shall sorrow be,
The roof despair to bar all cheerful light from me,
The walls of marble black that moist'ned still shall weep,
My music hellish jarring sounds to banish friendly sleep.
Thus wedded to my woes and bedded to my tomb
O, let me living die, till death do come.

Giovanni Girolamo Kapsberger

Toccata No. 1

John Dowland

Far from triumphing court

Henry Lee

Farre from triumphing Court and wonted glory,
He dwelt in shadie unfrequented places,
Times prisoner now he made his pastime story,
Gladly forgets Courts erst afforded graces,
That Goddess whom hee servde to heav'n is gone,
And hee one earth, In darknesse left to moane.

But loe a glorious light from his darke rest
Shone from the place where erst this Goddess dwelt
A light whose beames the world with fruit hath blest
Blest was the Knight while hee that light beheld:
Since then a starre fixed on his head hath shinde,
And a Saints Image in his hart is shrinde.

But ah poore Knight though thus in dreame he ranged,
Hoping to serve this Saint in sort most meete,
Tyme with his golden locks to silver changed
Hath with age-fetters bound him hands and feete,
Aye mee, hee cryes, Goddess my limbs grow faint,
Though I times prisoner be, be you my Saint.

Pierre Guédron

Vous que le Bonheur rappelle

Anonymous

Vous que le Bonheur rappelle
A un servage ancien,
Mourez aux pieds de la belle
Qui vous daigne faire sien.

Glorieuse en votre perte,
Honnez votre vainqueur,
Qui vous a la porte ouverte
De la prison de son coeur.

Heureux venez vous donc
rendre
A celle qui vous a pris;
c'est honneur de se voir prendre
A qui tient tout à
mépris.

You, whom Fortune calls

You, whom Fortune calls
to an ancient servitude,
die at the feet of the beauty
who deigns to make you hers.

Basking in the glory of your defeat,
honour her who vanquished you,
her, who opened to you the door
of the prison of her heart.

So, come, and happily submit
yourself
to her who has captured you;
it is an honour to be captured
for one who hold everything in
scorn.

L'honneur d'un brave
adversaire
Honore votre trépas,
Heureux qu'en mourant peut
faire
Que son nom ne meure
pas.

The honour of having a brave
adversary
honours your demise;
happy he, who, as he dies, can
ensure
that his name does not die with
him.

John Dowland

Melancholy Galliard

Daniel Bacheler (1572-1619)

To plead my faith

Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex

To plead my faith where faith had no reward,
To move remorse where favour is not bourne,
To heap complaints where she doth not regard, —
Were fruitless, bootless, vain, and yield but scorn.

I lovéd her whom all the world admired,
I was refused of her that can love none;
And my vain hopes, which far too high aspired,
Is dead, and buried, and for ever gone.

Forget my name, since you have scorned my love,
And woman-like do not too late lament;
Since for your sake I do all mischief prove,
I none accuse nor nothing do repent.

I was as fond as ever she was fair,
Yet loved I not more than I now despair.

Giulio Caccini (1551-1618)

Amarilli, mia bella

Giovanni Battista Guarini

Amarilli, mia bella,
Non credi, o del mio cor dolce
desio,
D'esser tu l'amor mio?
Credilo pur: e se timor
t'assale,
Prendi questo mio strale
Aprimi il petto e vedrai scritto in
core:
Amarilli, Amarilli, Amarilli
É il mio amore.

Amaryllis, my lovely one

Amaryllis, my lovely one,
do you not believe, O my heart's
sweet desire,
that you are my love?
Believe it thus: and if fear
assails you,
take this my sword,
open my breast and see written
on my heart:
Amaryllis, Amaryllis, Amaryllis
is my beloved.

Dovrò dunque morire

Ottavio Rinuccini

Dovro dunque morire?
Pria che di nuovo io miri,
Voi bramata cagion le miei
 martiri?
Mio perduto tesoro,
Non potro dirvi pria ch'io mora
lo moro?
O miseria inaudita,
Non poter dir a voi morro mia
vita.

Must I then die?

Must I then die
before I can see you again,
longed-for cause of my
 suffering,
my lost treasure?
Can I not tell you before I die:
'I am dying'?
Oh, oh, unheard-of wretchedness,
to be unable to tell you: 'I am
dying, my life.'

Translations of Melli, 'O bella più', 'Sta notte mi sognava' and 'Dovrò dunque morire' by Andrew Huth. 'Ce penser qui sans fin tirannise ma vie', 'Passava Amor, su arco desarmado', 'Vuestros ojos tienen d'amor' and 'Vous que le Bonheur rappelle' by Sander Berg. 'Si le parler et le silence' by Roland Smithers. 'Amarilli, mia bella' copyright © by Katherine McGuire from The LiederNet Archive, lieder.net.