

The Instruments and Instrumentation

Although we are fortunate to have access to a fairly large spectrum of early instrument replicas, Camerata California also exploits such instruments as the modern guitar to recreate the sound and spirit of the era. For example, you probably wouldn't find a bowed psaltery (probably a folk instrument of the mid-20th century) in a medieval band, but you would hear the sound of a vielle—and that is the kind of sound we try to recreate. So sit back, close your eyes, and enjoy a ride into the past.

Few published works of the 16th century and earlier included specifics of orchestration. We can, however, make educated guesses based on written and visual evidence. Sources indicate that brass instruments such as cornetto and sackbut were typically grouped with voices; lute with viols; and crumhorns with shawms and sackbut. The style of music also tells us what instruments are appropriate. For example, viola da gamba can swell in volume and sustain notes for an expressive vocalistic line. A lute can play rapid florid parts, but cannot sustain long tones. Recorders and capped reed instruments sound good played in consorts, or mixed with other instruments, but they have limited range of volume. We can also look to the composer and country of origin, since real and distinct regional styles of performance were evident in 16th century Europe, including differences in local preference of instruments and style of singing.

Crumhorn (or krumhorn)—The word crumhorn means literally “curved horn.” The instrument has a double reed covered by a cap so that—unlike the oboe or bassoon—the reed isn't touched directly. They are the earliest (c.1500-1620) and by far the most common of the reed-cap instruments. Although the shape and sound might be unusual (sometimes “kazoo” comes to mind), the musical life of the crumhorn was a serious one, and they were often played in consorts like recorders.

Cornamuse—The cornamuse is a relative of the crumhorn. It has a reed-cap like the crumhorn, but is straight and has a much softer and sweeter sound.

Psaltery—The plucked psaltery consists of a sound box with tuned strings and is played either resting on the lap or leaning up against the chest. It developed in the Near East and filtered into Europe during the Crusades, and was regularly illustrated from the 12th century onward. Many literary references to the psaltery list it both in mixed ensembles and as a solo instrument. The shape varied enormously from trapezoid to the curved “pig snout” type. We use a modern bowed psaltery (of 20th century origin) to create the droning sound of a medieval stringed instrument such as the vielle.

Recorder—Wind instruments such as flutes and recorders are very old indeed. Recorders started to look more or less like their modern counterparts in the Middle Ages, and began to be made in several different sizes and ranges by the 14th century. Recorder playing had achieved a high degree of technical accomplishment by the 16th century, and a wide range of sizes offered a number of separate consorts within the recorder family.

Rankett (or rakkett)—The rankett is a double reed instrument in which the bore is folded in on itself. The bass rankett actually plays as low as a bassoon, in spite of being only just over a foot high, due to a maze of tubing within the cylindrical body.

Rauschpfeife—This reed-cap instrument produces a screaming sound (it is also known as schreierpfeife) that carries well outdoors and competes well with other loud consort instruments such as the shawm.



*Camerata California
presents*

Pleasures and Pastimes

*A program of lighthearted
secular music from
the 15th-18th centuries*

Wednesday, June 14, 2006

The Meadows of Los Gatos

Los Gatos California

Program

- Deo gracias Anglia* Anonymous (c.1415)
- What remedy* Anonymous (Tudor era, c.1500)
Pastime with good company Anon: attrib to Henry VIII (1491 - 1547)
- 'Earl Of Essex' Galliard* John Dowland (1563 - 1626)
If my complaints John Dowland
Lettie Smith, mezzo-soprano
- Paduana II* Wilhelm Brade (1560 - 1630)
Lachrimae Antiquae John Dowland
- +++++
- Strike The Viol* Henry Purcell (1659 - 1695)
Excerpt From *Come, Ye Sons Of Art, An Ode*
For The Birthday Of Queen Mary, 1694
Ted Lorraine, baritone
- Trio Sonata in F major* George Philipp Telemann (1681 - 1767)
for two recorders and basso continuo
- I. *Affettuoso*
II. *Allegro*
III. *Adagio*
IV. *Allegro vivace*
- +++++
- There were three ravens* Thomas Ravenscroft (c.1590 - c.1633)
Richard Stefanko, tenor
- We be soldiers* Ravenscroft
Tobacco is like love Tobias Hume (c.1569 - 1645)
Ted Lorraine, baritone
- Come Sirrah Jack* Thomas Weelkes (c.1576 - 1623)
Bring us a barrel Keith Marsden (1939 - 1991)
We be three poor mariners Ravenscroft

Bring us a barrel

Keith Marsden (1939 - 1991)

In the style of a traditional British pub song

Keith Marsden was a popular composer and performer of folk-style music, and famous for his humor.

*A man when he's drinking takes ale from the bin
But finds too little good stuff there within.
Four and a half is its measure in full
Too small for a sup, not enough for a pull...*

- Chorus -

*So bring us a barrel and set it up right
Bring us a barrel, to last out the night
Bring us a barrel, no matter how high
We'll drink it up Lads, we'll drink it dry.*

*The poor little firkin's nine gallons in all
The ale it is good, but the size is too small
For lads that are drinkers like you and like I
That firkin's small barrel too swiftly runs dry.*

*So roll out the puncheon and bring out the butt
Them's the best measures before us to put
Our cups will go round and good ale it will flow
And we'll be content -- for an hour or so.*

*It's huffcap and tosspot and marry go down
The hogshead and firkin and cask will go 'round.
The tun and the barrel, and someday there'll be
Enough good brown ale to fill up the sea.*

We be three poor mariners

Thomas Ravenscroft

(Instrumental)

By the time of Elizabeth I, the English navy was modern and efficient, supreme in the world. Their successes against Spain and other foes did much to bolster the self-esteem of the ordinary sailor, backbone of the navy. Ravenscroft captures their pride and swagger in this spirited march-like song.



*Tobacco, tobacco,
Sing sweetly for tobacco!
Tobacco is like love, o love it.
For you see I will prove it.*

*Love maketh lean the fat men's tumour,
So doth tobacco.
Love still dries up the wanton humour,
So doth tobacco.
Love makes men sail from shore to shore,
So doth tobacco.*

*'Tis fond love often makes men poor,
So doth tobacco.
Love makes men scorn all coward fears,
So doth tobacco.
Love often sets men by the ears,
So doth tobacco.*

*Tobacco, tobacco,
Sing sweetly for tobacco!
Tobacco is like love, o love it.
For you see I have proved it.*

Come, Sirrah Jack, Ho

Thomas Weelkes (c.1576 - 1623)

From Airs or Fantastic Spirits for three voices (1608)

Thomas Weelkes demonstrated his inventiveness, expressive range, and mastery of contrapuntal technique in his four sets of madrigals (published between 1597 and 1608). The final collection (Airs or Fantastic Spirits for three voice, 1608) is on a smaller scale and more humorous, reflecting his interest in drinking and smoking with companions.

His early success with madrigals and music written for the Church of England was not borne out. After his appointment as organist and choir-master at Chichester Cathedral in 1602, he was often in trouble, and was dismissed in 1609 for being a habitual drunkard and blasphemer.

*Smoking slowly established itself in England between 1565 and 1590 probably via English sailors who became acquainted with it from rival sailors on Spanish, Portuguese, French, and Flemish ships. The rather poor tobacco leaf (*Nicotiana rustica*) brought back by Sir Francis Drake from the English colonies in 1586 was not much competition for the Spanish version (*Nicotiana tabacum*) which was grown in the West Indies (The "Trinidad-o" mentioned in "Come Sirrah Jack"), Mexico, and the north of South America. English colonists took the Spanish plant from Trinidad and re-planted it in Virginia.*

*Come sirrah Jack ho,
Fill some tobacco,
Bring a wire and some fire,
Haste haste away,
quick I say, do not stay, shun delay,
for I drank none good today.*

*I swear that this tobacco
Is perfect Trinidad-o;
By the very very Mass,
never never was, better gear than is here,
by the rood, for the blood,
it is very very good, 'tis very good.*

The Players

*Mary Anne James, on leave
Sam Kiteley – bass voice, sackbut, viola da gamba
Bill Lazar, on leave
Ted Lorraine – baritone voice, percussion
Mike Megas – recorders, percussion
Ken Miller – tenor voice, recorder, crumhorn, cornamuse, percussion
Jennifer Randolph – soprano voice, recorder, crumhorn, cornamuse, harpsichord, rauschpfeife
Lettie Smith – soprano voice, recorder, shawm, rankett
Richard Stefanko – tenor voice, bells, percussion*

About Camerata California

Camerata California is a vocal and instrumental ensemble dedicated to performing sacred and secular music from the medieval through the early Baroque eras. The ensemble was inspired by Dr. Vernon Read, who taught and led Early Music at San Jose State University for many years. The members all have varied, long-standing musical experience.

Camerata is always looking for skilled musicians to join us for rehearsals and performances throughout the year. Contact us at majames@rjweb.org.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Jennifer Randolph for coordinating our rehearsals, updating our website, and providing program notes; to Mary Anne James for program notes and program production; to Ted Lorraine and Lettie Smith for publicity; and to The Meadows for their gracious hospitality. Special thanks to Dr. Ed Harris and San Jose State University School of Music and Dance for access to the early instrument collection.

Texts, Translations and Notes

Deo gracias Anglia

Anonymous (c.1415)

The Battle of Agincourt, fought on October 25, 1415, in northern France, was part of the Hundred Years' War. This battle was immortalized (and somewhat fictionalized) by William Shakespeare in his history play Henry V. The victory brought Henry into direct rivalry for the throne of France with Charles of Ponthieu (later known as Charles VII) who was championed by Joan of Arc.

This song of victory, also known as "The Agincourt Carol," celebrates King Henry V and the English victory at Agincourt. It may have been first sung at Henry's return to England. It is composed in carol form, with regular stanzas alternating with a refrain known as the burden. It has a macaronic text, using both English and Latin. As in other music of the period, the emphasis is not on harmony, but on melody and rhythm.

*Burden: Deo gracias Anglia, redde pro victoria.
(Give thanks to God, England, for bringing victory)*

*Our king went forth to Normandy,
With grace and might of chivalry;
There God for him wrought marvelously,
Wherefore England may call, and cry
Deo gracias!*

*He set a siege, forsooth to say,
To Harfleur town with royal array;
That town he won, and made a fray,
That France shall rue till Domesday.
Deo gracias!*

*Then went him forth our king comely.
In Agincourt field he fought manly.
Through grace of God most marvelously
He had both the field, and the victory.
Deo gracias!*

"There were three ravens" is also cataloged as Child Ballad #26 and appears in several versions throughout the United Kingdom. It is the initial verse of a song of love, loss, and maybe, magic.

*There were three ravens sat on a tree,
Down a down, hey down, a down
They were a black as they might be,
With a down, derry derry derry down, down.*

We be soldiers three

Thomas Ravenscroft (c.1590 - c.1633)

(from Deuteromelia, 1609)

"We Be Soldiers Three" depicts soldiers in the Protestant-Catholic conflicts "lately come forth from the Low Country," probably speaking bad French. Protestant Calvinism was popular among the prosperous merchants of the Dutch-speaking "Low Countries" (Flanders and Holland), as well as the French-speaking industrialists of the southern portion of the Netherlands.

*We be soldiers three,
Pardonnez moi, je vous en prie,
Lately come forth from the Low Country,
With never a penny of money.*

*Here, good fellow, I drink to thee,
Pardonnez moi, je vous en prie,
To all good fellows wherever they be,
With never a penny of money.*

*And he that will not pledge me this
Pardonnez moi, je vous en prie,
Pays for the shot, whatever it is,
With never a penny of money.*

Tobacco is like love

Tobias Hume (c.1569 - 1645)

From Musicall Humors (1605)

Captain Tobias Hume was a professional soldier and excellent performer on the viola da gamba. In 1605 he published Musicall Humors, a collection of his own compositions for voice and violas da gamba. His song, "Tobacco is like love," shows quite clearly that the controversy over tobacco had already begun quite soon after the leaf became known in England considered the most important English composer of the early Baroque era. Purcell spent much of his short life (he died at 36) in the service of the Chapel Royal as a composer, organist, and singer. He wrote extensively for the stage,

for the church and for popular entertainment, and was a master of setting the English language and of contrapuntal technique.

Strike the viol, touch the lute,
Wake the harp, inspire the flute.
Sing your patroness' praise
In cheerful and harmonious lays.

Trio in F Major

George Philipp Telemann (1681 - 1767)

Telemann was one of the most prominent composers in the Baroque era, more so than his contemporary, Johann Sebastian Bach. He was a friend and colleague of Bach, who became cantor at Leipzig because Telemann turned down the post. Telemann was, in fact, godfather to C.P.E. Bach. He was incredibly prolific in producing opera, cantatas, and instrumental music. Telemann traveled widely, absorbing various musical styles and incorporating them into his own compositions.

The Guinness Book of World Records lists Telemann as the most prolific composer of all time with more than 800 credited works. More recent studies, for example the thematic catalogues of his works published in the 1980s and 1990s, has shown that Telemann actually wrote over 3,000 compositions, the manuscripts for many of which were destroyed during World War II.

The trio sonata form was especially popular in the late 17th and early 18th centuries. It is written for two solo instruments and basso continuo (hence the trio). The basso continuo comprises a bass instrument (in this case, viola da gamba) playing the bass line and a harpsichord or other keyboard improvising a part upon the same bass line, according to a harmonic notation known as "figured bass."

There were three ravens

Thomas Ravenscroft (c.1590 - c.1633)

(from Deuteromelia, 1609)

Thomas Ravenscroft was responsible for the preservation of the largest collection of popular vocal music in his three printed catch books: Pammelia (1609), Deuteromalia (1609), and Melismata (1611). The works were clearly intended for a popular audience; it is not clear whether they appealed to the same people who took an interest in the madrigal, or whether the publishers were trying to reach a new audience. These works became the longest surviving collections of English popular song.

What remedy

Anonymous (Tudor era, c.1500)

Instrumental

Pastime with good company

Anon: attrib to Henry VIII (1491 - 1547)

The Tudors ruled England from 1485 to 1603. During this time, England's treasury, navy and music were rescued, revived and revitalized. Henry VIII, the second Tudor king, had great influence on thought and behavior during his reign. His philosophy was "Work hard, play harder." Music, dance and sports were important to him. He brought to the job of king an almost manic energy, fueled by a huge appetite for food and drink.

In his youth, he wore out eight horses a day while hunting, and also engaged regularly in dancing, jousting and wrestling. This lifestyle began to go badly wrong from the age of forty-four, when his horse rolled on him in a tournament, crippling one leg and leaving him a chronic invalid. The accident deprived him of his ability to take exercise, while his eating habits did not diminish, so that during his last few years he measured four and half feet round the waist.

His court was a model of decorum compared with most others in contemporary Europe, those who frequented it being forbidden to brawl, duel or appear in public with their mistresses. It is true, however, that he had a grosser side - his favourite jokes concerned the less sociable bodily functions - and his interest in knowledge did not make up for the fact that he could not actually think.

Pastime with good company
I love and shall until I die.
Grudge so will but none deny
So God be pleased so live will I.
For my pastance, hunt, sing, and
dance
My heart is set,
To my comfort, all goodly sport,
Who shall me let?

Youth must have some dalliance
Of good or ill some pastance
Company methinks then best
All thoughts and fancies to digest.
For idleness is chief mistress
Of vices all
Then who can say but mirth and play
Is best of all?

'Earl Of Essex' Galliard

John Dowland (1563 - 1626)

(Instrumental)

During his lifetime, John Dowland was known for his numerous compositions, his skill as a lutenist, and for being subtly outspoken about his feelings. Because of his exquisitely sorrowful music, he was sometimes known as "Dolorous Dowland". However, Dowland certainly didn't limit himself to pieces in a dolorous mood. But melancholy was the mode in Elizabethan England, and Dowland was the most stylish composer of his time.

Despite becoming one of the most famous lutenists in Europe and publishing several landmark instrumental collections *The First Booke of Songes or Ayres of Foure Partes with Tableture for the Lute* (1597) and *Lachrimae* (1604), John Dowland never received an appointment to the court of Elizabeth, probably because at some point he had become a Catholic.

Lute songs were usually settings of outstanding poetic texts. Composers picked up any old drivel for their multi-voice madrigals, but they preferred quality material for their solo-voice ayres. The moods and form of the music closely followed those of the poetry. The pieces were generally short, and assigned the greatest importance to the vocal part. The lute usually had to make do with a fairly simple accompaniment of chords, although Dowland's music for both voice and accompanist is more elaborate than that of his contemporaries.

* The Earl of Essex galliard is an instrumental version of the lute-song "Can she excuse my wrongs" published in Dowland's "First Booke of Songes or Ayres (1597)." The text was probably intended as an appeal to Elizabeth I on behalf of Robert Devereux, the Earl of Essex, who fell in and out of favor with the Queen and was eventually executed. Dowland wrote about the love/hate relationship between the Earl of Essex and Queen Elizabeth. After Robert was executed, at the Queen's orders, for attempting an uprising against her, Dowland made his loyalty to his "right honorable" friend (and perhaps his bitterness towards to Queen) quite obvious to all through the publication of this galliard.

If my complaints

John Dowland

Also in the "First Book" was Captain Digorie Piper's Galliard ('If my complaints could passions move'). Captain Digorie Piper was in Queen Elizabeth's navy and assigned to pirate Spanish ships, which he so enjoyed that he took it upon himself to pirate ships from other countries as well. Dowland must have felt a loyal friendship to Piper, as he went ahead and published pieces inscribed to the convicted pirate while employed by King Christian of Denmark -- whose ships had been preyed upon by none other than Captain Piper.

If my complaints could passions move,
Or make Love see wherein I suffer wrong:
My passions were enough to prove,
That my despairs had govern'd me too
long.
O Love, I live and die in thee,
Thy grief in my deep sighs still speaks:

Thy wounds do freshly bleed in me,
My heart for thy unkindness breaks:
Yet thou dost hope when I despair,
And when I hope, thou mak'st me hope in
vain.
Thou say'st thou canst my harms repair,
Yet for redress, thou let'st me still
complain.

Paduana II

Wilhelm Brade (1560 - 1630)

(Instrumental)

Dancing was especially popular at the courts of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I, but the forms had become more stylized by the turn of the 17th century and were not necessarily intended for dancing. The pavan (paduana in Italian) was a stately court dance in duple meter. The pavan was often paired with a galliard, a more lively dance that usually presented the same melody in triple meter. We are playing the pavan from a pavan/galliard pair by William (Wilhelm) Brade, a violinist who was born in England but spent much of his career in Germany.

"Paduana II" appears in an instrumental collection published in Hamburg in 1607. Although the collection includes selections by English composers Anthony Holborne and John Dowland, a third of the collection consists of dances by Brade. He was a respected instrumental composer of the time and had four complete collections of his own published. According to the introduction to the anthology, the pieces may have been intended for members of the violin family, but other instrumental combinations are certainly possible in the music of this time.

Lachrimae Antiquae

John Dowland

(Instrumental)

Most of Dowland's music is for his own instrument, the lute. Compositions include several books of solo lute works, lute songs (for one voice and lute), part-songs with lute accompaniment, and several pieces for viol consort with lute. His best known work is the lute song "Flow My Tears", the first verse of which runs: "Flow, my teares, fall from your springs, Exiled for ever, let me mourn; Where night's black bird her sad infamy sings; There let mee live forlorn."

He later wrote what is probably his best known instrumental work, 'Lachrimae or Seaven Teares Figured in Seaven Passionate Pavans,' a set of seven pieces for five viols and lute, each based on "Flow My Tears." It became one of the best known pieces of consort music in his own time. His pavane, "Lachrymae antiquae" was also one of the big hits of the seventeenth century.

Strike The Viol

Henry Purcell (1659-1695)

Excerpt from *Come, Ye Sons of Art: an Ode for the Birthday of Queen Mary*, 1694

After the death of Elizabeth I in 1603, the monarchy showed little interest in music. There was bickering over the succession to the throne and ardent fighting between Catholics and Protestants. Even with the Restoration of Charles II (1660), Italian and French music was favored over the native English style. Henry Purcell flourished in the period that followed the Restoration and is