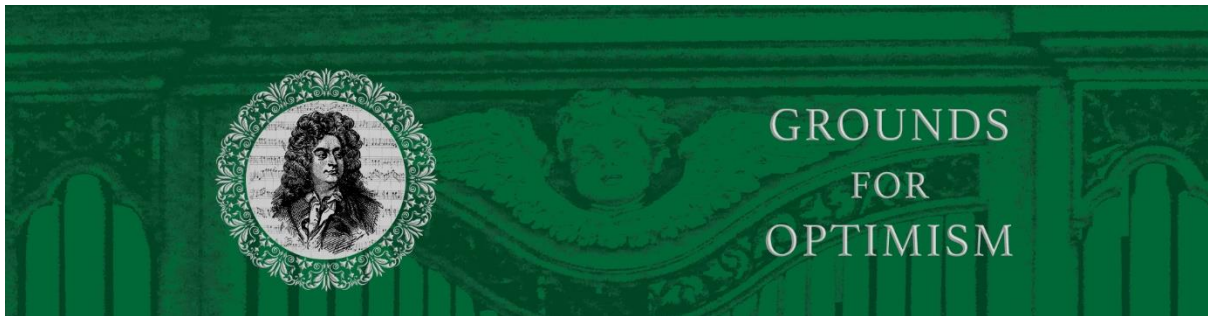


LONDON
FESTIVAL OF
BAROQUE
MUSIC
2021

B



Newe Vialles

Henrik Persson & Emilia Benjamin - viols

Lynda Sayce - theorbo



Saturday 22 May 2021, 7.30pm

Live at St John's Smith Square

Livestreamed and available on demand for 30 days at www.sjss.org.uk

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Ex Tempore

An intimate and improvisatory programme of 17th century music for viols and theorbo, featuring delicate dances by John Jenkins, flying divisions by Christopher Simpson and Daniel Norcombe, lyra viol arrangements of broadside ballads, and sonatas by Benjamin Hely, a viol player and teacher in Purcell's London.

William Byrd (c.1540-1623)	<i>Ne Irascaris</i> (anonymous 17th century arrangement for two lyra viols)
John Jenkins (1592-1678)	<i>A Fancy</i>
Christopher Simpson (c.1602-1669)	<i>Divisions in C</i>
Benjamin Hely (d.1699)	<i>Sonata in G minor</i> <i>Grave - Allegro - Largo - Allegro - Adagio</i>
Richard Sumarte (?-c.1630)	<i>Prelude - Fortune - Monnsier's allman</i>
Robert Johnson (c.1583-1633)	<i>Pavan</i>
John Jenkins	<i>Ayre - Ayre - Sarabande - Courante - Divisions in g</i>
Richard Sumarte	<i>Prelude - Lachrymae - Dafne</i>
Christopher Simpson (c.1602-1669)	<i>Divisions in E minor</i>
Benjamin Hely	<i>Sonata in B flat major</i> <i>Grave - Allegro - (Aria) -</i> <i>Grave/Presto/Adagissimo</i>



A warm welcome to the 37th London Festival of Baroque Music, 'Grounds for Optimism', which brings together a combination of live concerts and online events over a long weekend as we emerge from lockdown. This year's festival is split in to two parts. The first runs from 21st to 23rd May and this will be followed by a second part, from 18th to 20th September.

Grounds for Optimism is the title of a short feature of five online concerts, given by harpsichordist Steven Devine which pairs 'grounds' by Henry Purcell with other intimate keyboard music from England in the late 17th century. Also featuring in the online series are the Rosary Sonatas of Biber, played by Bojan Čičić, and also with Steven Devine; three programmes of Bach given by Amici Voices directed by Helen Charlston; and five programmes devised and performed by Tabea Debus and friends.

The first of the 3 live concerts sees Helen Charlston singing Purcell song, followed on Saturday 22 May with an intimate and improvisatory programme of 17th century music for viols and theorbo given by Neue Vialles and finally on Sunday 23 May, a programme of Purcell Verse Anthems from Tenebrae, directed by Nigel Short.

Following the uncertainty and disappointment surrounding the cancellation of last year's festival, along with so many other events and much of what we hold dear, it's thrilling to be able to welcome audiences back to live music and to see the return of this much-loved festival.

Operating at 15% of our usual capacity clearly presents enormous challenges. We therefore need your help to raise £10,000 to support this year's festival. If you are in a position to help, please visit our Crowdfunder campaign here:

<https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/lfbm2021>

Alternatively, to give by text message, text LFBM 10 to 70450 to donate £10. Texts cost £10 plus one standard rate message.

We are immensely grateful to all of the festival's Friends and supporters for enabling these events to take place and to all of you for joining us, whether in person or online. Thank you for your support.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Heason". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Richard Heason, Director of the London Festival of Baroque Music

About the music

With the restoration of the Monarchy in 1660 came the restoration of court music, and although the newly monarch, Charles II, famously preferred the dance music he had enjoyed in exile to the older English style, the viol and its repertoire continued to flourish in England in the last decades of the 17th century. Professional players appeared from continental Europe, keen to try their luck with English audiences, and amateur players abounded at all levels of society - from aristocrats who had learnt the viol in childhood, to the rising professional classes, famously represented by Samuel Pepys, whose wife and maid-servant both learnt the viol as well. Today's programme explores the repertoire available to, and beloved by, English viol-players in the years leading up to 1700.

Byrd's motet *Ne Irascaris*, a favourite with collegiate and Cathedral choirs, appears in an undated arrangement for two "lyra" viols: bass viols reading polyphonic music from tablature notation, like that used by lute players. Such arrangements of polyphony are relatively rare, and much of the repertoire for lyra viol consists of dances, and divisions and variations on popular tunes. One manuscript, copied in the 1660s, contains arrangements of Elizabethan ballad tunes, ascribed to one Richard Sumarte, who died in the 1630s - suggesting that both the tunes themselves, and Sumarte's arrangements, had stayed in the public consciousness and continued to be popular decades later.

Apart from lyra-viol music, one of the chief diversions of a viol player was the art of playing "divisions" upon a ground (a repeating bass-line or harmonic sequence), often done in duo, with one player playing the ground and the other extemporising above it. This practise was described in detail by Christopher Simpson in *The Division Violist*, first published in 1659, which codified an improvisatory art stretching back to the 16th century. Composers such as John Jenkins and William Lawes incorporated this art of playing divisions into their new "suites" of dances, thus fusing an emerging style with a much older skill, and manuscript copies of self-composed divisions survive from both professional and amateur players, suggesting that despite the popularity of Simpson's treatise, not everyone could extemporise at sight!

The amateur players of the late 17th century required instruments, music, and tuition, supplied by a community of instrument makers, teachers, and music sellers, many of whom operated from premises near St Pauls' churchyard. These included the viol-maker Edward Lewis, one of whose instruments is being played today. Those new to the instrument (or not advanced enough for Simpson) could purchase an instruction book, such as *The Compleat Violist* by Benjamin Hely, who also left several manuscripts containing music for two viols and continuo. Hely's short, multi-sectional sonatas show the influence of Corelli and of the developing Baroque sonata, and seem an appropriate way to leave today's programme, showing that England's viol-players looked to the future as much as they did to the past.

BIOGRAPHIES

Newe Vialles

The name reflects the “Newe vialles” brought to the English court by Henry VIII from Italy to replace the “old vialles” (rebecs or fiddles), thus beginning the long tradition of viol-playing in the British isles.

With a repertoire stretching from the early 16th to the late 17th century, Newe Vialles is equally at home with polyphonic music from across the European continent as it is with the music of the English ‘Golden Age’. Their interest in the rejuvenation of the viol consort tradition has resulted in two world premieres of music for viols by Jocelyn Campbell (2016) and Giles Swayne (2017).

Recent projects include recordings of Buxtehude and Gibbons with the choir of Trinity Hall, Cambridge (Andrew Arthur), a programme of consort songs with Helen Charlston (mezzo soprano), and the establishment of the South West Viols Festival, an annual weekend of workshops, masterclasses and consort playing in Culmstock, Devon. Newe Vialles is ensemble in residence at Saxon Shore Early Music (Kennardington, Kent), where they will return in June 2022.

The group appears tonight in its smallest incarnation as two solo bass viols with continuo.

Henrik Persson

Born in Stockholm, Henrik moved to England to study cello at the Birmingham Conservatoire with Andrew Fuller and viola da gamba with Bill Hunt. He then undertook a postgraduate performance degree at the Royal Academy of Music in London where he studied baroque and classical cello with Jennifer Ward-Clarke and viola da gamba with Richard Campbell.

Henrik currently enjoys a rich and varied freelance career, most notably as first continuo player for Sounds Baroque and Amici Voices. He is also a regular with Florilegium, the Musical and Amicable Society, with whom he also appears as a soloist, and for the Blackdowns Early Music Projects. He was first continuo player of the New London Consort and Musicians of the Globe with whom he regularly toured throughout the UK and the world for eight years. Henrik was also first continuo player for La Nuova Musica from 2007 to 2010 and a member of the European Union Baroque Orchestra 2002-03.

Recordings include appearances as continuo player on several discs such as Spiritato!’s The Judgement of Paris by Daniel Purcell, Sweeter Than Roses with soprano Anna Dennis and Sounds Baroque, Bach cantatas with Amici Voices, and Odes, Songs and Sonatas, Divine, Moral and Entertaining from the English 18th Century with the Musical and Amicable Society. He also appears as soloist together with Jonathan Rees and Martin Perkins on the Weston Park Cello Music recording with the same group.

Henrik is most grateful to have been lent a very special newly restored original division viol by Edward Lewis, 1703, for this concert.

Emilia Benjamin

Emilia began her musical journey at the age of 5 playing Suzuki violin, but started to branch out while at university, where she studied History of Art but spent more time in the music department. From the violin, it was but a small step to the viola (people always need violas), and then, after seeing a concert of Dowland’s *Lachrimae*, the heavenly sound of the five viols prompted her to

instantly take up the treble viol and join the university consort. She loved the instrument so much she even made one for herself and it serves her trustily to this very day in the viol consort Phantasm.

Realising that it might be a good idea to actually earn money from doing what she loved most, she followed her degree by going to the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, took up the bass viol, and emerged 2 years later blinking into the light. After quite a few years of orchestras, viol consorts and chamber groups (principal among them Trio Sonnerie with Monica Huggett), something possessed Emilia to take up the lirone, which has 13 strings and has been the subject of many of her nightmares. And from the sublime to the ridiculous, her new venture, all on one string, is learning the Trumpet Marine.

Lynda Sayce

One of Britain's leading lutenists with over 100 recordings to her name, Lynda Sayce read Music at St Hugh's College, Oxford, then studied lute with Jakob Lindberg at the Royal College of Music. She performs regularly as soloist and continuo player with leading period instrument ensembles worldwide, is principal lutenist with The King's Consort, Ex Cathedra and the Musicians of the Globe, and has broadcast extensively on radio and TV. She is also director of the lute ensemble Chordophony, whose repertory and instrumentarium is based exclusively on her research. In 2013, after many years as a frustrated listener with twitchy fingers, Lynda added a bass viol to her collection of fretted things and started viol lessons with Susanne Heinrich.

Lynda has written for *Early Music*, the *New Grove Dictionary of Music*, and the art journal *Apollo*. She contributed texts on plucked instruments to the new musical instrument catalogue of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. She holds a Ph.D (Open University, 2001) for her research on the history of the theorbo, which is being prepared for publication.

A keen photographer, she also works with cutting-edge digitization equipment, for the Oxford-based Digital Image Archive of Medieval Music, and the Alamire Foundation at Leuven University. Many thousands of her manuscript photographs are now in digital archives worldwide, providing unparalleled source access to music scholars.

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The London Festival of Baroque Music, known before 2015 as the Lufthansa Festival of Baroque Music, was founded in 1984 and aims to put before London audiences the highest quality performers in the field of Baroque music from abroad and from the UK.

The Lufthansa Festival was jointly founded in 1984 by Ivor Bolton and Tess Knighton to enrich the already-strong London scene for 17th- and 18th-century music by inviting over top-quality foreign artists, many to make their UK debuts. It quickly won recognition as one of the world's foremost early-music festivals, with a reputation for intelligent theme-based programming and for offering London audiences the opportunity to see live artists they may previously have only heard in recordings.

In its 30 years of existence, visiting artists have included such Baroque luminaries from abroad as Musica Antiqua Köln, La Petite Bande, the Bach Ensemble, Collegium Vocale Gent, the Freiburg Baroque Orchestra, the Akademie für Alte Musik Berlin, Les Talens Lyriques, Tafelmusik, Jordi Savall, Andreas Scholl, Gustav Leonhardt and Andreas Staier, and home-grown performers such as Dame Emma Kirkby, Andrew Manze, Carolyn Sampson, The English Concert, the Academy of Ancient Music and the Gabrieli Consort & Players.

Concerts were initially at St James Church, Piccadilly, but since 1998 have mainly taken place at a new regular home at the Baroque church of St John's Smith Square. Concerts are also presented in Westminster Abbey and a range of other local venues.

www.lfbm.org.uk

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