

**Pegasus Early Music presents**

## **Music for Kings**

Laura Heimes, soprano;  
Julie Andrijeski & Boel Gidholm, violins;  
Beiliang Zhu & David Morris, violas da gamba;  
Daniel Swenberg & Deborah Fox, theorbos

Sett No. 8 in C major William Lawes (1602-1645)  
Paven – Aire – Alman – Aire – Corant – Saraband

Mediocrity in Love rejected Henry Lawes (1596-1662)  
The Lark  
In vain, fair Chloris, you design Lady Mary Dering (1629-1704)  
I rise and grieve Henry Lawes

Diverse bizzarie Sopra la Vecchia Sarabanda ò pur Ciaccona  
Nicola Matteis (1650-1714)  
She loves and she confesses too, Z. 413 Henry Purcell (1659-1695)

Chacony in G minor, Z.730 Henry Purcell  
So when the Glitt'ring Queen from *Yorkshire Feast Song*, Z. 333  
Hark! How All Things from *The Fairy Queen*, Z. 629

Divisions in G Minor John Jenkins (1592-1678)

Weep no more my wearied eyes Nicholas Lanier (1588-1666)  
Mark how the blushful morn  
No more shall meads be deck'd with flow'rs

Sett No. 6 in D major William Lawes  
Fantasy – Aire – Alman – Corant – Ecco – Aire. Morriss

## Program Notes

In today's program we dive into the delightful, passionate, and sometimes quirky music of 17<sup>th</sup> century England. The composers whose music you will hear today were also performing musicians. They worked at court or in the Chapel Royal or other royal musical establishments, providing music for religious services, lavish court entertainments, theatrical masques, and intimate salon occasions.

The seventeenth century in England was politically stormy, with two civil wars, kings deposed/exiled/executed/restored, religious strife and persecution, a Commonwealth without a monarch, Gunpowder Plots and Glorious Revolutions, plagues, a Great Fire, uprisings, and so on. And yet, with the exception of the Cromwell Interregnum, music continued at court and was rich in variety and style, as you'll hear today.

**William Lawes** (1602-1645) is perhaps the most famous of the Royalist musicians and seems to have been very close to King Charles I. William was possibly a member of Charles's Private Musick while Charles was still Prince of Wales. When Charles became King, William became a "musician-in-ordinary for lutes and voices," (*ordinary* in this sense means a regular member of the music staff, unlike *extraordinary* musicians, who were hired as extras) composing and performing in court entertainments and masques. When Lawes enlisted in the army to serve the Royalists, he was given a position in the Royal Life Guards, ostensibly to keep him closer to Charles and therefore out of harm's way. And when Lawes was killed in the line of duty, Charles declared a special period of mourning and called him Father of Musick.

Lawes was a prolific composer in many genres. He wrote many secular songs and stage music for court masques, as well as sacred anthems and motets. His music is characterized by expressive melodies, intricate harmonies, and bold experimentation blending elements of English, French, and Italian styles, and pushing the boundaries of form and structure. In the instrumental Consorts on our program today, you will hear many lush harmonies suddenly transformed into clashing discords accompanied by eccentric rhythms, which then turn an unexpected corner into a sublime harmony. These Royal Consorts, or Setts, are written for two violins who play as equals, two viols who take turns playing florid solo parts and bass line, and, very unusually (except for the fact that Lawes was well known for his theorbo playing), two theorbos, who have separate solo lines in some of the movements and otherwise play continuo (a harmonized bassline). Both Setts open with a slow movement, unfolding with added ornaments and contrasting sections. Then follow several dances, such as aire, almand, corant, and sarabande; here we really hear Lawes' sense of rhythmic vitality and "willful angularity."

William's older brother, **Henry Lawes** (1596-1662), is known primarily for his contributions to vocal music, leaving us with more than four hundred songs, both published and in manuscript. Lawes was a skilled singer and lutenist, and served as one of the Gentlemen of the Chapel Royal under both Charles I and Charles II. The poet John Milton, author of the epic *Paradise Lost*, wrote a dedicatory sonnet for one of Henry's publications, in his praise:

Harry, whose tuneful and well measur'd Song  
First taught our English Musick how to span  
Words with just note and accent, not to scan  
With Midas Ears, committing short and long;  
Thy worth and skill exempts thee from the throng,  
With praise enough for Envy to look wan;

To after age thou shalt be writ the man,  
That with smooth aire couldst humor best our tongue  
Thou honour'st Verse, and Verse must send her wing  
To honour thee, the Priest of Phoebus Quire  
That tun'st their happiest lines in Hymn or Story  
Dante shall give Fame leave to set thee higher  
Then his Casella, whom he woo'd to sing  
Met in the milder shades of Purgatory.

**Lady Mary Dering** (1629-1704) was born Mary Harvey, and through an arranged marriage became Mary, Lady Dering. She was well-educated and studied music with Henry Lawes, who thought so highly of her that he dedicated his 1655 publication *Select Ayres and Dialogues* to her. In this volume he published three of her songs, which, sadly, are the only pieces we have of hers. These songs are the first music by a female composer to be published in England.

**Nicholas Lanier** (1588-1666) held the esteemed position of Master of the King's Musick during the reigns of both Charles I and Charles II. In addition to his musical talents as a composer, singer, and lutenist, Lanier was also a skilled painter. During the Commonwealth period, he relocated to Holland, where he may have resorted to forging art to sustain himself. Lanier enjoyed particular favor from Charles I, who, it is reported, would frequently place his hand upon Lanier's shoulder during his performances. Sent by Charles I to Italy in the 1620s to acquire an extensive art collection from the Dukes of Mantua, Lanier was exposed to the emerging Italian musical style, notably influenced by Claudio Monteverdi. He skillfully integrated elements of this style into his own compositions, including the use of recitative and the popular ground bass, as you'll hear in *No More Shall Meads*. An intriguing detail of his life is the close friendship between Lanier and the much younger Samuel Pepys, who frequently invited Lanier to his musical gatherings in the early 1660s. Lanier's musical prowess was lauded even earlier, as evidenced by Sir Gerard Herbert's 1619 letter describing Lanier's captivating performance in the Queen's bedchamber, where he displayed his mastery of the Irish harp, the viol, and his enchanting singing and lute playing.

**John Jenkins** (1592-1678) was a virtuoso viol player, highly influential in the development of English consort music. He was a friend of William Lawes, and also worked at court. During the hostilities that killed Lawes, Jenkins left the court and worked for two Royalist families loyal to Charles I. During the Commonwealth, Jenkins wrote more than seventy suites of music for amateur music-makers rather than theater music, which was forbidden by Cromwell. After the Restoration, he became a musician at the court of Charles II. Jenkins was a lutenist and a viol player. He wrote extensively for various instrumental ensembles, including viol consorts, keyboard, and wind instruments, contributing significantly to the repertoire of English chamber music during the 17th century.

**Nicola Matteis** (ca.1650-1714) was an Italian violinist and composer, known throughout Europe for his virtuosic playing and innovative compositions. He spent much of his career in England, where he became a favorite musician in the court of King Charles II. He was known for his pioneering approach to violin technique, incorporating novel bowing techniques and ornamentation styles that pushed the boundaries of violin playing of the time. He also gave excellent instructions on playing for amateur musicians who would buy his publications. The writer John Evelyn wrote in his diary:

I heard that stupendious Violin Signor Nichola... whom certainly never mortal man exceeded on that instrument, he had a stroak so sweete, made it speaking like the Voice of a man and when he pleased, like a Consort of severall Instruments: he did wonders upon a Note: was an excellent Composer also. Nothing approched the violin in Nichola's hand: he seemed to be inspired and played such ravishing things... as astonishd us all.

**Henry Purcell's** (1659-1695) output encompasses a wide range of genres, including sacred music, opera, instrumental music, and songs. Under Charles II and then James II, he served as organist at Westminster Abbey and later as organist of the Chapel Royal, positions that allowed him to create music for ceremonial occasions and church services. Purcell's music is characterized by inventive harmonies in the tradition of earlier composers on this program, expressive melodies, and sophisticated counterpoint. He easily adopted the Italian ground bass style introduced perhaps by Lanier, taking it always one step further with innovation, as you'll hear in his *Chacony*, as well as in *She Loves and She Confesses*, and in *So when the Glitt'ring Queen*.

---Deborah Fox, Karina Tseng

