Aspects of English Song

Essays by Anthony Rooley

Schola Cantorum Basiliensis
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Aspects of English Song
Essays by Anthony Rooley
Edited by Giovanna Baviera & Martin Kirnbauer

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Fore-word

Anthony Rooley, together with Evelyn Tubb, had a profound influence on vocal training at the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis and gave new impulses over decades (beginning with courses as early as the 1980s and with a permanent teaching position since 1999 until 2018). In particular, the Advanced Vocal Ensemble Studies (AVES) course he initiated in 2008 introduced many singers to the supreme discipline of Renaissance and Early Baroque a cappella singing. Central to his teaching was the power of language, shaped by the art of oratory and performance, disciplines which Anthony Rooley himself also masters exceptionally well. Language is both the medium and represents the content, like two sides of a coin. In the context of teaching, therefore, he wrote many texts and essays that give us an idea of the intellectual background against which he developed his musical ideas.

The Schola Cantorum Basiliensis is proud to be able to publish some of these essays in this collection. These texts are still notably close to the original inspiring oral lecture. They also document Anthony Rooleys passion for using pictorial representations, which bring a further, to a certain extent non-verbal level into his teaching.

Thanks are due to Tony for providing the texts, Giovanna Baviera for editorial support, Christelle Cazaux for organising the illustrations and Tess Knighton for her introduction. Sincere thanks also go to the SULGER FOUNDATION for their generous financial support of the publication.

Basel, September 2021 *Thomas Drescher & Martin Kirnbauer*

Intro-duction

Tess Knighton

> You would pluck out the heart of my mystery
> (Hamlet, III: 2)

Few performers talk about what they do; few performers write about what they do: performance can indeed seem a mysterious process. This is perhaps less the case now as regards, for example, seventeenth-century music: since the advent of the early music movement – in which Anthony Rooley has had a leading role – information on which sources are used, which way an ornament is interpreted, which instrument has been chosen and why, is generally well out in the open. Rather, the mystery lies in what they do when they perform. This is not surprising. Many performers have little time to do anything other than performing; many others do not have the urge to talk or write about what they do: it is not easy to put into words an experience that is of the moment, not only transient, but also intangible, ineffable or, as Anthony Rooley would probably say, divine. Therein lies the mystery, even though in recent decades, the notion of performance studies has emerged as an interdisciplinary discipline: performance is taken as a lens through which to see the world, the act or art of performance as a focus for critical analysis. Performance can be seen, in scholarly terms, as "a process, praxis and episteme, a mode of transmission, an accomplishment, and a means of intervening in the world".[1] The technological tools of digital humanities have opened up new analytical methods, including the possibility of 'visualisation' that, in theory, allows the intangible to be 'seen'. Sound waves have long been viewed graphically, but will it really be possible to measure the inspiration – the ineffable, the divine, if you will –, that moment of transformation when music, mediated through the performer, takes place in the listener? There is also a flowering of technology-led research into emotional response on the part of the members of an audience listening to live music-making: it's amazing what an app on your mobile phone can do now, let alone what it will be able to do in the future.

For Rooley – performing largely in pre-DH days – the approach to understanding performance has been more philosophical. In a recent talk, he spoke of how, as a lute player, he became more and more aware of philosophy, in part because the lute is such a quiet instrument: the fragile sound of a plucked string has to communicate by drawing the listener in, while the performer explores the potential for the transience of the sound as a key to unlocking self-knowledge. This, Rooley describes, is the Orphic moment, the fleeting but profound moment when musical performance, in dialogue between performer and audience, becomes transformative, and performer and audience are drawn together in a shared and genuinely two-way process. As a lutenist, he was drawn inexorably to the Neoplatonic thinking of Renaissance philosophers, such as Marsilio Ficino (1433–1499). Ficino, who described music as the decoration of silence (thus wonderfully evoking its mystery), and other thinkers of the time saw the true role of the performer as the ability to channel higher creative activity: performance was seen, essentially, as a ritual that could

1 Diana Taylor, *Performance*, Durham & London: Duke University Press 2016, 202.

create the conditions for contemplative awareness. In other words, the energy generated by the music and then gathered and sustained together through the performer, who serves as conduit during the unfolding of the musical performance in an infinite exchange of ebb and flow with the listener, can lead to that frisson of understanding, of recognition of all that is beauty.

The notion of the performer as conduit is easily appreciated, but, Rooley has long believed, this requires the performer to step to one side to get inside the composer's mind and to allow the music to convey that sense of profundity; this is perhaps less easily accomplished. When it is achieved, not only will the audience be deeply moved, but the performer will likewise be affected; as Angela Voss, in a review of Rooley's *Performance: Revealing the Orpheus Within* (1990), summarised: "the performer's own being may be tempered and his unruly [surely no pun intended!] elements harnessed".[2] This abnegation of the ego, this stepping aside, Rooley considers to be a bold step. I would suggest that for a performer to talk about the performance experience, as he knows it and as filtered through Renaissance thinking, is equally bold. The performer who talks about what he (or she) does enters into a philosophical negotiation with the audience; some critics have felt that at times Rooley as explicator has crossed the fine dividing line between infectious enthusiasm and evangelical zeal. That intangible boundary is probably best imagined on a spectrum between objectivity and subjectivity as filtered through the reader's (or listener's) mind.

Perhaps what matters most is what matters to Rooley as a performer, and what he brings to his performances of what has inspired him. He is inspired not only by philosophy but clearly also by literature: the relationship between words and music lies at the heart of his interpretations, whether he is accompanying a solo lute song or directing a performance of a madrigal with the vocal ensemble he founded in 1969, the *Consort of Musicke*. The clear (essentially vibrato-less), balanced sound that the Consort achieved – free from the mannerisms of the earliest madrigal groups such as *The English Singers* –, combined with a professionalism that laid to rest the prevailing air of amateurism associated with the genre from the early twentieth century (at least in Britain), meant that the sheer beauty and refinement of their performances and recordings dominated the 1970s and 80s and had a profound lasting influence. Such refinement emanated from Rooley's constant and unwavering search to find a balance between words and music. His love and sense of affinity with the music is clear, but he relishes the poetry, as anyone who has heard him read seventeenth-century verse will know.

Many of Rooley's writings focus on the words-music relationship, from an early article on Dowland's *Songs of Darkness* published in *Early Music* in 1983 to his exploration, in the same journal almost a quarter of a century later, in 2006, of the symbolism layered upon layer in a single Dowland song. Rooley discusses the ways in which Dowland adopted the persona of melancholia which, he argues in 1983 in anticipation of *Revealing the Orpheus Within*, formed part of broader Neoplatonic debates concerning the union of poetry and music and which, through that combination, had a transformative impact on the listener. In 2006, Rooley offers a masterly decoding of Dowland's song "His golden locks" from the *First Booke of Songes* (1597), with verse by Sir Henry Lee, courtier of Queen Elizabeth I. Years spent thinking about Dowland's songs and their texts leads to a fascinating interpretation of how every image, allegorical reference and literary device would have been 'read', or, in fact, heard in Dowland's setting – "a performance piece of quite extraordinary power" – by the queen and her courtiers. Similar insights abound in Rooley's essay in this collection on John Daniel's *Songs for the Lute, Viol and Voice* of 1606; as he says, the simplicity of the title is belied by the contents of the song book being 'rich beyond imagining'. Indeed, he describes how the musical imagery in Daniel's song "Can doleful notes" combines to become almost 'oppressive in its omnipresence'. In this poetico-musical *tour de force*, as Rooley describes, Apollo has lost his Daphne, and "gives vent with the most extreme utterance that musical art can contrive". Long experience as player-philosopher enables him to bring remarkable insights into a song repertory that, placed in its own context, is no less sophisticated, profound and affecting than the great songs cycles of Schubert.

What Rooley does as a performer, then, is seek to communicate the deep rhetoric of poetry and song and to convey their combined meanings and well of inspiration to the listener. How the listener responds to the performance will vary according to their own experience and level of engagement, but he or she will, at the very least, be 'drawn in' by the subtle tones of the lute. Music, in its ability to transcend the meaning of words, can affect the listener's response in the moment of 'doing', what Rooley has termed "present moment awareness", but is greatly enriched by the insight gained through his writings and, perhaps above all, through his illustrated talks – an art he has made his own in presentations as fine-tuned as a double-strung lute. With that instrument to hand for musical illustration, he suffuses his talks with a gentle sense of humour that leavens the philosophy and raises the audience's attentiveness: "The new Humanism, Platonism, Hermeticism, Gnosticism, Rosicrucianism, and plain downright Commonsense-ism immensely enriched the mediaeval world of thought throughout the sixteenth century", he quips before describing Thomas Campion as a Renaissance man in the chapter entitled "The fair singer". Well, a Yorkshire man born to common sense would say that, wouldn't he? A little common sense can go a long way in philosophical thought, as well as in the life of a performing musician, but this performer has been captivated by those other lines of thought and has striven to convey their meaning in his performances over a lifetime.

This collection of Rooley's essays and talks in written form is a cornucopia of inside knowledge of seventeenth-century English song, of the delights of historical detail and analytical insight drawn from years of performing experience and philosophical thought. His listeners, his students at the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis, as elsewhere, will have been touched by his inspiration, by what he does when he performs and how his performances intervene with the world. Reading these musings will help to give some idea of the wellspring for his interpretations, as well as of how he would pluck out the heart of the mystery that is making music.

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2 In: *Early Music* 19/3 (1991), 451–53: 451.

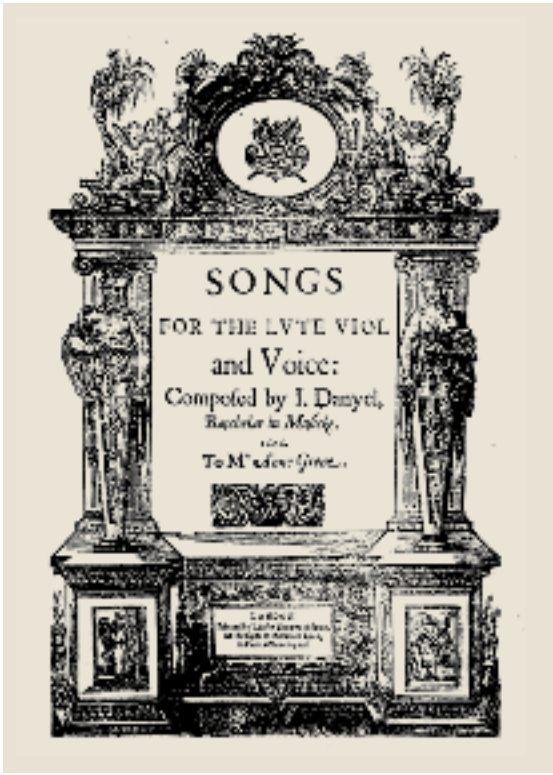
Coy Daphne Fled from Phoebus' Hot Pursuit:

John Danyel's Songs (1606) Interpreted as the Story of Apollo and Daphne

It may be dismissed as simply an extended pun on the surname "Greene" but, on careful inspection, John Danyel's only printed collection, his *Songs for the Lute, Viol and Voice* (1606) is so elaborately worked through that an interpretation becomes necessary. This essay explores some of the salient features that might not be apparent at first sight.

1

Figure 1: Title page of John Danyel's *Songs for the Lute, Viol and Voice*



The plain, almost austere title that Danyel gives his only volume of songs promises simple fare, in contrast to some of its contemporary songbooks such as *A Musical Dreame*, *A Musical Banquet* and *A Pilgrimes Solace*. In fact, the contents hidden under this plain cover are rich beyond imagining: Danyel's volume is one of the most elaborately contrived collections of the time. It draws on a wide armoury of rhetoric and symbolism beloved in the high Renaissance and particularly cultivated in Jacobean England.

Rarely do songbook title pages carry the name of the dedicatee: their name's appearance there is already a sign that one should be alert to something other, a further dimension than normally expected. Danyel's dedication "To Mistress Anne Grene" is as significant as it is rare. The whole volume is a carefully constructed conceit—an elaborate Jacobean game—with the young Anne Grene as the central figure. We have no likeness of her, but to give an idea of how a young female of that time might have appeared, I present a portrait of one of her contemporaries.

Figure 2: Portrait of Jane Palmer, ca. 1597

This picture is of a nine-year-old girl in 1597 who is roughly the same age as Anne Grene: by 1606, she would have been perhaps eighteen years old. This young "lady" (all children then were treated as young adults) is Miss Jane Palmer; the portrait still hangs in the ancestral home, Dorney Court, just by the Heathrow flight path and is still held by the Palmer family.

2

Danyel's opening dedication, written in verse, explains the circumstances behind the publication of these songs:

> To Mistresse Anne Grene, the worthy Daughter to
> Sir William Grene of Milton, Knight.
>
> That which was onely privately compos'd,
> For your delight, faire ornament of Worth,
> Is here, come, to bee publikely disclos'd:
> And to an universall view put forth.
> Which having beene but yours and mine before,
> (Or but few besides) is made hereby
> To bee the worlds: and yours and mine no more.
> So that in this sort giving it to you,
> I give it frome you, and therein doe wrong,
> To make that, which in private was your due:
> Thus to the world in common to belong.
> And thereby may debase the estimate,
> Of what perhaps did beare some price before:
> For oft we see how things of slender rate,
> Being undivulg'd, are choisely held in store:
> And rarer compositions once exposed,
> Are (as unworthy of the world) contemn'd:
> For what, but by their having been disclos'd
> To all, hath made all misteries contemn'd.

These "private harmonies", written whilst John Danyel was in the employment of the Grene family as music tutor to their daughter Anne, are now presented to the world. Her influence is everywhere in these songs, songs of such intellectual height and philosophical depth that this young lady must have been a remarkably discriminating pupil!

Throughout the book Anne Grene is identified with Daphne, the ancient Greek nymph; an emblem of purity, virginity and rustic beauty. Puns on her surname that elaborate on this identification abound throughout the volume, as in the first song "Coy Daphne Fled", which retells the story of Daphne bathing naked, espied by Apollo. The god desires her (or "wishes to marry her", as is found in some of the

prim introductions to mythology that still abound, beached whales from 19th-century moral "correctness") but she refuses his advances. As a mere mortal—a female one at that—rejecting a god is dangerous stuff: in his rage and frustration, Apollo only avoids destroying her totally by the timely intervention of chaste Diana, the Goddess of, among other things, virginity. At Daphne's urgent supplication to avert impending rape, she pleads to Diana for deliverance. Diana responds by turning her into a laurel tree. The god's amorous advances are not wholly in vain: the crown he wears is of laurel leaves: Daphne is thus constantly "wreathing" him for eternity. The final line of this first song defiantly states "she rests still Grene, and so wish I to be". Grene is capitalized and italicized, so that no one can be in doubt of the pun. In fact, verse one of this song is the ancient myth retold in a six-line stanza, spoken by Phoebus as a kind of warning to Anne—she should learn from Daphne's fate. The second stanza, from Anne's perspective, illustrates the female point of view and ends with her powerful affirmation of unsullied purity, "knowing men's passions idle and off course".

If indeed Anne is identified with Daphne, then who, but John Danyel, is Apollo? Apollo, the lyre-playing god of music, master of all the Muses, is represented by her lute tutor, at least for the purposes of the extended elaborate conceit which is this entire publication. The songs follow, unfolding, one by one, a delightful sequence of masculine advance and feminine rebuttal. Apollo, the music-god, pursues his hot desires as the volume unfolds, whilst Daphne shows modesty, steadfastness and the moral strength to remain "green" and cool about it.

From the first song to the very last note, this conceit dictates the structuring in ways one can hardly believe, for the lengths that Danyel goes. The final piece of the whole collection is not a song, but a lute solo, a set of variations. It is an elaborate play on her name: "Mrs. Anne Grene her leaves be greene". It serves as an instrumental postlude to the songs: contained in the lute solo divisions are several pretty and complex conceits. Danyel chooses the folktune "Browning" (called this because of its rustic connotations: things rustic were always characterized as brown, such as "brown exercise" as a term for hunting sports). He sets fourteen divisions or variations on it, but calls the tune by its other name, for obvious reasons. The one verse to have survived goes:

> The leaves be green,
> The nuts be brown;
> They hang so high,
> They will not come down.

After all the lover's advances, special pleas, anger, fawning, false claims and so on, the initial desires of the mistress ("she rests still grene, and so wish I to be") are maintained until the final note of the book. Significantly, there are fourteen variations: the number fourteen in traditional numerology is used for the expression of feminine virtues in art. The most obvious and pertinent example of this is the Petrarchan fourteen-line sonnet dedicated to Laura. Laura, that is, of the laurel tree,

for "Laura" is the Latin equivalent of the Greek for "green": the laurel is, of course, also the tree into which protesting Daphne was turned. There is, however, a more thoroughly hidden and subtle conceit built into the structure and realization of this lute solo, affecting its very sonority. The folk tune in its simplest form has the peculiarity of starting one tone higher than it ends. Virtually all surviving versions begin on G and end on F, but Danyel transposes it up one tone so that it begins on A and ends on G—Anne Grene's initials. He goes much further by presenting the piece in a unique tuning for the lute, deviating from the standard lute tuning g, d, A, F, C, G for the first time in any English source (and possibly elsewhere too). Danyel drops the pitch of the top two strings by one semitone and alters all the lower strings by various intervals, with two exceptions: the third string (A) and the sixth string (G). These remain constant, reflecting Anne Grene's expressed desire to remain constant to her vows, whilst all the other strings slip a semitone or more from their long-accustomed pitch, representing the immoral, debased desires of the music god Apollo (i.e. John Danyel). In a practical aside, the piece in this strange tuning is very difficult, not least for the fact that in performance the necessary re-tuning takes much effort and is not stable. When played using the standard tuning it is still a demanding work, but much more attainable. Clearly, Daniel composed it in standard tuning: the re-entrant tuning is obviously a device to heighten the conceit. There is a manuscript source, The Cozen's Lute Book in Cambridge, which features the standard tuning. This is the practical performing version, while the printed one is allegorical.

Other puns on "Mistress Grene" are found scattered throughout the volume: Number XII, "Let not Cloris", is a galliard-song reminiscent of John Dowland's "Shall I strive with words to move". Cloris is also the Greek for green, thus identifying the dedicatee. She is also mentioned in Number XIX, "What delight can they enjoy?" in the second stanza, with a most apposite sentiment: "and therefore Cloris will not love". The theme of love rejected is continued in the following song, the final song in the collection, which features the most elaborate instrumentation in the book: "Now the Earth, the Skies, the Air". In this lyric, the poet sees the entire world joyful in springtime, the time of fresh "greenness", when the earth is newly clothed in green: that is, except for himself, a pathetic figure left alone to sing "notes of misery". After this doleful self-pitying, the lute solo makes manifest his lonely condition, whilst praising her steadfastness.

Almost all the remaining songs can be enjoyed as contributions to the central dialogue between Apollo and Daphne. The one major exception is an important one, as it proves to be one of the finest lute songs of the era, Dowland's output not excepted. It is the trilogy "Grief keep within", an elegiac cycle of great profundity, written for "Mrs. M.E. her Funerall Teares for the death of her husband" (Numbers IX-XI). If it were possible to identify Mrs M.E. we would probably know why this piece was included and what part it played in the central dialogue, but no identity has yet been proposed by anyone. Perhaps she was a close member of the family or a family friend: unfortunately, conjecture is empty without more evidence.

This important exception aside, my reading of the male-female exchange is as follows:

I "Coy Daphne Fled"

Verse 1: male advance. Apollo-Danyel uses the mythological story as a warning, in an attempt to persuade and seduce
Verse 2: female rebuttal. Daphne-Anne uses the same story to affirm her determination to maintain her chastity

II "Thou Pretty Bird"

A male protestation, based on a free translation of Guarini's poem "O come sei gentile", in which the lover likens his condition to the mistress' nightingale: both are encaged, but the singing nightingale lives, whilst he, singing, dies. The nightingale, chief songster amongst birds, is associated with Apollo.

III "He Whose Desires are Still Abroad, I see"

The female riposte: the female voice constantly argues the deeper philosophy throughout the book. Here, the argument is that those who desire what they have not and cannot have will never know inner peace.

IV "Like as the Lute Delights"

Elaborate male pleading; this poem by Samuel Danyel is a suitably complex set of musical allusions for an "Apollo"–lutenist to express. So involved are the implications of the poem and John's setting of it that the full exegesis will be found in the appendix. It is a kind of centerpiece to the Apollonian argument.

V "Dost Thou Withdraw Thy Grace"

Male surprise at her continued disdain; despite the brilliance of the previous poem, she remains unmoved, hurting his male pride.

VI "Why Can'st Thou Not"

Aggrieved male utterance: he cannot believe that she can remain unmoved, since other females have never resisted his charms so severely.

VII "Stay, Cruel Stay"

Female confusion: how can he be so unkind, when she is being true to herself? That should command only his respect.

VIII "Time, Cruel Time"

Male indulgent philosophizing; Time himself is in league with this fair beauty, despite his lengthy pleading.

IX-XI "Grief Keep Within"

Without being able to identify Mrs. M.E., or her husband, this profound expression of bereavement, one of the finest lute songs in the entire repertoire, cannot be placed in the context I am proposing.

XII "Let Not Cloris Think"

Hurt male pride: let her not think that though he is "envassall'd" he is blind. No one else understands her as well as he: can she not take joy in that, and therefore show him some hint of kindness? "Cloris" and "green" create a specific link to Anne.

XIII-XV "Can Doleful Notes"

Male, intellectual obfuscation; the most complex piece in the book, the precise meaning of which has confounded all commentators. The very abstruseness is Apollonian and, in this context, a summation of the musician's dilemma, filled as it is with musical puns and allusions.

XVI "Eyes Look No More"

Female abstruse philosophy: it can only be understood if one is familiar with the inner message of John Dowland's "Flow My Tears", for this song is its parody har–monically, rhythmically, melodically and, most important, textually. Here, Danyel is revealing an affinity with the esoteric circle around Lucy, Countess of Bedford, turning it to the advantage of Anne Grene by showing, as it were, that she is of the same calibre and understanding as that paragon of esoterica.

XVII "If I Could Shut the Gate Against My Thoughts"

Female redemptive desire to be beyond physical passions. Here, Danyel creates an exquisite prayer-like plea to be free from human passions and persuasions, a statement of the desire to be elevated into a spiritual realm.

XVIII "I Die When as I do Not See"

Male, earthbound, desire-driven statement. He realizes that she is pure and beyond his reach, though he cannot accept it. Her female principles prove eternal, whilst his male desires prove ephemeral.

XIX "What Delight Can They Enjoy"

A four-part "ayre", the first in the book, expressing harmony and a uniting of philosophies. The words "and therefore Cloris will not love" sum up the message of the entire book. The battle is over and she has proved the victor; this is emphasized by the four-part harmony.

XX "Now the Earth, the Skies, the Air"

The second four-part "ayre", with two lutes. This is the final statement from the man (Danyel-Apollo) that all else may be happy, for nature is following her own desired course. For him, however, there is no springtime, for his desires have been frustrated and are expressed in "notes of misery".

XXI "Mistress Anne Grene, Her Leaves Be Greene"

The final encomium to the lady and her steadfastness of mind and heart: fourteen divisions, or variations, on her own name. She metaphorically turns into the laurel tree through these variations.

APPENDIX

Notes to "Like as the Lute" (IV)

The first thing to note is the placing of this song as number four in the volume. Considering the numerological awareness the Jacobeans had, such things are not accidental. The number four represents worldly, earthly manifestation, represented by a number of "fours": the seasons; points of the compass; the four "conditions" (hot, cold, humid and dry); and the four elements, earth, water, air and fire. How is this relevant to a high-flown poem about the lute, music and the muse? The poet (Samuel Danyel, in fine form) writes from the male admirer's point of view, taking the position that he is earthbound (locked in "fourness", as it were) without the inspiration of his muse, the woman decidedly from another plane who gives him all his inspiration and elevates him.

The ardent (male) lover is a lutenist, who preludes searching for his inspiration with a gently rising phrase: an inverted "Lachrimae" four-note theme, implying that there is no melancholy, only uplifting inspiration. Establishing mode and mood and unlocking the channels of inspiration, the singer follows in like manner, quoting the same theme the lutenist presented—literally, "like as the lute".

Like as the lute that joys or else dislikes
As in his art that plays upon the same,
So sounds my Muse according as she strikes
On my heart strings high tun'd unto her fame.
Her touch doth cause the warble of the sound
Which here I yield in lamentable wise,
A wailing descant on the sweetest ground,
Whose due reports give honor to her eyes.
Else harsh my style, untunable my Muse,
Hoarse sounds the voice that praiseth not her name;
If any pleasing relish here I use,
Then judge the world her beauty gives the same.
O happy ground that makes the music such,
And blessed hand that gives so sweet a touch.

From the very start it is clear the lyric turns on musical points, puns and pleasing relishes. Every single line of the fourteen lines of the sonnet carries a musical allusion, with one exception: "Then judge the world her beauty gives the same", for she is beyond music—indeed, she is its very source of inspiration. A list of these timbral references reveals that a number of them are today obsolete. Their meaning will be explored in turn: "Lute", "his art", "plays", "sounds", "strikes", "heart-strings", "high-tun'd", "touch", "warble", "sound", "yield", "lamentable", "wailing", "descant", "sweetest ground", "reports", "pleasing relish", "untunable", "hoarse sounds", "voice", "ground", "touch". Such a stream of invention could only have been created by Apollo! The receiver of this high-flown stream of consciousness is of course the object of his adoration: she literally becomes his muse and is responsible for anything pleasing he performs on his lute; without her his music is harsh, unpleasing, dissonant and hoarse. The poem is indeed an exaggerated conceit that in itself is inspired only by her. It is a carefully fashioned piece of artwork of the highest order; incidentally, it also proves that Samuel Danyel deserves greater recognition today. Whilst being utterly self-conscious, it remains an inspiring piece of poetry: here, art does not conceal art, as the Renaissance maxim goes, but fully reveals it, becoming art for art's sake—indeed, Apollonian.

As brilliant as Samuel proves to be, his younger brother rises to and equals the challenge, for every verbal innuendo and musical reference is given a musical response, atomizing the poetic implications in sound-pictures. Some responses are commonplace musical emblems; others are extremely subtle, some even hidden from obvious view. Some are intended to raise a smile of recognition; others to inspire and raise admiration. All are intended for delighting the ear of the "beloved", who is the reason it all unfolds anyway. It is a complex, ritualistic stage of seduction by flattery, skill and artfulness: Apollo presenting a panoply of devices in order to achieve his desire.

The lutenist is perhaps sitting on a mossy bank—they often were, for poetry's sake—preluding on his lute, seeking the spark of inspiration; he then sings the same phrase lengthened and elaborated ("Like as the lute"). He enjoys the opposition of "delighting" and "disliking", signified by an A-flat in the bass (the lute has potential colours to enhance that device, a choice of the individual player). "As is his art" is accompanied by a rising lute flourish that represents the art, continued after the voice cadences on "same". The rhythmic and melodic musical point for "so sounds my Muse" is first stated on the lute in the alto range, echoed by the voice. Both lute and voice then echo each other; thus, the simple point is reiterated four times, emphasizing the specific meaning of the poetic phrase. "According as she strikes" falls on the sharpened third, giving a bright, "striking" quality. This is coincidental with dotted rhythms in the lute, which also give the effect of striking. "On my heartstrings" is a nicely placed "alto" register for the voice, giving an internal quality, gently plucking at the heart in the breast of the listener. "High tun'd unto her fame" is the highest phrase yet heard in both the vocal line and lute part: if a bass viol were accompanying the performance, as is one desired possibility, then one hears a very tender, high tuning that is most affective.

A rare event now takes place: a silence in all parts after the words "Her touch". Though it is only two quavers in length, a vast piece of mystical musical lore is implied by this silence. Silence in all parts is rarely used in the lute song repertoire at this time: when it is, it is almost always intended to suggest something heavenly, remote or otherworldly. It is a reference to the Platonic idea of "the Music of the Spheres": that the planets in the skies make this primeval sound as they move through their orbits. The hum is so all-including, so permanent, so loud that we cannot hear it. Shakespeare's speech from Lorenzo to Jessica as they sit on a "mossy bank" at night looking at the "pateens of bright gold" is only the most famous

statement of this philosophy or belief. By creating a silence in all parts, especially at a surprising, unexpected moment, the ear becomes attentive to that subtle humming of which our earthly, sounded music is a pale reflection. Here, it is intended to alert the listener to the source of our musician's inspiration—his beloved. Any contemporary listener would also know the parallel Platonic idea, espoused by Marsilio Ficino, of a subtle, divine music holding the fabric of the universe together. Apollo looks down from his position as sun god and projects that "silent music" to his nine Muses and, via them, to the world below. These are only two quavers of rest, but they are charged with implications of vast proportions and are artfully intended to cause a smile of recognition.

"Warble" receives a suitably wobbly figure, first from the lute, then voice, then viol; "yield" has a yielding, flattened note and "lamentable" has a falling figure in quavers that is sounded seven times in the various parts—a flood of lamenting that finally abates in a grand cadence. The new phrase, "A wayling descant", has the voice obviously wailing with flattened notes in a howling melody. Hidden from view and from ear at first, the lute (doubled by the bass viol if present) starts on a slowly climbing figure that ascends stepwise for six tones, or the hexachord. As it reaches the sixth degree, the bass line turns and descends from whence it came, making a twelve-note ground for the wailing descant. Only then does the voice sing "the sweetest ground", as the bass descends. This is not a device to be noticed at first hearing but a hidden conceit that only becomes pleasurable on intimate, repeated hearings. Here, familiarity breeds only pleasure and delight.

"Whose due reports" is one of the almost obsolete terms: these are musical reports, or short themes tossed from one part to another, in echo and play. There are four in the voice and twelve in the lute and viol; this pleasurable fragmenting, like snippets of conversation, is one of the chief delights when sharing music-making with others. The final cadence of this phrase on "her eyes" gives an example of graphic "eye music", for the voice sounds a semibreve, a madrigalian image of the eye used in Italian madrigals by composers such as Luca Marenzio, so admired by the English. The next image is on the word "relish", a Jacobean term for an elaborate turn, a decorative melodic figure that brings spice to the line. These were expected to be improvised: here, however, Danyel carefully writes this relish out, so an opportunity is not missed. The next phrase, the line without musical imagery, is delivered with lovely sonorous melody and harmony in all parts, implying the beauty of the beloved muse.

"Else harsh my stile" has dissonance; "untunable my Muse" takes the melody to the edge of what is deemed sweet and beautiful; "hoarse sounds" takes the voice into the chest register for the lowest vocal phrase in the entire piece. The final couplet of the sonnet is repeated, turning the fourteen sonnet lines (a reference to femininity in art) into sixteen (four times four), a completion of worldly manifestation: the song ends in silence after "so sweet a touch".

All of this ultra-mannered structuring does not affect the beauty of the piece at all: its effectiveness persists even if none of this is known. But how much more satisfying to the listener when the mind has been fed by such inside knowledge! It becomes more than a musical experience: a metamorphosis takes place. Anne Grene, however, remained unpersuaded.

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The Deep Abyss of Hell

Or

Bedlam Revisited: A Brief History of English Mad Songs of the 17th Century

Part One
Mad Tom o' Bedlam
A Much-Loved Inmate of a Famous Asylum

> Forth from the dark and dismal cell,
> Or from the deep abyss of Hell,
> Mad Tom is come to view the world again
> To see if he can cure his distemper'd Brain.

Forlorn optimism is conjured by these opening lines of a song that was headed "Tom a Bedlam. For a Bass alone" printed in 1673 in *Choice Songs and Ayres*. In many respects it is an odd song, presented in odd company; yet these words and their associated melody can lay claim to be the most popular, long-lived song of an entire century. A number of ballad tunes can claim equal longevity, but their words migrate and transmute in a continuing process of metamorphosis. In "Mad Tom o' Bedlam", there is an unexpected consistency; its very continuity spawned many imitations, ripostes and a whole theatrical genre of "mad songs". This essay embraces the English fascination for the bizarre, the distracted, melancholy malcontents, fantastical cockscombs—men, women and maidens who are out of their minds yet turned into art, poetry and music, for all to view, for general entertainment, amusement and diversion. The 17th century was regarded by many in that day as being a world turned upside down; society seemed to reflect that truth was stranger than fiction. "Bedlam is a pleasant place, that it is, and abounds with amusements", wrote Thomas Brown in 1721. Although he was writing of the physical place—Bethlem Hospital, which was located roughly on the site now occupied by Liverpool Street Station—he, like many in his age, considered Bedlam a state of mind to which his times were attuned. The very name had become synonymous with a state of chaos and pandemonium, where reason and common sense were jilted for a sad representation of the external, chaotic world.

1

Figure 1: Detail of an engraving by Luke Milbourne in *New Mad Tom of Bedlam* (1670)

I choose to begin this survey with the 1673 edition of "Mad Tom" because with this print the ballad-song is absorbed into the company of art song for the first time: indeed, the song gathered new prestige by its association with the "newest ayres and songs, sung at Court, and at the Public Theatres; composed by several Gentlemen of His Majesties Musick, and others" described on the title page of the publication. "Mad Tom" was so well-known that the description of the collection—"newest" ayres—would have fooled no one: the tune had been around since before the Civil War at least. Its appearance in full art dress, in the bass clef, for a *buffo* bass no doubt, with very clear underlay and well laid out verses, brought it into line with the surrounding songs by the fashionable court wits: John Banister, Pelham Humfrey, Matthew Locke and others. In this upmarket form, "Mad Tom" continued to appear in single sheet prints well into the 18th century, though transposed to the more usual, all-purpose treble clef.

A "New Mad Tom of Bedlam" had first appeared during the last years of the Interregnum, in the cheap broadside-ballad format with its typically crude woodcut—depicting Mad Tom half naked, looking very distracted—and the instruction "the tune is Grayes Inne Mask.". Rarely was music supplied on these broadsheets, for customers were not expected to be musically literate. When it was included it was so crudely engraved, with gross errors, that its presence was worse than useless. These ballads relied on an extensive repertoire of memorised tunes, an aural tradition that stretched back well into the 16th century. In this case, "Grayes Inn Mask" was a popular dance tune printed in all the early editions of John Playford's *The English Dancing Master* from 1651 onwards and was therefore a very familiar melody to much of the population. Scurvy fiddlers in every tavern would have had it as part of their stock repertoire; but how far did the tune stretch back, and did its words maintain the link with the tune?

The title of the melody gives firm clues as to its origins: Gray's Inn was one of several Inns of Court which were called upon from time to time to provide civic or royal entertainment. On the occasion of the marriage of Princess Elizabeth to Frederic the Fifth, Count Palatine of the Rhine in February 1613, a series of elaborate masques was presented at Whitehall in honour of the marriage. John Coprario provided much of the music for *The Masque of the Inner Temple and Grays Inn* that was performed on 20 February. Francis Beaumont provided the libretto in collaboration with, amongst others, Francis Bacon, Inigo Jones and over a hundred members of the two Inns, even including the Royal Revellers.

In the course of the Masque, two personified rivers—the Thames and the Rhine—are elaborately interwoven, both in plot and choreography. Variety is created by the interpolation of two anti-masques; this device allowed the introduction of sensational or bizarre figures which maintained royal interest during the more symbolic sections. The second of the anti-masques was a pantomimic display of characters embodying English country and town stereotypes: "Iris", the flower of the riverbank; a "Pedant", representing the scholarly traditions of Oxford, Cambridge and the Inns of Court; "a Serving-man"; a "Chambermaid"; and so on. In amongst these characters were a "He-Fool" and a "She-Fool", two idiot dancers perhaps representing a couple recently released from Bethlem Hospital, an institution already replete with a 250-year history and renowned across Europe.

It is not clear when the words "Forth from the dark and dismal cell" came into being—they are certainly not in Beaumont's libretto—but the tune surely was used for the dancing lunatic, for it is found in two contemporary sources: one with the title "The Grays Inn Masque" , the other in a lute manuscript, headed "Mad Tom o' Bedlam". With such a specific link it is quite possible that a full caricature presentation of a sung dance, acted out with appropriately lunatic gestures could have been incorporated in the 1613 production. The earliest datable surviving appearance of the poem is from forty years later, though nothing in its style or content excludes an earlier composition date. There has been a long association between the "Mad Tom" poem and the poet William Basse, who flourished at the same time as the masque: it is therefore possible that he was the author and that the poem was incorporated in the production. Speculation is complicated by the survival of another tune called "Tom of Bedlam" in the aforementioned lute manuscript, which has a life and history independent from the "Mad Tom o' Bedlam" tune.

An early mad poem, "From the Hag and Hungry Goblin" is found in the Giles Earle Song Book (ca. 1620) without music and was linked to the second tune in 1672—words and music fit admirably despite the remarkable fifty-year gap. Elsewhere, in a miscellany of poetry, this same lyric is indexed as "Tom o' Bedlam's song to K[ing] James" and headed, before the poem, "Blesse thy faire eyes from the foul feind". Could this be the song that "Mad Tom" delivered in the second anti-masque? The personal address to King James and the expressed desire that his "fair" (i.e. royal) eyes should ever have to look on so foul a creature, suggest a performance in the Royal Presence. Longer and more rambling in content than "Forth from the dark and dismal cell", "From the Hag" includes some very touching lines, creating a picture of Tom as being a mild, harmless creature who would do harm to no one, except perhaps himself:

> Come dame or maid
> Be not afraid,
> Poor Tom will injure nothing.

Tom cares for others whom he perceives to be worse off than himself:

> With a thought I took for Maudlin
> And a cruse of cockle pottage.

This is the earliest mention of Maudlin, Tom's female counterpart in Bedlam; a character with a history in song almost as illustrious as our hero. Indeed, the poignant, distracted love they share for each other unfolds slowly over a hundred years. In a poem printed in 1719 she sings:

To find my Tom of Bedlam
Ten Thousand Years I'll travel,
Mad Maudlin goes with dirty toe
to save her shoes from gravel.

In a single sheet dating from ca. 1720 she sings a sad refrain to a newly composed tune:

I love my love because I know my love love's me.

Tom and Maudlin's sad condition drew forth several similar responses expressed in balladry, particularly through the voices of lovesick, half-witted characters. One such, printed around 1655, was called "The Mad Mans Morrice"; the Morrice dance was frequently associated with a distracted condition. The ballad begins with a caution:

A warning for young men to have a care,
How they in love entangled are:
Wherein (by experience) you shall find
His trouble and grief, with discontent of mind.

The narrator tells how:

Into a pond stark naked I ran
And cast my clothes away sir.

He then exclaims:

How I got out I have forgot,
I do not well remember,
Or whether it was cold or hot,
In June or in December.

His debt to Tom is made clear:

Tom Bedlam's but a sage to me,
I speak in sober sadness,
For more strange visions do I see,
Than he in all his madness.

The text clearly relates to the tradition of Mad Tom, though the ballad sheet doesn't identify the melody to which it is to be sung, simply using the rubric "to a pleasant new tune".

What was it about Tom's ballad that gave it such life and longevity and encouraged a hundred years of imitation? Indeed, it was not long before "high art" began to take inspiration from its low balladry, crafting lyric and melody into highly expressive

mad songs that occupied centre stage in the public theatres. So much charm is encapsulated in the classic "Tom o' Bedlam": Tom becomes a character that pulls at the heart. One feels pity and sympathy as he, in his witless state, expresses sharp wit and makes us laugh; though he is poor in sense, his lines are filled with learning. Furthermore, he is a natural performer; he knows how to play to the gallery. Tom is a perfectly drawn archetype of humanity, pathetic in his frailty, lost in his aloneness, confused by ancient learning and mythology and exhausted in his struggle to make sense of it all. He is, of course, "everyman"—every listener recognises the failings and shortcomings because they are their own. Who could resist the plea:

Poor Tom is very dry;
A little drink for Charity.

In exploring the rich vein of creativity found in the mad songs of the 17th century I want to pursue two quite different avenues: on one hand, the perception in society of the mentally ill; on the other, the depiction of madness as a means to express wildness on stage. Though, at first, they may seem far apart, these two strands will eventually be woven together in order to offer an understanding of why the genre was so vigorous and virtually all-encompassing. It is to an extent possible to attribute to the lyrics, the music and the performance of stylised mad songs an entire paradigm shift in the enjoyment of expressive, liberated performance styles in general. That there was a rich interplay between art and social sensibilities at this time may be considered self-evident, but this body of material played a role more significant than has hitherto been recognised.

I open the discussion of the first strand with a brief overview of a uniquely English institution—Bethlem Hospital in the City of London, one of the oldest and most venerated establishments of the city. My intention is not to give a potted history of such a long-running caring hospice, as excellent surveys already exist. I would rather wish to sketch a context sufficient in detail to give an understanding of the influence which the actual place had on the fantastical literature and in particular on the songs of the 17th century.

From its founding in 1247 the Priory of St. Mary of Bethlehem was associated with the care of the insane. Its expanding and changing roles from the 13th to the late 16th centuries provide a fascinating study in how attitudes and treatment of the insane changed and developed. There is no doubt that by the reign of Queen Elizabeth I Bethlem, or Bedlam (the variants were interchangeable by this time) had become part of the common view of London. It was a foundation stone upon which the character of the city was built; its fame spread throughout Europe.

It was a wide circle of Jacobean playwrights that explored this familiarity in a series of powerful plays written and performed in the early years of the 17th century. In turning brief references to Bedlam into complete scenes and casting key characters with a variety of kinds of madness, the dramatists took the concept of Bedlam from the realm of the actual into that of the fantastical; the name became synonymous

with a chaotic state and took on a life independent of the institution itself. At the turn of the 17th century it was a commonly held notion that the world had gone quite mad: everything was topsy-turvy, a mindless chaos. As the century progressed civil war, regicide and religious bigotry were seen as confirmations that society itself was Bedlam. As art continued to mirror turmoil and inner states of confusion, life and art confirmed this perception. Playwrights like Thomas Dekker, John Webster, Thomas Middleton and others created harrowing scenes of Bedlam, both as a place and as a state of mind. Whilst in the royal court masques elaborating on themes of the divine rule of kings were performed, extended anti-masques peopled with bizarre, grotesque and lunatic characters were created outside of court, maintaining a curious balance between order and chaos. Ben Johnson excelled in both public and court dramas and allowed anarchic themes to filter from the theatre to the Banqueting House.

That element of the expression of wild, uncontrollable forces in art continued and even grew during the Restoration. John Dryden's royal political play *Albion and Albanius*, designed to amuse a disillusioned Charles II (the eponymous first hero of the play) was set to music by one Louis Grabu, a composer of Catalan descent called over from Paris. It is the first all-sung, full-length opera in English, with some wonderful music that deeply influenced Henry Purcell and his generation. Its neglect today is perhaps due to its perceived failure in 1687, though this failure was entirely due to political rather than artistic causes. The work is a curious blend of the old court masque and the new Lullian style opera from France. It is heavily laden with fascinating personifications, among which "Augusta", the City of London, chastened after allowing revolutionary elements to rule, and "Thamesis", the River Thames, a lithe yet lamenting baritone. However, what really concerns us here are the anti-masque elements: "Zealota" (religious bigotry) and "Democracy" (nicely cast as an evil force causing regicide). They are joined by other wild, insane characters, all depicted in a pantomimic way, so foolish that they could not be taken seriously. Both Dryden and Grabu create wonderful comic scenes of Bedlam personified through these grotesque roles.

After the disastrous Great Fire of 1666, as the City of London was being rebuilt, Bethlem Hospital was rehoused in new palatial premises which accommodated a greatly increased number of visitors. These were neither relatives nor doctors, nor even well-wishers, but those who came out of idleness and curiosity to taunt and cajole and be entertained by the inmates. For some, a visit to the City of London was not complete without a viewing of the lunatics in their "straw". How differently must playwrights have viewed Bedlam though, when one of their own, the brilliantly gifted Nathaniel Lee, became an inmate there after his wits gave way. His tortuous dark plots take on new meaning after his breakdown.

Even as late as 1748, in *The Gentleman's Magazine* it was said that visitors went to deride the nakedness of human nature for their own mirth. Not long after, the visits to the hospital began to decline as society perceived lunacy as an embarrassment not to be paraded but hidden; the condition of the inmates deteriorated behind closed doors for the next 150 years.

Part Two
Oh! Let us Howl Some Heavy Note
A Mad Scene from *The Duchess of Malfi*

The conflation of madhouse and playhouse for the Jacobeans produced powerful drama that explores the core of human frailty. Many of these great plays were revived in the 1690s, though they were tampered with to suit a more confectioned age and were often decked with new songs. A closer look at one such play will suffice to reveal the interplay of drama and song in intensifying the unfolding of madness and cruelty. *The Duchess of Malfi* by John Webster, first performed in 1612 and published in 1623, provides the ideal context: a dark play with a mad scene that uses music and song to intensify the palpable air of insanity. Act IV, Scene II is the climax of Ferdinand's sinister plot and reveals his sister, the Duchess, in tormented state, finding moral support with her maid and confidant, Cariola:

DUCHESS: What hideous noise was that?
CARIOLA: 'Tis the wild consort
Of madmen, lady, which your tyrant brother
Hath plac'd about your lodging. This tyranny
I think, was never practis'd till this hour.
DUCHESS: Indeed I thank him: nothing but noise and folly
Can keep me in my right wits, whereas reason
And silence make me stark mad. Sit down,
Discourse to me some dismal tragedy.
CARIOLA: O 'twill increase your melancholy.
DUCHESS: Thou art deceived
To hear of greater grief would lessen mine.

The Duchess' "tyrant brother" Ferdinando has devised a new form of mental torture for her—a group of "mad" musicians who strike up outside her room, making a wild cacophony intended to drive her further into distress. Yet, on the border between sanity and madness, the Duchess claims that these crazed sounds provide more succour than silence and reason. Stories which tell of "dismal tragedy" will provide some hint of comfort and lessen her present distress. These borderline mental states are explored skilfully by Webster:

CARIOLA: Pray dry your eyes
What think you of Madam?
DUCHESS: Of nothing:
When I muse thus, I sleep.
CARIOLA: Like a madman, with your eyes open?

Later:

DUCHESS: I'll tell thee a miracle,
I am not mad yet, to my cause of sorrow.
Th'heaven o'er my head seems made of molten brass,
The earth of flaming sulphur, yet I am not mad.
I am acquainted with sad misery,
As the tanned galley-slave is with his oar.

Could there be a statement more forlorn of hope than the following?

DUCHESS: Fortune seems only to have her eyesight,
To behold my tragedy.

As the din outside increases, a servant enters and introduces the entertainment designed for her by Ferdinando: "several sorts of madmen". The servant lists the bizarre stereotypes of madness; an amalgam of real-life characters found in Bedlam, fused with inventions of the dramatist's fertile imagination:

SERVANT: There's a mad lawyer, and a secular priest,
A doctor that has forfeited his wits
By jealousy; an astrologian,
Who foretold the day of doom was
Last week, and failing of't
Ran mad; an English tailor, craz'd i'th'brain
With the study of new fashion; a gentleman usher
Quite beside himself with care to keep in mind
The number of his lady's salutations.

To these are added a farmer, who for want of transport failed to get his grain to market before it rotted. and "one broker, that's mad".

With reference to the chaining of certain violent mad inmates in Bedlam, the Duchess declares:

DUCHESS: Let them loose when you please,
For I am chain'd to endure all your tyranny

The madmen enter and one of them sings "this song [...] to a dismal kind of music", as indicated by the stage direction. Which of the characters plays the "mad musician" is not specified, though in other plays one finds the stereotypical image of the melancholy musician dressed in black. Indeed, reading between the lines in Webster's play, it is very likely that all eight madmen were actually musicians, making enough din to cause the violent jarring of the senses. The given song text has a chorus for all to join in with, and the stringent sounds of instruments like the cittern, bandora and lyra viol with eight raucous voices would bring this scene to a suitable climax. The words are aptly bizarre:

O let us howl, some heavy note,
Some deadly-dogged howl,
Sounding as from the threatening throat,
Of beasts, and fatal fowl.
As ravens, screech-owls, bulls and bears,
We'll bell and bawl our parts,
Till irksome noise, have cloyed your ears
And corrosiv'd your hearts.
At last when as our quire wants breath,
Our bodies being blest,
We'll sing like swans, to welcome death
And die in love and rest.

The instrumental music the madmen play outside the Duchess' room has not survived, though one can imagine outlandish dance music with frequent and bizarre changes of metre, such as is found in a number of extant "masque" dances from the period. However, a contemporary setting of the song by the skilful theatre composer Robert Johnson does survive. We cannot be absolutely certain that his setting was used in the first performance in 1612, but the composition certainly existed by 1623 when the play was first printed. Judging by the number of sources of the song (three survive in contemporary manuscripts) Johnson's setting enjoyed considerable fame and popularity. Several of his surviving play-songs display skilful understanding of music as drama—they are songs charged with mood, intensity and theatricality. These are not pretty songs to entertain a tired ear; rather, they are songs to intensify and heighten the drama.

Figure 2: Robert Johnson, "Oh let us howl" (NYPL Drexel 4041)

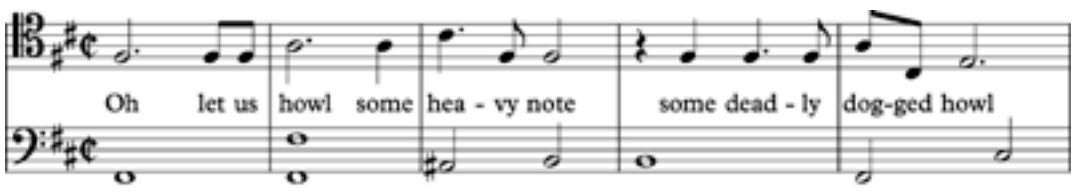


Figure 3: Robert Johnson, "Oh let us howl" (NYPL Drexel 4175)

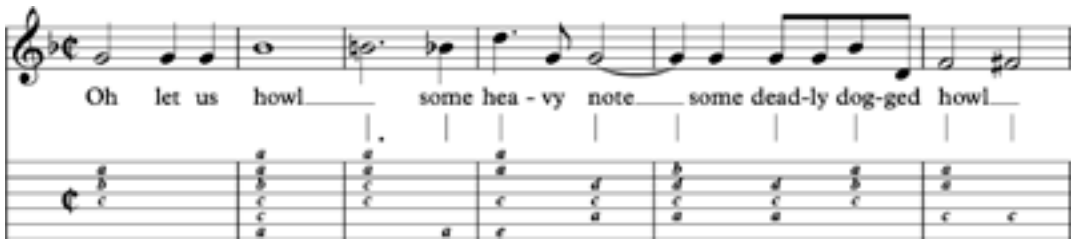
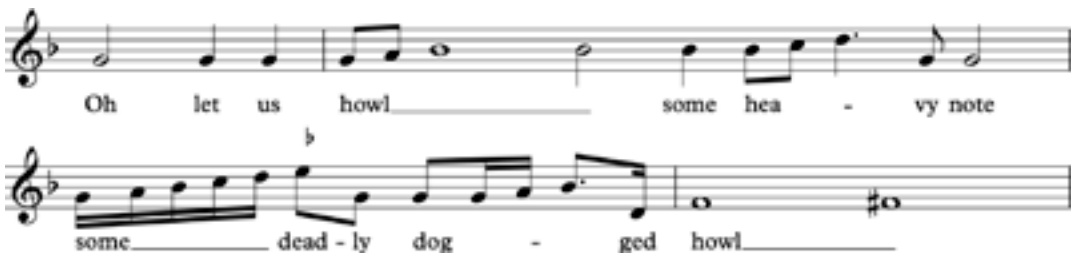


Figure 4: Robert Johnson, "Oh let us howl" (BL Add 29481)



Of the three versions of "O let us howl", it is difficult to ascertain which one is closest to either the Johnson version, or the version used in the play. In his modern edition of Robert Johnson's songs, Ian Spink chooses, cautiously perhaps, the simplest, plainest and, it must be said, the most musically literate version. Features found in the radically different other versions perhaps reveal more how an experienced theatre singer-actor might render it. The opening of each version makes for interesting comparison:

2

3

4

The version in Figure 2 would seem to reflect the composer's basic text, whilst those in Figures 3 and 4 introduce individual singers' mannerisms or vocal colourings—representing a performance text, or an *aide-memoire* for the singer-actor. The chromaticism in Figure 3 is a notation of what a theatrical singer would do to the powerfully onomatopoeic word "howl", whilst in the version in Figure 4 the composer uses the professional singer's skills in melodic ornamentation and, in so doing, heightens the dramatic presentation of the song in the play's context. An experienced performer today would do well to study all three versions, perhaps making his or her own conflation, an individual fourth version.

The guiding principle in Robert Johnson's setting of "O let us howl" is that of the recitativo style, newly imported from Italy—using speech rhythms and stresses, forming a kind of heightened speech in song. This contrasts with a setting from around 1700 by John Eccles, for a revival of Webster's play. Here, Eccles incorporates speech and song in a melismatic manner, revealing his maturity as an effective theatre-song composer. I would not expend effort in making qualitative judgements regarding the merits of Johnson's and Eccles' settings, as each in its distinctive way serves their dramatic function. However, the two settings provide a rare opportunity to examine the difference in taste of the two periods, with the given constant of the same dramatic context and song text.

Figure 5: Robert Johnson, "O let us howl"

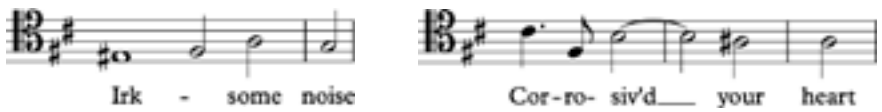


Figure 6: John Eccles, "O let us howl"

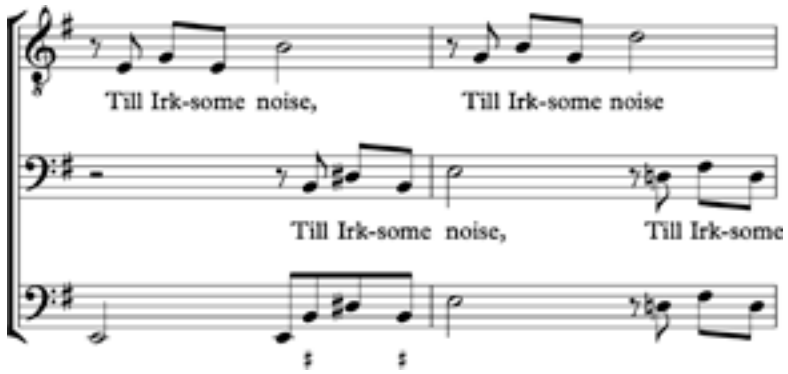
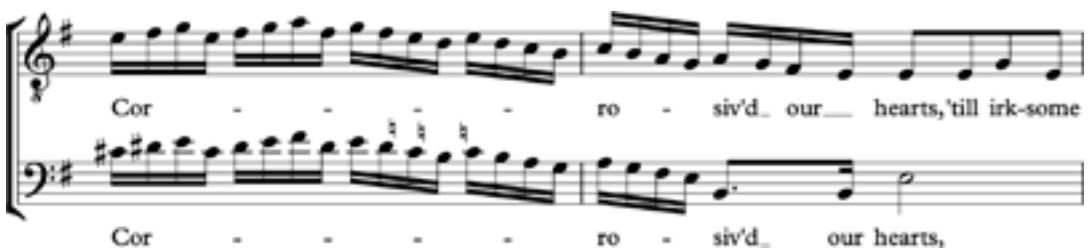


Figure 7: John Eccles, "O let us howl"



Robert Johnson revels in the vibrant setting of English in recitative style but chooses to paint words (in the mode of the polyphonic madrigalists) when he believes that such word-painting will heighten the tension:

5

This is certainly not speech rhythm, yet the emotional temperature is raised by drawing out "ugly" vowel sounds ("irksome" and "corrosiv'd" in the above example) which could then be exaggerated by a singer responsive to the black humour of the moment. John Eccles, on the other hand, uses quite different means, while still retaining colourful word-painting as one of his devices. By the point in the song in which he brings in a bass to join his tenor he uses the following motive, repeated agitatedly in stepwise ascent in one voice after the other:

6

The agitation becomes intolerable, and the build-up of energy bursts into a tumbling roll:

7

With virtuosic agitation through repetition, the two singers roulade in chains of thirds on the word "corrosiv'd", building to a tumultuous climax. Eccles' setting of the last four lines seems not to have survived, but it is likely that he would have moved into four-part harmony for the chorus, as he so often does elsewhere in his theatre songs.

In Webster's play, the song is followed by a brief soliloquy spoken by each of the four madmen, none of whom follows the others in any consecutive thought, creating a bizarrely disjunctive non-dialogue. These examples are typical of their mad isolation and are perhaps drawn from real life, overheard from inmates in Bedlam.

MAD ASTROLOGER: Doomsday not come yet? I'll draw it nearer by a perspective, or make a glass, that shall set all the world on fire upon an instant. I cannot sleep, my pillow is stuffed with a litter of porcupines.

MAD LAWYER: Hell is a mere glass-house, where the devils are continually blowing up women's souls on hollow irons, and the fire never goes out.

MAD PRIEST: I will lie with every woman in my Parish the tenth night. I will tythe them over like haycocks.

MAD DOCTOR: Shall my 'pothecary outgo me, because I am a cuckold? I have found out his roguery: he makes allum of his wife's urine, and sells it to Puritans, that have sore throats with over-straining.

They continue berating the Duchess in like manner until a "dance consisting of a madman with music answerable thereunto" begins. No music survives, but one's imagination runs riot as to the nature of the bizarre sounds and choreography!

At the conclusion of the dance, Bosola enters "like an old man", his intention to murder the Duchess; though before carrying out this act he dallies with perverse, cruel dialogue:

BOSOLA [to the Duchess]: Thou art a box of wormseed, at best, but a salvatory of green mummy: what's this flesh? A little crudded milk, fantastical puff-paste: our bodies are weaker than those paper prisons boys use to keep flies in more contemptible, since ours is to preserve earthworms.

This dark scene of madness and cruelty continues, the music having played a central role in heightening the emotional impact of the play. Of course, there is humour a-plenty too—a particularly grotesque, black humour for which we English have always been famous. Even in the performance of the song, the element of antimasque of the comical grotesque must be played up. Not knowing whether to laugh or weep is a key feature of one's response to a successful mad song.

Other Jacobean tragedies employ similar devices, but the intense power of this scene from The Duchess of Malfi is not surpassed: the integration of dance and song leaves a lingering memory in the viewer's imagination. It is, perhaps, the earliest mad song and certainly belongs to the first generation of this curious 17th-century taste.

Part Three
Newly from a Poach'd Toad Mad Songs Fit for a King?

Just how curious this taste became is revealed in the next example: "Oberon; or the Madman's Song", "sung in a comedy at Cambridge before the King and Queen, by the author". Thomas Holmes, the composer and performer of this eccentric piece, was an admired singer of his day, praised for his elaborate improvisations. We are fortunate that this example of his art survives: written in a manuscript, probably his autograph, it is difficult to decode. "Newly from a poach'd Toad" presents many problems for a modern editor, not least because of the elaborate vocal roulades scattered around the side and foot of the page.

For the next two, very different examples I turn to the music of William Lawes, the cavalier composer, favourite of Charles I and more famous today for his wild fantasias for five and six viols. Indeed, if one were to search for an instrumental equivalent to mad songs, one would readily find it amongst these dark, brooding, impassioned masterpieces. His rugged, eccentric themes epitomise a world turned upside down—they almost breathe the atmosphere of the Caroline Court and positively exude anarchy and civil war! But William Lawes' songs also contain much that is worthy of detailed exploration. His vocal art is that of the epigrammatist, taking his cue from the intensely terse and brief lyrics created by the literary circle around Charles I. The second of Lawes' two songs, which will be discussed later, belongs firmly to that genre, while the first, presented here, is decidedly, perversely prolix—part of its "mad" demeanour aping, I think, the balladry of "Mad Tom".

"There can be no glad man" is preserved in the manuscript Drexel 4041, in what looks to me like a William Lawes autograph; the hand shows the same speed of writing, degree of carelessness, second-thought corrections and resultant illegibility as in the well-known William Lawes collection in the British Library. The book would appear to have been compiled over two to three years and was completed around 1640. The long poem which follows the underlaid first verse of the song is barely legible in places; fortunately, a second version survives, hitherto unnoticed I think, in volume five of Thomas D'Urfey's *Pills to Purge Melancholy*, published in 1719. No composer is acknowledged, but it is entitled "The Mad-Man's Song". Lawes would have been proud to know that, over seventy years after his death, his hastily composed pseudo-ballad was remembered by that rubric, with its implication that its creator was mad too! The burden of the poem is that the mad man is the happy man:

We laugh at you Wise Man.
That thus do despise men,
Whose senses you think to Decline;
Mark well and you'll see
What you count a Frenzy
Is indeed but a Rapture Divine.

The refrain confirms this superior condition:

Then be thou Mad,
Mad, mad let's be,
Nor shall the Foul Fiend
Be madder than we.

Cast as a tavern song, created spontaneously for William and his drinking, writing, composing fraternity to enjoy, this arty ballad contains deep philosophy. The "rapture divine" so highly praised in these verses embodies an ancient belief in the power of the arts to exercise an uplifting force on human life, to stem the tide of ignorance and folly. Paradoxically, the "mad" condition is close to the "rapture divine" in quite specific ways.

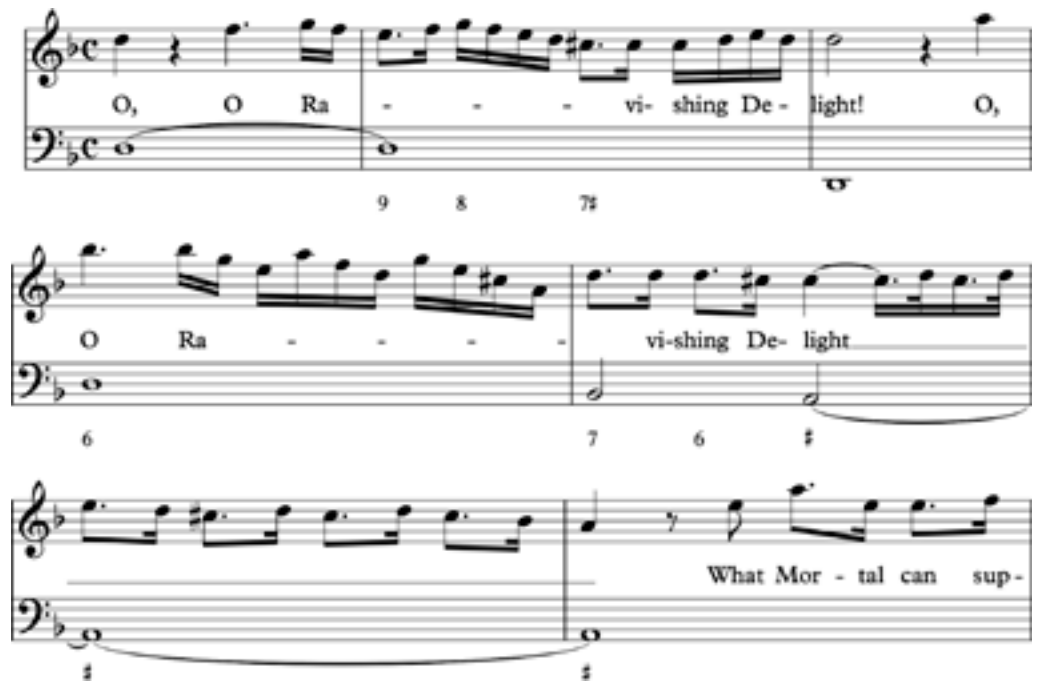
Throughout Robert Burton's weighty tome, The Anatomy of Melancholy, he vacillates between defining melancholy as a disease and believing that certain forms of inspired melancholy are closer to divine inspiration. In this, Burton, the 17th-century English reference point for *all literati*, is quoting a pan-European concept traceable back directly to the philosophy of the Florentine 15th-century magus, Marsilio Ficino. Throughout his writings, but especially in his *De Triplici Vita*, Ficino elaborates the concept of "divine furore", madness and genius combined to create ecstatic communion, manifest most particularly in the figure of Orpheus. The idea that certain performers carried this furore in their work was well established in the 16th century—the lutenist Francesco da Milano was called "Il Divino", Dowland was known as "the English Orpheus" and Henry Purcell was named the "Orpheus Britannicus". These appellations, granted by contemporaries, are acknowledging that some artists channel divine inspiration in the manner of Orpheus, as taught by Marsilio Ficino. The heady, sometimes dangerous, mix of inspiration and insanity is the price to pay for great art and is the impulse behind mad songs and art songs, so that the fullest potential for ecstasy be manifested.

This mad 17th century wanted excess of ecstasy; this is nicely pointed up in a carefully contrived moment of artistic excess of ecstasy in the Prize Competition, held in London in 1700–1701. The Judgement of Paris was the theme chosen by "several gentlemen of quality" and William Congreve was commissioned to write the libretto. The result is a brilliant piece of work, riding on a tide of inspiration. The very theme allows the exploration of ecstasy in art. Paris, the noble shepherd–boy, is visited by Mercury and is given a golden apple, with the enigmatic words "for the fairest". Paris becomes a study in human response to a sequence of visitations and contacts with deities. He is still overcome by the presence of Mercury, when down come the three great goddesses, Juno, Pallas and Venus, each one singing an aria telling of her prowess and why she, alone, should be given the prize! The ecstasy experienced by Paris is undoubtedly a particularly powerful form of madness.

Fortunately, the composers who entered for the prize money had a century-old tradition of mad songs behind them, which allowed them to explore this inspiring vein in setting Paris' response. A comparison of Eccles', Weldon's and Daniel Purcell's arias would be a fascinating study in three individual ways of channelling ecstasy, but that analysis is for another occasion. For the moment I settle on Daniel Purcell's setting, in order to isolate a few features of ecstasy and madness—the effect of "divine furore" on his composing style. The "ecstatic style" is a feature that can be defined in many of Daniel Purcell's compositions, even more than in his brother's canon, or in the works of his contemporaries; but again, that must be explored separately elsewhere.

In the aria "O Ravishing Delight!", Paris has just seen all three goddesses come almost close enough to touch, but their radiance is such that he has to turn his eyes away from them. After three, eloquent, persuasive songs from the goddesses, poor Paris, a mere mortal after all, is reduced to a gibbering, confused heap; although Congreve brilliantly has him say that, to make a judgement, he will need to view the goddesses naked!

8 *Figure 8:* Daniel Purcell, "O Ravishing Delight", opening



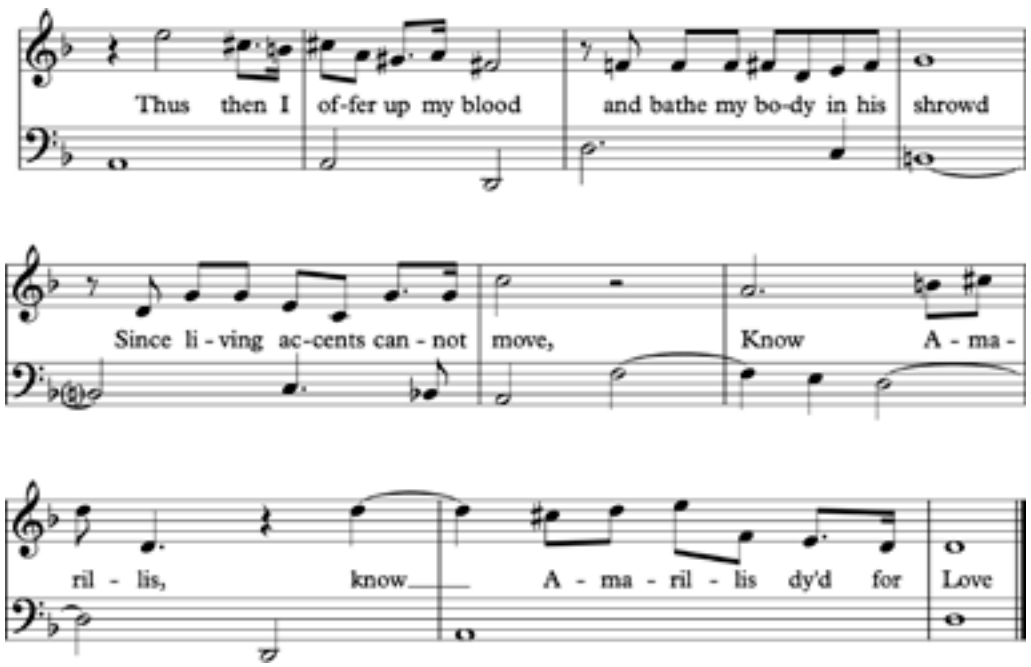
Daniel Purcell opens the floodgate of ecstasy with his first figure, the melisma on "O ravishing delight" which is punctuated by an expressive rest, a gasp, after "O". The melisma is repeated, heightened and extended immediately, giving the effect of Paris overreaching himself, out of control, overcome. "Alas too weak" is chromatically flattened, and "human brain" is given dotted notes and sharpened intervals, painting utter confusion. The melisma on "rapture" is so extended that the singer's breath is used to the full for the words "to sustain"—irony and humour are not lost on any tenor playing this role, revealing, too, how intimately these composers understood the voices for which they were writing, creatively pushing humour, expression and vocal skill to their limits. The octave chromatic descent on "I faint, I fall" expresses well Paris' melting at the knees, overcome with the sight and presence of the deities. The diminished fifth on "O take me", the melisma on "ecstasy" and the extraordinary convolution on "aching", which is intensified by extension on its repeat, conclude this catalogue of affetti in the service of expressing ecstasy. It is a masterpiece from Daniel Purcell and a mad song to remember!

If at one end of the scale there is a merging with ecstasy, so at the opposite end of the spectrum do extreme grief and deep lamenting also fuse with madness. This end of the range of emotion also finds rich expression in poetry, music and performance, sometimes helping to contain the worst pains of bereavement, as an elegiac, monumental piece, where madness or excess of emotion are calmed and channelled by art. However, there are the near-demented rantings, lamenting soliloquies of

abandoned lovers, which formed a special sub-species after Claudio Monteverdi's great "Lamento d'Arianna" of 1607. This transferred to English awareness with Nicholas Lanier's "Lament of Hero and Leander" of ca.1630, which was still being reprinted and studied in the 1680s. These laments are large-scale, sometimes sprawling works that explore the range of emotions and psychological conditions exploding or bursting into madness. There is one little-known masterpiece, my second example from William Lawes, which deserves close study: "Amarillis, tear thy hair". Although the print reproduced from the edition of 1669 claims Henry Lawes as the composer, there is absolutely no doubt that this song stems from William's pen, as it appears in his autograph manuscript with his signature at the end. In my opinion, this brief distracted lament contains in condensed form as much as, if not more than, many of the large-scale works.

Amaryllis has just discovered the body of her lover, Daphnis, and from the first agitated cry of her name William Lawes wastes not a note in expressing her distraction. The affecting rest, the leap of a major seventh, the agitated dotted rhythm, all in the first bar, announce the intensity of emotion we will experience. There is no known dramatic context for this song: such a frame is not needed, for this song is its own drama, an entire scene revealed and explored in fewer than two minutes! Huge, sobbing, affecting rests punctuate the opening fragmented phrases. "Beat thy breast" displays a beating rhythm; "sigh" is surrounded by breath; "Weep" falls a minor sixth; "despair" hammers the heart; and "cry, Aye me!" is barely containable with its sobbing rests. Then, an upward minor-sixth leap, a fall of a diminished fifth, followed by a recitative intoning on the unaskable question: "Is Daphnis dead?" Speech rhythms mark the next phrase, but with the addition of a long, suspended note on "pale", which draws the picture of his bloodless face. The pathetic interval to "drown'd" gives the singer a chance, if so minded, to slow up the tactus so that the full quantity of the enriched diphthong in that word can be expressed. The agitated, panting repeats of "wither" drive Amaryllis forward, only to express, by disjunct energy, a slowing of the tactus to paint "cold, how cold he's grown", sending a shiver through the listener's body. The measured, monumental "sure his lips are turned to stone" carves out the image in a semblance of a funeral effigy. The dedicatory "Thus then I offer up my blood" emphasises the quasi-religious ritualising, as Amaryllis swathes the body in the "shroud" (here there is a chance for an almost endless diphthong on the semibreve) which is her metaphor for his body. Thus, in a concluding, heart-rending cry, Amaryllis writes her own epitaph with her last breath borne on the ether: "Amaryllis died for love".

9 *Figure 9:* William Lawes, "Amarillis tear thy hair", end



Here then, is a mad song composed perhaps in the late 1630s, printed in the late 1660s and again in the late 1670s. This allowed it to be accessible to, and studied by, all the theatre composers who were to elaborate the mad-song genre which took the theatres by storm in the 1690s. The Lawesian epigrammatic style might not have been their final goal but, in its charged brevity, it contained the seeds of much that was later explored.

Part Four
Mad Bess o' Bedlam
Restoration, Perhaps, but Not of Sanity!

A work of the Interregnum which was of paramount influence on post-Restoration composers was the masque *Cupid and Death*, with a brilliant libretto by James Shirley and an almost continuous musical setting by Matthew Locke and Christopher Gibbons. Some of the dances and individual songs were printed in the anthologies of the 1670s and '80s. But it was the fame of the central theme of the work (such a presumptuous, even dangerous theme to present publicly, with Cromwell possibly present in the 1653 performance!) that made it notorious at the Restoration. By 1658, when C*upid and Death* was revived, the force of the Interregnum was waning, but five years earlier such a theme was tantamount to sedition. It certainly and very obviously played on the notion that this era was madness and that all semblance of

sanity was gone (this point of view, of course, being the royalist position, which most composers adhered to). The theme of *Cupid and Death*, drawn from a lesser-known Aesop fable, carried political undertones and social commentary which had been the function of those fables from ancient times.

Simply stated, Cupid and Death are travelling in a deep forest when the weather unexpectedly deteriorates, so that these two unlikely travellers search out a nearby inn. The Host, bluff and hearty, tries his best to make them welcome, strange though they seem, but the Chamberlain, who has to see to their needs, likes them not at all and decides to play a prank which will have far-reaching effects: he changes their arrows! From then on, everyone that Cupid fires at dies, resulting in heaps of dead lovers everywhere (these represent the Royalists who died fighting for their king); but Death, firing at old men and women, soldiers and the like, finds them being rejuvenated and falling in love (symbolising Puritans, Zealots, Roundheads and the rest). The Chamberlain, having caused this mischief, thinks it high time to move on before he is discovered; in the forest he comes across Despair, a dismal creature who tries to hang himself with a rope, but does not have the strength to get the rope over a branch of the tree. The Chamberlain takes pity, serves Despair a draft of some sack or sherry, which immediately revives him with new hope. In gratitude, Despair bequeaths his length of rope to the Chamberlain and goes off rejoicing. Next, Death discovers the Chamberlain and fires an arrow (which is, of course, a love dart). The recipient of one of these darts, ancient lore decrees, falls in love with the next creature he sees: the poor Chamberlain comes across two apes, which become the objects of his passionate affection as he fawns and fondles them. A Satyr appears, the master of the apes, who takes these dear creatures from the Chamberlain: the latter is so distraught at the loss of his new loves that, finding the rope Despair had left him, sings his farewell distracted aria and hangs himself. The fact that shortly Mercury descends and sets everything aright (a thin disguise, no doubt, for the hoped-for return of Charles II) does not concern us here. What does is the bizarre story of the decline of the Chamberlain from being a somewhat self-absorbed, slightly narcissistic young man to a man capable of bestiality and, finally, suicide. Although this decline takes place in a world made topsy-turvy by his own actions, our sympathies are with him; he is "everyman", trapped in circumstances created by himself but which are not in his control: he becomes insane, a madman singing his mad, final farewell.

Just ten years after "Tom o' Bedlam" appeared in *Choice Songs and Ayres*, Vol I in 1673, the most famous mad song of the time, Henry Purcell's "Bess of Bedlam" was printed in the fourth volume of the same series. It is the most famous today, though several other songs might have claimed greater fame during the late 17th century. "Bess of Bedlam" appeals for several reasons: it is a very good, well-composed, entertaining song; it has appealed to several modern generations of young sopranos who believe that by the act of singing this famous song their performance will become somehow more dramatic and theatrical; Bess is also the female counterpart of Mad Tom and the sentimental idea that they are in some ways connected, even sometime as make-believe lovers, finds deep sympathy.

Aside from being two songs about people from Bedlam, there is little superficially in common between "Mad Tom" and "Bess of Bedlam". One is close to balladry, whilst the other is decidedly an art song; this is exemplified by Bess having a basso continuo line of considerable sophistication, whereas Tom has no bass at all! Nevertheless, I do feel that both the unknown poet and Henry Purcell are creating a kind of companion for Tom. "From silent shades", Bess's opening words, echo Tom's "Forth from the dark and dismal cell". Both mention Diana-Cynthia, Mars and Venus; to Tom's Pluto and Proserpine is added Bess's Charon—all characters of the underworld. Bess's "ambrosia" and "nectar" (food and drink of the gods) consciously contrasts with Tom's hankering for "powder'd beef, turnip and carrot". Musically there is much to contrast, as has been mentioned: however, one telling link is the frequent shifting from duple to triple meter, reflecting distraction and instability.

Purcell's Bess was reprinted as late as 1737 in the beautifully engraved edition of *The Musical Entertainer* by George Bickham Junior. The four elaborate plates for "Mad Bess" are dedicated to the Earl of Gainsborough, who was a latter-day admirer of the Purcellian era. All singers learning "Bess of Bedlam" would do well to study closely the four engravings of Bess. The postures of body and head as well as the hand gestures give wonderful inspiration on how the piece might have been presented around 1700.

10

Figure 10: Plates for "Mad Bess" in George Bickham Junior's *The Musical Entertainer* (1737)

For all its drama, "Bess of Bedlam" would seem to be without a dramatic context, being one of Purcell's single songs. However, his next mad song, "I'll sail upon the Dog-star", which begins with a harmonic echo of "Mad Tom", comes from Thomas D'Urfey's *A Fool's Preferment* of 1685, and as such has been treated at some length in Curtis Price's survey of the dramatic context of all Henry Purcell's theatre songs. I refer the interested reader to that volume for further information.

It is time now, having entered the region of repertoire more familiar to our era, namely the dramatic songs of Henry Purcell, to attempt a definition of a mad song: or, failing that, at least to draw its parameters. Because Purcell's theatre songs have been treated with considerable attention, I intend not to ignore his work (for that would be impossible in a genre where he is one of the central contributors) but to refer to his contemporaries at greater length and in more detail. What is so readily attributed to Henry Purcell, particularly if it is perceived to be good, more correctly belongs to the 1690s, until such time as we have equal access to Henry's contemporaries' work and can therefore make any comparative study more coherent. John Eccles, Daniel Purcell, John Weldon and John Blow—not to mention the less prolific, but not necessarily less creatively able, composers such as Ralph Courtville, Jeremiah Clarke and a legion of others—had at least a passing involvement with theatre mad songs: some excelled at the style.

Precise definition of the mad song is difficult, as the genre itself is characterised by variety, individuality and an intentional exploration of the bizarre. Almost equal amounts of creative skill are required from the poet, the composer and the performers: in addition, there is that ineluctable thing called fashionable taste—something so fleeting, so fickle, so fanciful that it amounts to a kind of madness itself! However, there may be something sufficiently stable as to masquerade as a definition of a mad song.

In the lyrics we might expect to find a basic self-absorbed state: an interior vision or concern that develops the psychology of the character. There is likely to be no constant mood, but deliberately disjunct extreme swings causing a general agitation. The imagery may be self-consciously bizarre or lunatic, with arcane references that disrupt the listener's linear response. There may be moments of self-pitying, a kind of maudlin narcissism or outbreaks of temporary heroism and rashness. A principal destructive emotion (jealousy or despair) may erupt, defining the cause of this particular manifestation of madness. Periods of unnatural calm and rambling narrative might contrast with more turbulent outbursts. There is often an overall feeling that the individual has no control over the outcome which is in the hands of a greater force—Cupid, Destiny, the Fates or the Gods. These lyrics do not deal with reality: the public must recognise themselves but must also be entertained. While the rapid shift of emotions causes a sympathetic response and recognition in the audience, this is art which, though it may draw a smile or a tear in response, is not the thing itself: a seeming rather than a being.

Since the lyrics are the immediate source of inspiration for the composer—a kind of creative straitjacket—it is obvious that he must have perceived the inner potential of a mad lyric before turning it into a song. There will be stock musical responses to stock literary images and it is largely these standard responses which define the sound of an age. Jacobean mad songs could not be confused with post-Restoration pieces because the stock-in-trade of the two eras is so dissimilar, though the individuality of the composer will make his work different from that of his colleagues. What makes a song "mad" from a compositional point of view therefore depends to a large extent on the compositional language of the 1690s composers. Just as for the lyric I do not attempt to define a D'Urfey, a Dryden or a Congreve I shall not attempt to personalise the individual composers' responses. It is only necessary to spell this out because of the over-shadowing effect of "Purcellian" scholarship, commentary and relative familiarity. Let us, for a moment, pretend Henry Purcell is yet to be discovered—he is just one of a whole generation of composers that engages our curiosity and enthusiasm. For all the affective rhetorical devices listed for the creation of a mad lyric there is an equivalent armoury of musical devices available to render in notes what began in words. Music by numbers—normally a pejorative expression—is actually just about right, if only a part of the equation. With most of the 1690s mad-song repertoire spread out in front of me, I see endless expressive rests for "sighs". There are tumbling melismas for "falls", rising roulades for "flying", long-held high notes for "heavens", jagged rhythms for "stagger", recitative rhythm-patterns for narrative and speech effects and low notes for "earth" or "Hell" (it's much the same down there!). Then, I see rising chromaticisms for "rising hopes" and descending chromaticisms for "failing" and "despairing". For 150 years prior to this, composers had been experimenting with word-painting; by 1700 it had reached a point both of high sophistication and of deep banality. Such was the encyclopaedia of possibilities that a composer could incorporate any device he desired, triggered only by the general context and the individual word. Extravagant as the mad lyrics were, the musical response would be in kind. For every generalisation, such as that most mad songs begin in a minor key, there will be an exception ("Mad Tom", for example, which begins in the major). Most mad songs begin in duple measure, but there are a significant number in a dancing 6/4 weakening that generalisation. Most mad songs are soliloquies, yet there are some very effective mad duets. Perhaps we come closest to a musical definition of a mad song when we admit that a successful example is where the composer has always put the words first and allowed his imagination free reign. The 150-year catalogue of devices was raided with a zest and enthusiasm for the new context.

One of the constraining or liberating factors (depending on the individuals involved) is the competence of the particular singer for whom a work is being created. In many instances through the 1690s the circle between lyricist, composer and performer was intimate enough for there to be a sixth-sense communication between activities. Perhaps the closest in the history of English theatre was that between Congreve, Eccles and Anne Bracegirdle. Congreve created a leading role (as he did in every one of his plays) with Bracegirdle's talents, strengths and weaknesses in mind. As it happens, few mad songs came from this artistic union: John Eccles

composed numerous mad songs for Anne, some of which were the most popular songs of the age, but the lyrics were by a variety of librettists. We will look at a few of these in more detail shortly.

Knowing a performer's abilities amounted to much more than writing within a certain vocal compass; it was more a matter of creating a tailor-made fit, allowing the individual personality to shine through. The public had an intimate knowledge of their stars' lives, both on and off the stage, so that their dramatic persona and their real character fused into a larger-than-life personality. Any song not suiting the public's perception of their idol would be given short shrift and be heard no more: one which satisfied all these requirements would be printed, reprinted, imitated and quoted time and again. D'Urfey's lyric "I burn, I burn", set by John Eccles and sung by Anne Bracegirdle as Marcella in Don Quixote: Part II held a dominant place in the public's affection from 1695 to well into the 18th century.
The manner of performing mad songs became a crucial ingredient in their success.

If Anne Bracegirdle was famed for her stunning entrances and even more dramatic exits, it is likely that we are considering highly theatrical presentations of the mad songs, for they were frequently contrived to be the centrepiece of the play. Using every medium of communication, the singing actors and actresses would woo the public in a manner quite out of step with the taste of today and which has nothing remotely to do with our received tradition of the presentation of "grand opera". First, the performers were primarily actors and used their singing voice as an extension of their acting (though in saying this I do not mean it was close to our popular West-End musical style of delivery). 1690s theatres were very small by today's standards and the accompaniment often consisted of no more than a harpsichord, theorbo-lute and bass viol. Singers who bawled were branded: Hawkins says of the singer Bartholomew Platt's rendition of George Hayden's "New Mad Tom" at Sadlers Wells in about 1710 that it was "enjoyed to the great delight of all who mistook roaring for singing". A semi-sung cantilena style of delivery was adopted, especially in heroic couplets and in deep tragedy. The gap between speech and song was smaller than we might think. The use of gesture, involving complex rules of practice elaborated since at least the beginning of the 17th century meant the training of eye, head, hand, arm and body in a manner we might call artificial (though actually full of art). A performance today in the manner of the 1690s would quite possibly seem completely over the top. Yet a high degree of artificiality is essential in order to appreciate the genre of mad songs at all. A modern public has some distance to go before being an "authentic" audience of the 1690s!

Part Five
Art Thou the Crack-Brain Fool?
The 1690s Vogue for Mad Songs

With these general observations in mind, let us return to the early 1690s where the taste for mad songs was gathering apace. One of the playwrights who most enthusiastically espoused—one might even suggest capitalised on—the genre was the prolific Thomas D'Urfey. History has not dealt kindly with this brilliant writer, identified early on as "the drunken poet" in Purcell's Fairy Queen. He was a professional writer, at times a hack (who isn't, who tries to earn a living from writing?). Much of his work is unlikely to be retrieved from its place in history, but many of his song lyrics are not short of brilliance, even genius. D'Urfey's rich use of the English language was a spur to the imagination for many of Henry Purcell's best songs, not to mention those of his legion of colleagues.

In 1693 Thomas D'Urfey's play *The Richmond Heiress* was presented. It is a comedy full of topical references, many lost on us today, though even its subtitle, *A Woman Once in the Right* refers to recent experiences of the leading actress, Mistress Anne Bracegirdle. She had been abducted by one of her admirers to test whether or not she was still a virgin. Much of her fame came from the claim to chastity and purity, unusual for actresses of that time; certain gossips had insinuated an affair with the actor William Mountfort. In the fracas that ensued the abduction Mountfort was murdered, the nobleman responsible got away without charge and Anne Bracegirdle was returned to public life intact.

D'Urfey's play turns on this affair as the Heiress, Fulvia—played by Bracegirdle—runs mad or feigns madness to avoid unwanted suitors. In the character descriptions in the playbook, the main personalities are outlined thus:

> FULVIA: The Heiress, a witty, generous and virtuous young lady, who being privately in love with Frederick, feigns herself lunatick to trick her Guardian, and avoid impertinent suitors. Acted by Mrs Bracegirdle.
>
> QUICKWITT: A witty but poor scholar, that being hired by Frederick to steal the Heiress, feigns himself mad, and takes upon him the Name of the Lord de la Fool. By Mr Doggett.
>
> FREDERICK: Half-brother to Sir Quibble; a witty young town-spark, who through Vice and Inconstancy of his Humour, tho' he were contracted to Sophronia, breaks off with her upon a slight occasion, to pursue an Intrigue with the Heiress, who has much the greater fortune. By Mr William

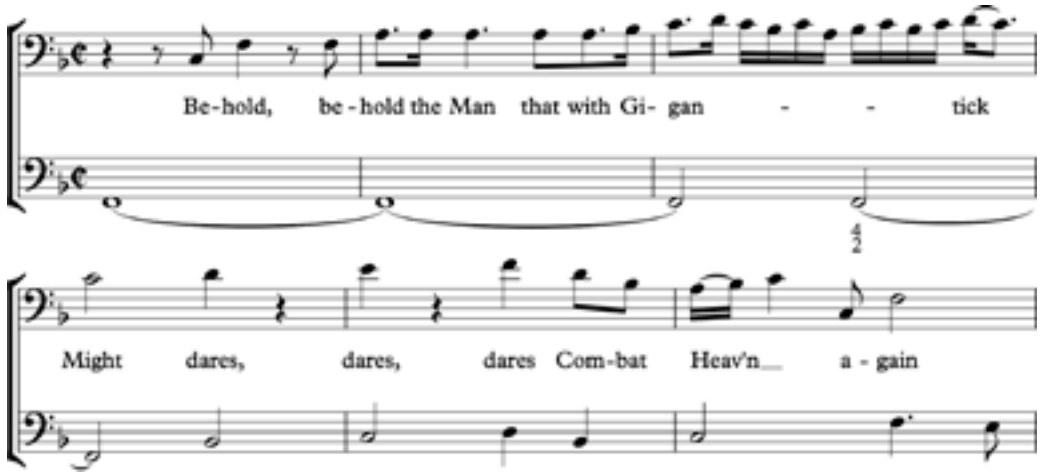
It is unusual for playbooks to give so full a character delineation; the purpose, surely, is to underline how close this comedy is reenacting real life. D'Urfey is blatantly cashing in on the passionate gossip generated by the abduction. Since the play revolves around madness—real and feigned, dramatising the madness of the London theatre world as well—there are rich pickings to be had for the development of the mad song genre.

Aside from Henry Purcell's brilliant suite of "Ayres" for the play, the main musical contribution is in the form of two sung dialogues. The first, Purcell's "Behold the man with gigantic might" was for Mr Reading and Mrs Ayliff to sing, both of whom were categorised as professional singers without a character role. This extended mad song, a scena in its own right, is a dynamic composition from the mature Purcell. Fulvia (Bracegirdle) and Lord de La Fool, alias Quickwitt (Doggett) sang the other dialogue, composed by John Eccles.

On paper this second dialogue is a slighter affair, leading Curtis Price to wonder why contemporaries—informed men of the theatre such as Dryden, no less—should have so much preferred the Eccles piece over the more brilliant, more complex, lengthier Purcell dialogue. Price's coverage of the piece is engaging and full of good insight: however, it misses the essential point, I think, which is that the audience was well disposed to Doggett and Bracegirdle—two young, talented actors in comedy—as well as breathless to hear how audaciously D'Urfey might exploit Bracegirdle's recent experiences. When Bracegirdle sings "I'm still a Maid, I'm still of Vesta's train" (i.e. she is still a virgin!) the audience must have heaved a sigh of relief and broken out in reassured laughed; with, no doubt, some disbelieving tutting at the same time. The dialogue between a fool half-mad and a maid feigning madness breaks down into nudges and winks worthy of pantomime—of which, of course, this is a genuine forerunner. That the audience should have preferred this piece of comic vérité over an interpolated lengthy dialogue sung by two professional singers, no matter how able, should come as no surprise.

As for the music involved, I'll add a few comments to Price's analysis. Purcell clearly responds directly to the English language with graphic imagery. D'Urfey's choice of the word "gigantic" in the first line is irresistible:

11 *Figure 11:* Purcell, "Behold the Man that with Gigantick Might"



Behind the speech rhythms, the roulade, the repetition of "dares" implying a blustering male energy, the piece links to its ballad progenitor, "Mad Tom", in harmonic simplicity. In the closing chorus, D'Urfey makes a clear verbal link with Lawes' mad song "There can be no glad man", which he would later go on to publish in his *Pills to Purge Melancholy*:

> Then Mad, very mad let us be ...
> And all things in Nature are mad too as we.

The borrowing, or parodying, goes on, for Purcell's rollicking 6/4 chorus recalls the Lawes music. Eccles, in turn, gives a perfectly balanced musical answer to Purcell's close in the opening of his dialogue:

Figure 12: End of Purcell's "Behold the man"

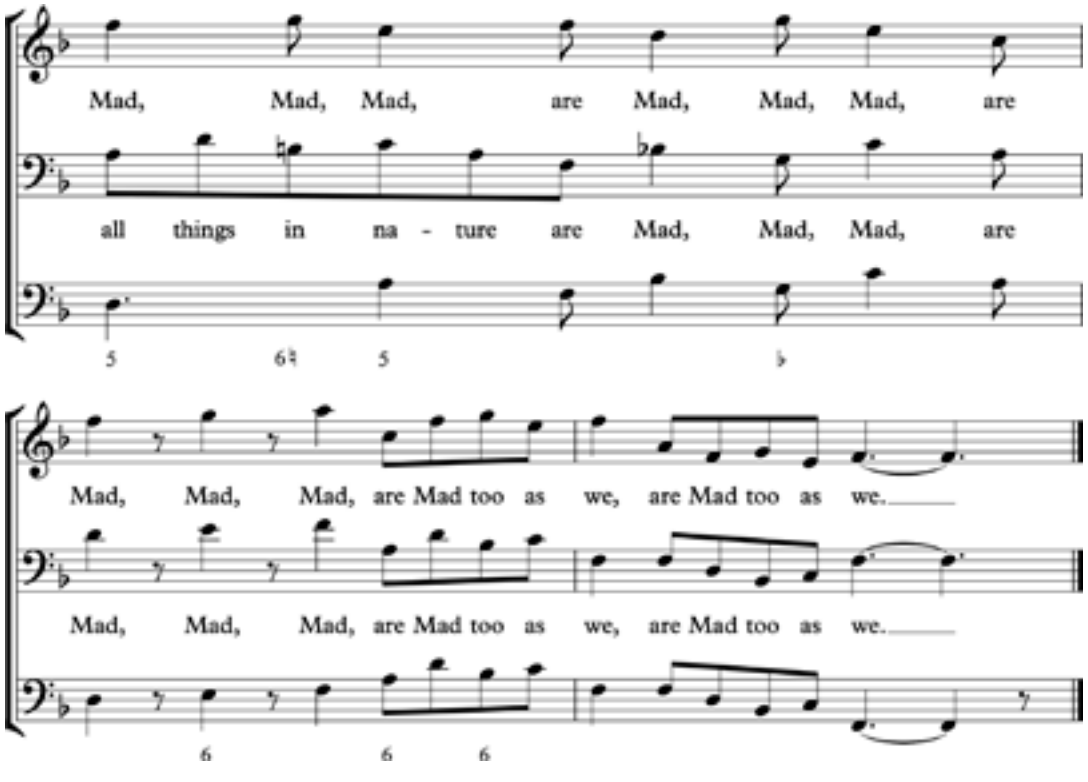
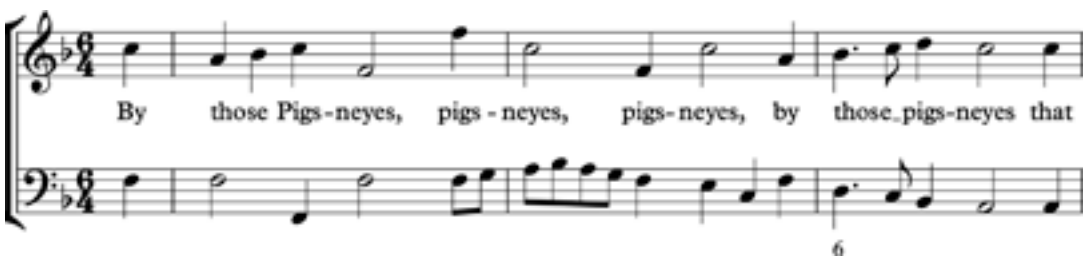


Figure 13: Opening of Eccles' "By those Pigsneyes"



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The audience must have been delighted by the comic insult to the theatre's admired beauty, delivered with the timing and skill that led to Doggett's fame as the greatest comic actor of the age.
As Quickwitt concludes his bizarre, inept attempt to seduce Fulvia there is a spoken aside by one Dr Guiacum, "a quack doctor, an opinionated Chemical doctor, a great pretender to cure lunaticks and Claps". He gives a running commentary for the audience, translating the progress and action of the song:

DR GUIACUM: She makes up to him now, the Distemper works now, they are curing one another.

Then Fulvia sings "Art thou the crack-brained fool"; the dialogue, the very antithesis of a lovers' dialogue, proceeds now in song, now in speech. The song ends with Quickwitt who first sings: "You are a fool, or else you lie" and then, speaking:

QUICKWITT: But if thou art, go to the Queen and beg me, for I must hang tomorrow for a Rape committed upon 15 Richmond virgins, 30 years old and upwards, that have took the shock of mankind most miraculously; there's my Petition, read it and away. (Gives her letter)

FULVIA: By Heaven! 'Tis Frederick's hand, and I find now, this is all feign'd madness and a plot of his to bring me off. O ye dear witty creature ...
... If faithful love, and an obedient wife can make him happy, he may assure himself of me, I know his merit, and have a soul to prize it.

The second act ends with one of Bracegirdle's famous exits, with a speech typical of the fusing of the play (Fulvia) and reality (Anne), leaving the audience feeling she had opened her heart and confided in them alone:

FULVIA: Nor shall the wretched customs of the World,
That change the sweets of love t'a sordid bargain,
Ever corrupt my Nature; wealth is a good addition,
And shall be given by me, a slave to Virtue,
And wait upon the kind brave Man I love,
Who weds a fool, affronts her human Nature;
Who can be kind to such a brutal creature,
'Tis wit with love improves the Marriage chorus,
And such a man is welcome to my arms. (Exit)

This breathtaking speech challenges all her male admirers in the audience, accuses her fellow actresses of having sex for money and lays a foundation stone for female emancipation as well. That is a powerful mix, from a playwright who is supposedly a hack! Her earlier entrance in Act II, Scene 2 is equally challenging, directly addressing her public and admirers:

(Enter Fulvia madly dress't)
FULVIA: Give me fresh air, the place is hot and sultry: the Rooms are warmed with lovers' scorching sighs that glow and breathe upon me. Is there no remedy? Must I be crowded thus—hah! ...
... Yet what care I, I'm mistress of my own fate, let 'em drink, let 'em roar, let 'em sing, what is't to me – I'll do the same.

Then, Anne Bracegirdle bursts into song, with lyrics and melody by Thomas D'Urfey, telling the truth about how utterly tired she is of London gossip:

How vile are the sordid intrigues of the Town,
... In plotting and sotting
They waste the whole day.

She follows this pseudo-drinking song with the exasperated cry:

Let me have musick, and bring in Orpheus there; O!
My hard fortune!

The Richmond Heiress was a resounding success and achieved what D'Urfey most desired: it kept the entire theatre public talking and agog for more. Under the guise of madness and tomfoolery (is that where the word comes from?) stage persona and real life merged further together.

More, much more was in store with Thomas D'Urfey's dramatisation of the ramblings of Don Quixote, whose adventures had recently been published in a new English prose translation in 1688. *The Comical History of Don Quixote* ran to a sequel of three plays, rather like a blockbuster movie; in keeping with the analogy, Parts I and II ran to huge acclaim and box-office success in 1694, whilst Part III was a dismal failure and lost the theatre a great deal of money. The background to the *Don Quixote* saga has been covered twice by Price, who provides the best survey of the play, its music and circumstances. It is however necessary to review the mad songs in *Don Quixote*, for they play a central role in the diffusion and development of the genre.

Part Six
'Tis Sultry, Sultry Weather
The *Don Quixote* Trilogy of Mad Songs

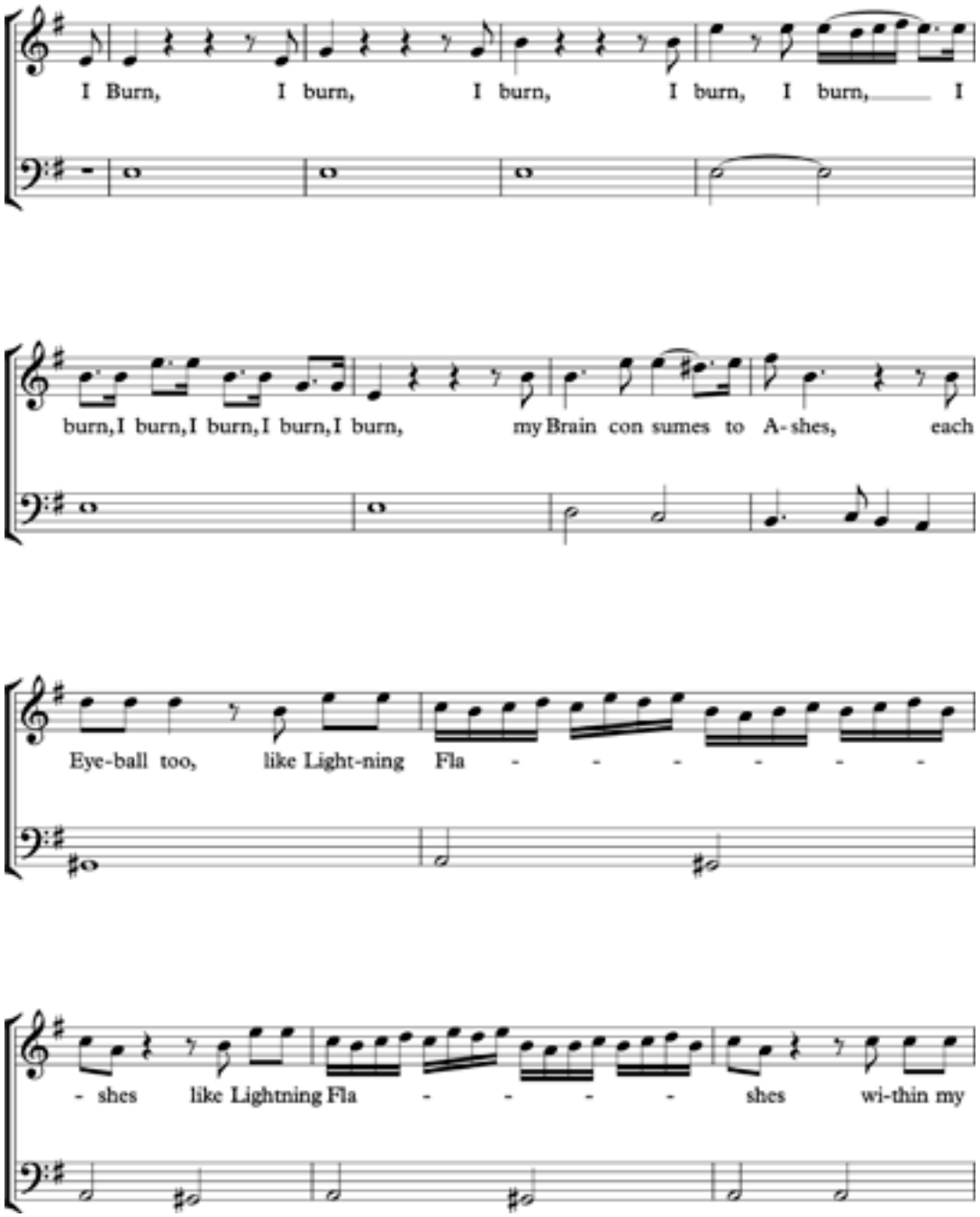
Tom D'Urfey clearly understood the dramatic pull of mad songs for he structured each of his three parts of *Don Quixote* around a central mad song, each a supreme example of the art from the point of view of lyrics, settings and—to the extent to which we can ascertain—the performance.

In Part I, the popular actor-singer John Bowman played Cardenio: the character introduces himself in the play with an extended mad soliloquy, Henry Purcell's famous "Let the dreadful Engines of Eternal Will". This brilliant lyric from D'Urfey, charged with colourful words, fired Purcell's unstoppable enthusiasm for the English language: "thunder", "roar", "crooked", "hot", "fatal", "horrid", all in the first four lines! D'Urfey, now the consummate master of creating poetry for music, pours on the agony: "frozen", "rancour", "tempests", "despair", "cold"—the next four lines! The burden of this torrent of agonising images? Cardenio, a kind of nobleman's equivalent of Tom o' Bedlam, has been crossed in love. His darling Lucinda has been taken from him: with her gone, his senses too have left him; he is found ranging in a rocky desert, dressed in clothes once of the finest kind, now torn to shreds. If I had to choose one mad song as the apotheosis of the genre, I think it would have to be this one—for its theatricality, its humanity, and for Purcell's boyish, innocent enthusiasm, balanced with the utmost sophistication. It was clearly enjoyed in its own time, too, for there is a soprano (!) version of it in a Purcell autograph, rearranged, it is thought, for a court performance for Princess Anne, sung by her favourite singer, Arabella Hunt.

As great as the song is, the limelight was stolen from Cardenio's rantings in *Don Quixote I* by the even more popular ravings of Marcella in *Don Quixote II*. Marcella was played by Anne Bracegirdle, who had a head start on John Bowman in terms of public affection. Bracegirdle had portrayed Marcella in *Don Quixote I* as a young woman not only disdainful towards all men, but even frigid towards the luckless Chrisostom—who died of a broken heart for his love for her—and towards his henchman, the noble Ambrosio. In *Don Quixote II* she develops, against her better judgement, a secret passion for Ambrosio, who returns her original disdain cruelly. Her passion bursts in a powerful speech that turns directly into her mad aria, "I burn, I burn". It was a triumphant success and became a new benchmark for dramatic song overnight. D'Urfey, Eccles (its composer) and Bracegirdle made equal contributions to its success. If I had a second chance to choose my favourite mad song of the time, it would be, without a doubt, this one!

Once Marcella reveals her growing passion for Ambrosio, he plays with her cruelly, like a cat with a mouse:

Figure 14: Eccles' "I burn, I burn"



AMBROSIO: To see her thus! Why, now she's in her Kingdom; her darling Mischiefs now have gather'd head, and riot in her Brain; Oh, take this from me, friend; when once a Woman's mad, she's in Perfection.

With her passion smouldering, Marcella is deaf to his hatred and in the final speech before the song she abases herself, ending up in a totally naked emotional state, moving from speech to song in a heart-rending manner—an unforgettable moment in post-Restoration music theatre:

MARCELLA: Nay then, farewell dissembling—all female arts and tricks begone, avaunt, and let the passion of my heart lie open. Turn, turn thou dearest pleasure of my soul, and I will bathe thee with my eyes' fond tears: lay thee upon my breast panting with love, and speak the softest words into thy ears that ere were spoken by a kind yielding maid; kiss thee with eager joy, and press thee close, close to my heart till I am lost in transport, and am for that short time a Deity ...

The simplicity but utter appropriateness of the tenfold reiteration of "I burn" at the beginning of the song is the hallmark of John Eccles, a truly great theatre-song composer. Moving from speech to barely sung utterances and intoned speech-rhythms, he leaves the listener perplexed as to what constitutes the difference between speech and song. The integration of the two is complete in the hands of a singer-actress of Bracegirdle's calibre. To a held pedal-point on E, the repetitions mount in intensity through pitch, rhythm and affective breaths to form the fire of the soul. D'Urfey's judicious, barely noticed alliteration between "burn" and "brain", combined with strong personal identifying with "I" and "my" takes the listener into the interior private world of Marcella, so that from this incantatory, mantra-like opening every syllable, every vowel and consonant is etched on the listener's brain. "Consumes" leads with a semitone melisma towards D#, harshly dissonant with the bass; "ashes", with its sibilant softness is particularly striking after the reiterated E. Speech rhythms for "each eye-ball too, like lightening" makes the word-painting on "flashes" all the more unexpected. The repetition of this figure, like two separate bolts of lightning—one from each eye—renders it much more than merely a stock figure drawn from the encyclopaedia of devices. Here it is charged such that the scena is lit by Bracegirdle's bright eyes—a feature frequently extolled in admiring paeans. "Within my breast" returns us to another dear feature of our idol and the minor seventh harmony softens the sound, making it more inward-looking.

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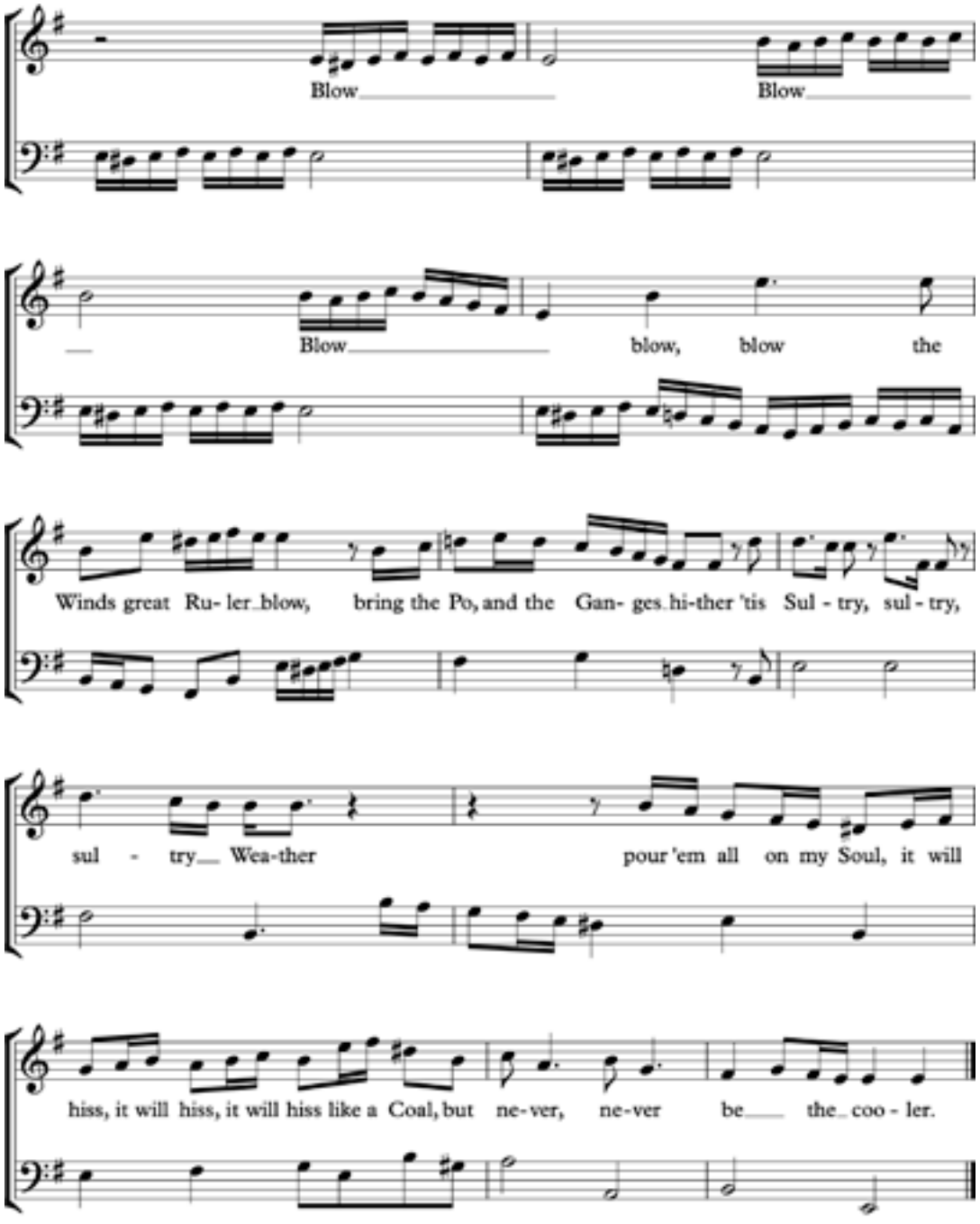
Then, there "glows a solid fire" and a dissonant major seventh against the bass pushes to an anticipated final cadence, with an imitation for the singer to explore an enriched diphthong on "Fire". Agitated rhythms and repetition of "thousand,

Figure 15: Eccles' "I burn, I burn"



thousand Ages" paints an aeon and the first full cadence is reached with "expiring" tension: phase one of the scena closes. To rekindle the fire, the continuo instrument, ideally perhaps a bass viol played here sotto voce, prepares for the voice singing, with plenty of free air, to paint the word "blow". A duet between bass and voice, exchanging the decorated pedal point, turns into a supplication to Jove, the great ruler of wind and fire. D'Urfey draws on extravagant imagery in the tradition of the ballad mad songs, as Marcella beseeches that the rivers Po and Ganges be brought together to dowse her fire. The sense of location is jerked out of a wooden London theatre to the hot, humid climate of India and the Ganges basin with "'tis sultry, sultry weather". Eccles' first-inversion chords with dissonant anacrusis suggest oppressive weather. The thrice-repeated "hiss" imitates with onomatopoeia the sound of the rivers' waters meeting the hot coals of her soul. Yet it will not be enough to cool her: the cadence that ends this section ends on the singer's lower E, where the piece began, hinting at coolness but not giving way to it. The awkward, syllabic tune which forms the third section goes through more text at a faster pace—the affect is a kind of arioso narrative which explains why Marcella is in this foolish condition: its effect is edgy, disturbing. Her inner agitation is communicated to the listener directly.

15

The fourth section begins with the words "adieu transporting joys": a pedal E in the bass is combined with exotic melismas that circle around the minor sixth, creating a longing for lost happiness. This longing is disturbed by a tumbling bass turning into a semiquaver "riff" which forms the backcloth to Marcella tearing off her jewelled ornaments, hairpiece and anything that a self-respecting woman would adorn herself with.

Figure 16: Eccles' "I burn, I burn"

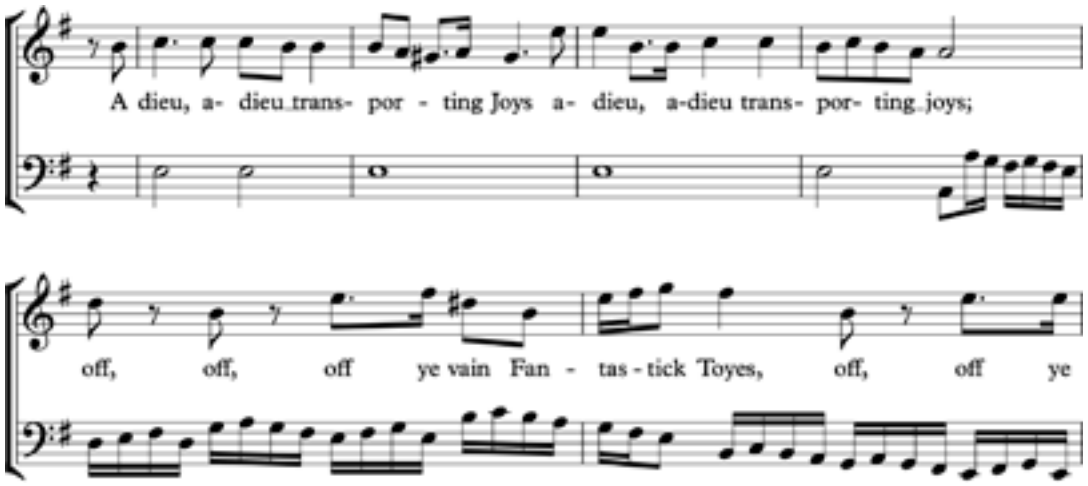


Figure 17: Plates for "The Delirious Lady" in George Bickham's *The Musical Entertainer* (1737)

Calling for "daggers, poison, fire" to quench her desire, she has become the epitome of the mad woman, half-naked, whose lust cannot be satisfied. Bedlam was, according to popular lore of the 17th century, filled with such abject figures of femininity and this insane sexual appetite was available to any man who took a fancy, or pity, on the poor wretches. Marcella is brought this low as her final cry "all Hell feels not the rage, which I, poor I, endure" first rises chromatically and slowly, then descends quickly to the depths. Against this, her reiterated "poor I" melismas call in a pleading, pulling, pathetic manner. With the final cadence still ringing and before the audience has had chance to recover and respond to this tumultuous display of passion, Marcella returns to speech, crazed, and lacking any rationality:

> MARCELLA: Thou art the bird of night. Come, I'll go with thee; by thy broad face and toothless gums I know thee, and that hook'd nose that shades the stumps remaining, thou art Grimalkin - Whoo! Whoo! Whoo!—come along bird. [Exit]

Bracegirdle's famous exit worked again! The stunned London audience had experienced nothing like this emotional temperature before. Anne Bracegirdle's position as "the Darling of the Stage" was assured: the mad-song genre had reached a point of maturity.

Forces beyond Thomas D'Urfey's control contributed to the failure of *Don Quixote III* in 1695. Theatre management intrigue had caused Thomas Betterton to part company with Christopher Rich, taking Bracegirdle, Eccles and a number of the experienced players with him. All this is treated at length elsewhere and only concerns us here for the circumstances surrounding the last of the Don Quixote mad songs. As fate would have it, this would also be the last song composed by Henry Purcell, he "being in his sickness" and about to die shortly thereafter.

Had I a third chance to choose the finest of the mad songs, "From Rosie Bowers", sung by Altisdora in order to seduce the elderly Don Quixote would be a likely contender. I hold a slight reservation, for though it is an excellent song, it is a more contrived mad song, both in nature and intention. So famous is this piece, and so well covered by Price, that I will add very little. It is worth pointing out that D'Urfey gave each of the sections of the lyric a descriptive label, showing his exploration of different degrees or stages of madness: "In Five Movements: *Love; Gaily; Slow, melancholy; Passion; Swift, frenzy.*" This is Altisdora attempting to persuade the Don's affections away from the love of his fantasy, one Dulcinea del Toboso, the unattainable vision of his courtly love. Altisdora was played by the twelve-year-old Letitia Cross; it is possible that her youth and inexperience got in the way of the success of this song with the audience.However, this undoubtedly great piece won admiration in the years to come and was handsomely printed in Bickham's The Musical Entertainer in four plates representing *The Delirious Lady* in four appropriate poses, ending up with clumps of torn hair in her hands!

Part Seven
Restless in Thought, Disturb'd in Mind
An Old, Worn Century is Out, at Last!
But Does the New Offer Better?

Despite the failure of *Don Quixote III* in 1695 there is no doubt in my mind that the three mad songs from the trilogy represent the height of the genre, which enjoyed a further ten years or more of creative development. From this point on it is not possible, desirable or necessary to cover every mad song in detail; a broader sweep, a more general survey will give a better idea of the wealth of material waiting to be explored. Very few of the songs listed in this essay and in the appendix have been performed, edited or researched in modern times, but this is no reflection of their intrinsic artistic merit. My enthusiasm for certain titles does not mean that others, which I might appear to be cooler about, are any less in stature. It remains for others to explore some of these lesser-known works and to make a personal assessment of their worth.

A number of so-called mad songs independent of any known dramatic context were published in various music books of the time. A most challenging and rewarding mad song is John Blow's "Lysander I pursue", published in his *Amphion Anglicus* in 1700. I have discussed the background and social context of this superb volume elsewhere and suggested there that this virtuoso song was composed for Princess Anne's favourite singer, Arabella Hunt, in imitation of the popular mad songs being enjoyed in the public theatres. The theme of Blow's mad song is a recurrent one in Amphion Anglicus. There, the battle of the sexes unfolds: Lysander, the great noble warrior of history, is the object of Belinda's love; in her distraction she calls forth Cupid and his powerful darts to do battle. In her imagination, the heavens are filled with legions of armed Cupids: in the ensuing chaos, she is burned up by her passion. Many features of this entertaining song reflect the mad songs of Purcell and Eccles—it is a kind of potpourri of several of their songs. Though this is self-evident, it in no way diminishes John Blow's creativity, but rather enhances it, for he makes a parody of admired works while still producing a work of imagination and originality. "Lysander I pursue" stands as one of the most powerful mad songs in the entire genre. Blow created a work which is a distillation of the popular genre of the time for the delectation of his Royal patron.

A rarely noticed single mad song by Henry Purcell, "Beneath a poplar's shadow", was published posthumously in Book II of *Orpheus Britannicus*. It is missed in discussions by most commentators for it is a single song without any known context, nor any known poet. Surrounded by obscurity, it has been relegated to the rather large number of good Purcell songs that are never performed. Although it is short, the composition contains several attractive features, including a novel depiction of "swell" and rather more textbook depictions of "rage" and "fury".

One other work of Henry Purcell's must also be mentioned here: his thrilling "Not all my torments", surviving only in the Gresham Song Book. The opening section is a superb example of the ecstatic style, incorporating curious intervals, melismas and rhythms in an intoxicated manner—almost like the slow alap of an Indian *raga*! Although not described as a mad song, it undoubtedly belongs to the genre. As an interesting aside, Purcell writes "I burn" in the Gresham manuscript several times, as though he was going to either copy Eccles' song or compose a new work with these words. The stave and the rest of the page are blank except for the words "no more", copied below "I burn" in a later hand. Indeed, after Purcell's untimely death his genius burned no more.

A mad song set by Mr Morgan being the last he made was published as a single sheet, being "The 3rd Weekly Song for November ye 16th, 1699". Thomas Morgan was of Irish birth, coming from Dublin to London late in 1691. His output as a composer is small, mostly of instrumental chamber music and a handful of songs. The mad song, said to be his last work, begins with "Come ye inhabitants of Heaven conduct me to my love". As a mad song it belongs to the more ecstatic strand, being a gentle eulogy of a lover desiring to join his or her loved one in loftier realms. It is a valuable reminder that not all mad songs need be raving and ranting and that madness manifests in a whole spectrum of emotions.

The most prolific composer of mad songs is undoubtedly John Eccles. Part Three of the appendix is a list of all Eccles' songs I have so far noticed which decidedly belong to the mad-song genre or are very close in spirit—a precise definition still eludes me. There may be more songs to add to this list, but it is close to approaching completeness. I have checked the contexts for most of these songs, where that is possible, though occasionally the playbooks do not include the lyrics, for they were often placed late in rehearsal, sometimes with a different writer from that of the play. A work of chilling genius like "Find me a lonely cave" has no obvious place in *The Villain* and since it was sung by Mary Hodgson, who rarely acted and often sang from offstage, it could be used to intensify atmosphere effectively in several points in the drama. On the other hand, the songs Eccles created for Anne Bracegirdle are almost always intrinsic to the dramatic action. After the success of "I burn" every playwright wanted to capitalise on Bracegirdle's skills.

In the Fickle Shepherdess, 1703, for example, Anne played the lead role of Amintas, a mad shepherd. This was a breeches role for which she was famous; a feature of this play is that it was played only by women. I suspect that the timing of this play, bedecked with all the finest actresses of the time, was to celebrate the coronation of Queen Anne to the throne of England. As the prologue makes clear:

> Since England does its brightest glories owe
> To Female Power, we only Females show.

In Act II Scene 1 the mad song is carefully framed in this manner:

> AMARYLLIS: Save there's not a nymph on the Sicilian plains curst like Amaryllis; wer't not enough thou dreadful Goddess, to make

me bear the wrecks of a neglected love—But as if the heavenly
Senate all decreed my Punishment; my Father to an eternal exile
doom'd, and my poor brother, Amyntas, robb'd of all his senses.

AMINTAS: Who calls Amintas - Beauteous Proserpine, 'tis she -
[rises] - Fair Empress of the Elizian shades - (Ceres's bright
Daughter, interceed for me, persuade my mother to leave talking
riddles, won't thou?) Thou supreme Goddess of Eternal Night, beg
of immortel Ceres that I may wed Urania ...

Ha! Pluto is jealous, and see Urania mounts above (starts up)

This speech leads directly into "Haste, give me wings" after which display of madness Bracegirdle would seem to make another of her exits. Clorinda, played by Elizabeth Barry, simply exclaims "Ah! Poor Amintas".

Mary Hodgson and Anne Bracegirdle frequently worked closely together. One occasion, which is immortalised in lines penned by Congreve, probably after the final rehearsal of his brilliant *The Way of the World* in 1700, shows the pressure they were under to learn new plays and songs:

MILLAMENT: Desire Mrs.--, that is in the next Room
to sing the Song I would have learned Yesterday. You
shall hear it Madam- not that there's any great matter
in it, but 'tis agreeable to my Humour.
(Set by Mr. John Eccles, and sung by Mrs. Hodgson)

It would seem to be fairly clear from this that the song was originally conceived by both Congreve and Eccles for Bracegirdle to sing, but in her own lines she confesses she had not had time to learn it! The song is indeed a virtuosic tour de force, deserving to be much better known. Its strongly contrasted sections and overall length put it in the category of a small-scale cantata. Three decades later, the same lyric is set by Handel, one of his most elaborate single songs in English.

Eccle's "Oh! Take him gently from the pile" deserves a closer look too, for it is another example of the seamless weaving together of Bracegirdle's skills as actress and singer. In 1695, Anne Bracegirdle played Lausania, daughter to King Croesus of Lydia in John Banks' play *Cyrus the Great, or The Tragedy of Love*. Towards the end of the play, when tragedy mounts on tragedy, Lausania causes her father agony at her state of extreme madness. She is "dress'd like a cupid, with a bow and a quiver" and in this distracted state causes him further distress with these words:

LAUSANIA: Ye daring Mortals, wou'd ye hinder me?
Let me alone, I say - prepare my chariot;
Go fetch me Boreas straight, and bid him bring me
A gentle wind to spread my Fiery Wings,

Then I'll ride faster than the fleeting air,
Or racing clouds - the stars shall be my Guides,
And in a moment I will reach the Gods.

CROESUS: O dismal sight!

LAUSANIA: My father weeps; if tears could quench thee!

Bracegirdle then sings the first part of the mad song, "Oh! Take him gently from the pile", a moving opening by Eccles in aspirated descending "Oh"s and delicate dissonant harmonies on "take him gently". The passions then rise on three favourite words associated with Anne: "scorch", "burn", and "fire". The song is interrupted by this desperate speech from Lausania's father:

CROESUS: Hear me Lausania, thou hast once a brother
Doom'd by the Gods to want the gift of speech,
And yet his dumbness could not so afflict me,
As these wild words torment thy Father's soul.

LAUSANIA: This bow and Quiver were a wanton Cupid's;
I watch'd the boy, as he lay down to sleep
And stole his ammunition from his side;
And now I've got 'em, I will be reveng'd
On all mankind, on all the sex at once.
And shoot love's plague into their Breasts–stand Fair!

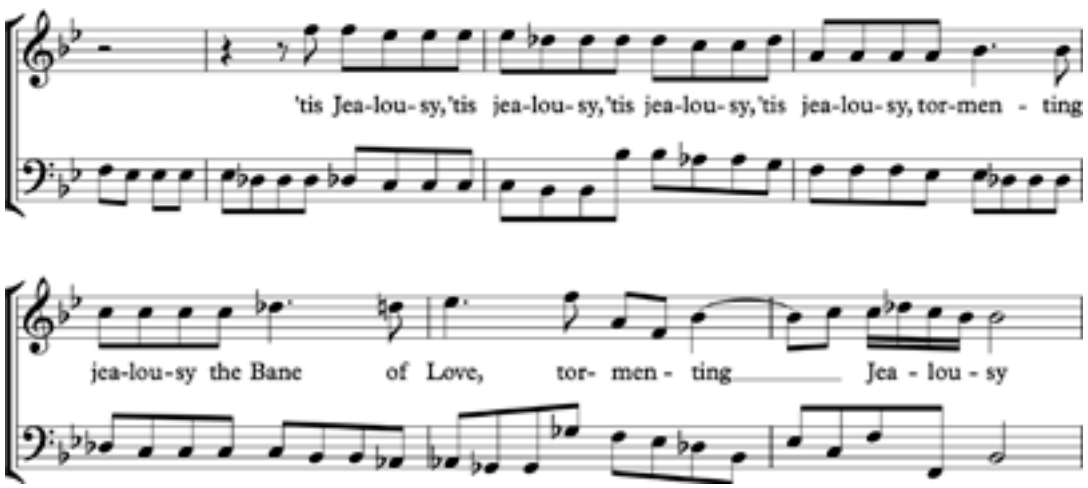
The music picks up with an instrumental *ritornello* in fast-moving 6/4 time. Though the cue is not precise in the playbook, if the *ritornello* begins on the word "mankind" in her last speech, she can go straight into the second half of the song, "I'm arm'd and declare for a vigorous War!". The song concludes with Lausania declaring she will "shoot the great Archer, shoot him Dead!". As she exits (another of Bracegirdle's theatrical departures!) Croesus is left holding the stage with lines the audience would have loved:

CROESUS: Her sense is out of tune, her wit's not well,
But yet, alas! Her tongue is charming still.

Here is yet another case of the real Bracegirdle and the theatrically "mad" star fusing together.

Several other songs by John Eccles will repay close study. Particularly rewarding is "Restless in thought, disturb'd in mind" sung by Mary Hodgson in She Ventures and He Wins (1695). It is a demanding song which needs all the professionalism for which she was famed, being a fine example of the virtuoso vocal art. Finally, from Eccles' list, I single out "Wasted with sighs": it is a fine work with very expressive rests and

Figure 18: Excerpt from Daniel Purcell, "Morpheus thou gentle God"



lovely invention throughout, but it is also one of the few from this composer written for a male singer. John Wiltshire was an admired tenor of the day, though he was more linked with the Chapel Royal than the theatre. This excursion into madness must have been a welcome diversion for him.

Turning now to the little-known song repertoire of Daniel Purcell, the younger brother cast for so long in Henry's shadow, there is a small but rich legacy of mad songs. Most of his theatre songs belong to the period after his brother's death in 1695, though he had shown a propensity for dramatic composition much earlier. Daniel also concerned himself more with the ecstatic style: though obviously related to the mad songs, there is a sufficient distinction to be made for the purposes of detailed analysis. Part Four of the appendix includes a short list of songs related to the mad genre.

Number 46 on the list, "Alas! When charming Sylvia's gone" is a mad song with a difference, enforced by the stanzaic structure of the lyric. The lover is so overcome ("I smile, I freeze, I pant, I burn") in his beloved's presence and is equally bereft when she is gone ("I sigh, and think myself undone"). It is a gently lyrical mad song and would greatly depend on the style of performance for its effect. The hapless lover in number 47, "Beneath the gloomy shade" ends by dying: "the hapless shepherd spent in sighs, sunk down and said no more". It is a lyrical setting framed by symphonies in the form of a narrative, describing the character on stage who was presumably miming and gesturing whilst the music was performed. A narrative mad song or perhaps a descriptive mad song would be more accurate definitions.

However, with number 48, "Morpheus thou gentle God of soft repose", a song from *Iphigenia* by John Dennis performed in 1699, we have one of the greatest mad songs of the decade. It was sung by Mrs Erwin, a professional singer (rather than actress) of renown, for whom Daniel created a number of passionate and demanding songs. The multi-section design makes for a cantata of great variety, beginning with an ecstatic opening, rich in various melismas on key words: "gentle", "unruly tumults", "fury", "care" and "chase". A languorous triple section follows which paints "indulgent fancy" and the longing for ease of pain in eternal sleep. Yet ease and rest are not the lot of this distracted soul: in a quasi-recitative section, which turns into dramatically depicted unrest, all is revealed; jealousy is the cause of the turmoil. What follows is the richest depiction of jealousy I have ever heard in music, where voice and bass slide and slither in contorted chromaticisms.

18

The raging and raving which follow measure up to anything the more famous brother produced. These emotions are also expressed concisely: despite Daniel having often been criticised for prolixity and redundancy (a remark which, in fairness, is a valid occasional criticism applying not only to Daniel, but also to his contemporaries, including Henry) this cannot be said here. With the phrase "I must my rival or myself destroy" this brilliant mad song comes to a powerful close. In its strength and invention, it has no peer and deserves to be known.

Number 49, "Rouse ye Gods of the Main" hardly belongs in this list: however, the second part of this amazing work carries enough bizarre imagery with appropriately extreme music to drive anyone but a sorcerer mad! Angular leaps negotiating strange intervals are a feature: "grimfull" on a diminished fifth; "dismal" on a minor seventh; "chorus", traversing a diminished octave; "dreadful" on a melisma of unparalleled dissonance, incorporating a ninth, a flat seventh, a diminished fifth, in exceedingly disjunct rhythms. Nothing in Henry's most extreme passagework exceeds Daniel's fine achievements here.

Daniel Purcell seemed to have a penchant for stretching the concept of a mad song to new limits. In *Alexander the Great, or The Rival Queens*, performed in 1701 and written some years earlier by Nathaniel Lee (before he was consigned to Bethlem Hospital) Anne Bracegirdle played the young princess, Statira. In Act 5, Scene I Statira is discovered sleeping in the "Bower of Semiramis". The spirits of Queen Statira (her mother) and Darius appear standing on each side of her, with daggers, threatening her. They sing: "Is Innocence so void of care". In this macabre scene, Anne is not required to sing or speak, but is sleeping somewhat fitfully and eventually sleep-walks. The music, which consists of *ritornelli* and songs, is a kind of foreboding of her fate, an anticipation of her derangement to come. In this, there is some similarity to the scene from the *Duchess of Malfi,* though here the audience is asked to believe that the sleepwalker cannot hear the music which so palpably increases the dramatic tension: Daniel Purcell's music is equal to the task. In volume one of *The Banquet of Music* (1688) there is a moving cantata by Daniel, "'Twas night, and all the Village wrapp'd in sleep". It is a work of grief and despair, philosophising on the cynical state of the world: "none but Fortune's Fools are in request". It is a mad song with a difference, eluding precise classification and all the more disturbing for that!

Two plays which adopted madness as their central theme enjoyed a considerable degree of popularity around 1700. The first is *The Match at Bedlam*, for which we have no known librettist and only a rough date (sometime shortly after 1700). The only music linked with this play is John Eccles' song, "Amintor's warmth declines you say", a song that entertains, rather than exploring the passionate extremes of madness. It is frustrating that so little can be presently discovered about this play. Equally unsatisfying is the absence of a script for the second play with a central mad theme, The Mad Lover, a Peter Motteux reworking of a Beaumont and Fletcher original. Motteux's new script does not survive: this is a great blow, considering that virtually all of the music, some eighteen titles by John Eccles, is extant. Part Five of the appendix is a list of Eccles' songs and airs for the play. Of the nine songs, six were for Anne Bracegirdle to sing: since the hero was a breeches-role, she was presumably the "Mad Lover" of the title. Only one of these songs is a mad song; the rest are designed for varied and easy entertainment. "Must then a faithfull lover go" is a succinct example of Eccles' lighter style: four time-changes, the last leading to a tarantella-like 6/4, reflect the degree of distraction. Variety descended to pantomime in the dialogue "Proud Women I Scorn", for Mr Doggett and Mr Bowman were "dress'd in women's cloaths". This version of the Mad Lover must have been rather like a modern-day musical: stuffed with good tunes, eminently singable or playable

at home on the flute. The theatre "ayres", with an overture and eight dances, form a suitable body of instrumental music that ties the scenes together: the fifth piece is particularly fine, an "ayre" to a ground of hypnotic beauty. Sadly, without the libretto, we cannot know the sequence or context for this music.

Two further songs roughly dating around 1700 and found in Part Six of the appendix deserve particular mention. An elaborate cantata by John Weldon, "Reason, What Art Thou", is full of stunning invention. Frequent rhythm changes (five in all) follow the contrasting moods of the text. The piece is a single song, perhaps designed for one of the "consort" evenings at the York Buildings or somewhere similar. Weldon's intricate melismatic style mesmerises. His setting of "satisfaction" must come close to be the longest melisma of the period! The cause of this creature's unrest? The final couplet says it uniquely:

> My slavish will to Cupid's fire submits,
> And Reason on the Rocks of Passion sits.

John Wilford, a tenor of some renown around 1700, turned his hand occasionally to composing. His song "In Vain I Hope to Find Relief" betrays the intimate knowledge of the voice, of what lies comfortably and what is expressive. With its lovely effects achieved easily, this gentle mad song is a gift for any tenor, leaving plenty of room for beauty of voice as well as passion and madness.

With the obliteration of the English composers by the advent of all things Italian in the first decade of the 18th century, the spate of mad songs began to slow up. It might be lamented that such a vigorous tradition was brought to an end by rupture, rather than by a metamorphosis into new forms and styles. A sense of loss and a nostalgia for the "old" English style manifested in a number of ways: singers like Richard Leveridge continued to perform Purcell's mad songs (Cardenio's and Altis-dora's songs from Don Quixote) until the end of their long careers to great acclaim. In a way, such performances only served to mark an era gone: even the regrets were a ritualised formula.

"Old Mad Tom" continued to appear from time to time in new guises. "I'm Old Mad Tom, behold me, my wits are quite unframed" was set to a rather good tune; both words and music are anonymous, published around 1720. In another single sheet of around the same time, George Alexander Stevens wrote the words for a rather meandering, gawky sort of tune, summing up a tradition that had rather lost its way.

There is, however, one superb art-song creation entitled "Mad Tom", a piece that gained a degree of popularity through the performances by Bartholomew Platt, the singer who was censured by Hawkins for his vulgar singing. The "roaring" mistaken for singing which Hawkins disliked may well have been for his singing of the piece "In my triumphant chariot hurl'd", a character piece of considerable dimensions for a buffo bass-baritone. Hawkins' objections to that style of performance say much about the changing taste of the 18th century and its links with the decline of the

mad-song genre. The composer, George Hayden, also published three cantatas in English but in the Italian da capo style, with arias separated by short recitative. The subject matter was skilfully, though politely treated. Hayden was highly praised for these works by both Burney and Hawkins: these pastoral pieces didn't disturb the gentle flow of social intercourse, or assault "Reason" or the "Senses". There was nothing that shocked or shook the foundations of good taste. In such a climate, songs which were intended to entertain by disturbing would obviously find no place. Burney, in particular, found Purcell and his generation lacking in grace, though he admitted to finding in their work a certain rough-hewn quality.

Handel's excursions into extreme passions throughout his career—for example in *Orlando*, based on *Orlando Furioso* by Ariosto and first performed early in 1733—were somehow more palatable when in Italian. In that work, the expression of Orlando's madness in combined recitatives and arias accompanied orchestrally, is a true high point of the depiction of distraction and madness. Yet there is little to compare in the English language, either in Handel's output or in that of his contemporaries, aside from his setting of the Congreve lyric "Love's the frailty of the mind".

One of the late 18th-century musical antiquarians, John Stafford Smith, developed a real appreciation for the English theatrical style before 1700. His perceptive research makes him one of the earliest scholars responsible for the early-music revival! He was also a composer, modest perhaps, but able: among his own works is a setting of "I burn, I burn" entitled "The Frantic Lady". Here, the favourite theatre song of insane passion of a hundred years earlier is turned into the very personal mode of a late 18th-century ardent musician. A further piece in his Collection of Songs offers fascinating proof of his antiquarianism: the song, entitled "The Lunatic Lover", with its opening line "Grim King of the Ghosts make haste", is a lengthy cantata-like structure with recitative sections, followed by diverse contrasting arias in rapid changes of mood. The distracted lover is quite definitely mad. Most telling of all, though, is that the piece displays the rubric: "After Purcell's Style". John Stafford Smith was one of a very small group of cognoscenti who enjoyed the old style best!

These isolated examples of the expression of a mad Englishness are notable for their singularity. Not until Peter Maxwell Davies' tortured versions of Mad Tom and Maudlin, with the *Eight Songs for a Mad King* (1969) and *Miss Donnithorne's Maggot* (1974) is there a creative reawakening of this bizarre tradition. How many have dared follow it?

APPENDIX

English Mad Songs of the 17th Century
A Brief Checklist

Part One: Items which predate "Bess of Bedlam" by Henry Purcell (and items which are related to earlier works but were printed later)

Title	Composer and Date
1. Mad Tom o' Bedlam	John Coprario (?), 1613
2. Old Tom o' Bedlam [variant of 1]	John Coprario (?), 1613
3. A New Mad Tom of Bedlam ["Forth from the far and darksome cell"]	Anon. Ballad, ca. 1658
4. Tom a Bedlam [variant of 3]	Anon. Ballad, 1673
5. Old Tom of Bedlam [variant of 3]	Anon. Ballad, ca. 1700
6. Mad Maudlin ["To find my Tom of Bedlam"]	Anon. Ballad
7. Tom o' Bedlam's song to King James ["From the Hag", variant of 1?]	Anon. Ballad
8. Grays Inne Maske [variant of 1]	Dance Tune, 1651
9. The Maid in Bedlam	th.N. (?), ca. 1720
10. The Mad-man's Morrice [dance ballad to the tune of 1?]	Anon. Ballad
11. O let us howle [from *The Duchess of Malfi*]	Robert Johnson, 1613
12. Come let us howle [sung by two Madmen, revival of *Duchess of Malfi*]	John Eccles, ca. 1698
13. Oberon [or the Madman's Song: Newly from a poach'd toad]	Thomas Holmes, ca. 1630
14. There can be no glad man	William Lawes, ca. 1635
15. Amarillis, tear thy hair	William Lawes, ca. 1635

Part Two: Henry Purcell's mad songs and songs strongly influenced by the genre

Title	Date
16. Bess of Bedlam [From silent shades]	late 1682
17. Behold the man of gigantic might [from *The Richmond Heiress*]	1693
18. Let the dreadful engines [from *Don Quixote* Part II]	1694
19. From rosie bowers	1695
20. Beneath a poplar's shadow lay me	1694

NOTE: The previous five songs are all described as "mad songs": the following nine are all without dramatic context but all contain elements of the mad-song genre. Dates, where given, are mostly conjectural.

Title	Date
21. Amidst the shades	
22. Beneath a dark and melancholy grove	ca.1683
23. Draw near your lovers	
24. The fatal hour	
25. Fly swift ye hours	late 1691
26. I came, I saw and was undone	
27. Not all my torments	
28. No, to what purpose	May 1683
29. Urge me no more	ca.1682

Part Three: Mad songs by John Eccles [in alphabetical order]

30. Ah whither shall I fly? [from *The Princess of Persia*]	?
31. All things seem deaf to my complaints [from *The Pretenders*]	1698
32. Amintor's warmth declines you say [from *The Match at Bedlam*]	after 1700
33. Behold ye powers, this bleeding fair [from *Don Carlos, Prince of Spain–revival*]	1694
34. By those pigsneyes [from *The Richmond Heiress*]	1693
35. Find me a lonely cave [from *The Villain*]	1698
36. Haste give me wings [from *The Fickle Shepherdess*]	1703
37. Help, ye powers divine [from *The Husband, his own cuckold*]	1696
38. I burn, I burn [from *Don Quixote Part II*]	1694
39. If I hear Orinda swear [from *Love Betrayed*]	1703
40. I'll hurry thee hence [from *Justice Busy*]	1699
41. Love's but the frailty of the mind [from *The Way of the World*]	1700
42. Oh! Take him gently from the pile [from *Cyrus the Great*]	1695
43. Restless in thought, disturb'd in mind [from *She ventures and he wins*]	1695
44. Stay, ah, turn, ah, wither would you fly? [from *The Fair Penitent*]	1703
45. Wasted with sighs, I sigh'd [from *The Chances*]	1704

Part Four: Mad songs by Daniel Purcell [in alphabetical order]

46. Alas! When charming Sylvia's gone [from *The Spanish Wives*]	1696
47. Beneath the gloomy shade [from *The Humours of the Age*]	1701
48. Morpheus, thou gentle god [from *Iphigenia*]	1699
49. Rouse ye Gods of the Main [from *The Island Princess*]	1699
50. She walks as she dreams [from *Alexander the Great*]	1701
51. Thou gay, thou cruel maid [from *The Fop's Fortune*]	1700
52. 'Tis vain, in vain to fly	?
53. 'Twas night, and all the village wrapp'd in sleep	?

Part Five: Songs and ayres in the opera call'd The Mad Lover [1700].
All the music is by John Eccles

54. Overture, Aire (i), Aire (ii), Slow Aire, Aire (iii), Jigg, Aire (iv), Aire (v), Aire (vii)
55. Advance gay tenants of the plain
56. Cease of Cupid to complain [two versions]
57. Come ye nymphs and every swain
58. Know I've sworn, and swear again
59. Let all be gay, let pleasure reign
60. Must then a faithful lover go?
61. Proud women I scorn you
62. Who would be made a wife?

Part Six: Other examples of mad songs after 1700

Title	Composer
63. Reason, what art thou?	John Weldon
64. In vain I hope to find relief	John Wilford
65. I'm Old Mad Tom, behold me	Anon.
66. Barefoot and headbare, his blanket tight	Anon.
67. In my triumphant chariot hurl'd	George Hayden
68. I love to madness, rave t'enjoy	Mr. de la Sale

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The Fair Singer:

A Survey of a Genre of English 17th-Century Song

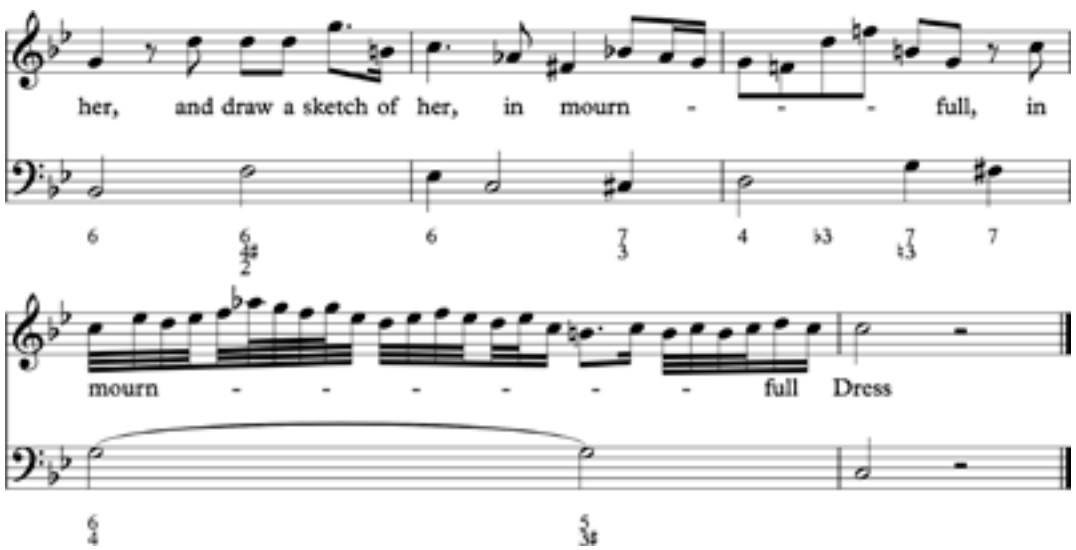
This exploration dwells on the 17th-century English repertoire that eulogises the feminine archetype: a young woman who not only possesses physical beauty—hair, forehead, eyes, teeth, mouth, lips, tongue, chin, neck, breasts, hands and feet are all mentioned frequently by the poets—but also sings exquisitely, often to her own accompaniment, with a ravishing touch upon the lute. The poets are mostly, but not invariably, male.

The singing of a vocally gifted woman has excited the imagination of the auditor—male and female alike—for thousands of years, much like the female nude body has for the aesthetic observer. There are, of course, forerunners to the 17th-century "fair singer" archetype: the mediaeval culture of courtly love, which revolved around the figure of an unattainable lady graced with physical and intellectual beauty, skilled in performing a good lais (I mean, of course, a mediaeval roundelai); or the extraordinary cortegiane of Venice in the middle of the 16th century, adept at performing lays of all kinds.

What separates the poems surveyed here from the common mass of verse praising female beauty is the dwelling on the effect of the female singer's voice on the hearer. It raises up the spirits, excites the soul, allows one to glimpse the heavenly choir and even to transcend death itself, if but for a moment of inspired ecstasy! In some instances, her hand's delicate touch upon the lute increases that upward movement of spirit, the mind soaring into realms undreamed. Here is a taste of the mystery we are about to explore: an irregular Ode "On Mistress Arabella Hunt Singing". The inspired poet is William Congreve, in a particularly transcendental frame of mind and in a style of exaggerated writing that can only be described as replete high-baroque virtuosity:

> Let all be hushed, each softest motion cease,
> Be every loud tumultuous thought at peace
> And every ruder gasp of breath
> Be calm as in the arms of Death.
> And thou most fickle, most uneasy part,
> Thou, restless Wanderer, my Heart,
> Be still; gently, ah gently, leave,
> Thou busy, idle thing, to heave
> Stir not a pulse; and let my blood,
> That turbulent and unruly flood,
> Be softly stayed:
> Let me be all, but my attention, dead.
> Go, rest, unnecessary springs of Life,
> Leave your officious toil and strife;
> For I would hear her Voice, and try
> If it be possible to die.

Figure 1: Sigismond Cousser, "Long have I fear'd"



What happens when such an artist, in an all-too mortal body, actually dies? Mistress Arabella Hunt did, in 1705; the same adoring poet, William Congreve, penned a simple four-line epitaph:

> Were there on Earth another Voice like thine,
> Another Hand so blest with Skill Divine!
> The late afflicted World some Hopes might have,
> And Harmony retrieve thee from the Grave.

This conciseness contrasts starkly with the style of his previous eulogy, indulgent in its prolixity and revelling in its virtuosity. Her death meant more than the loss of an admired singer, for Congreve and Hunt enjoyed an intimacy of a very personal kind—they were perhaps not lovers, but close and mutually supportive confidants.

The brevity of the epigram also contrasts with the one musical elegy lamenting Arabella's death; it is an extended work of great power and quite liberated imagination. The German-born composer Sigismond Cousser was travelling through London on his way to Dublin at the moment of her death and provided a vocal masterpiece, "Long have I fear'd" as a tribute to her skills. The style of composing reflects all the features of music performance Arabella was famed for—high tessitura, elaborate roulades and tortuously difficult ornamentation and expressive of mood and mode. It is her own elegy, as she might have sung it to the choiring angels in heaven, to whom she had so frequently been compared.

1

This is a kind of an end to a tradition: a century of praising women—idealised, imagined, or real—and their legendary skills in performance. The genre continues, in a dilute fashion, into the 19th century. More will be said of the long, slow decline into sentimentality later: for now, let us turn to this tradition's beginnings, to a style altogether simpler, though no less sophisticated.

For much of the 17th century, the epigram in lyric poetry held sway; the art was to conceal art, to give the impression that this or that simple morsel was a tossed-off, unconsidered trifle, created in a careless moment, an improvised nothing. Yet every syllable was gauged, every interval balanced, every rhythm tempered: this "Zen-in-the-art-of-the-lute-song" also held sway in performance. This is the era of art improving on nature, where immense scholarship of the ancients was hidden from view and seemingly casual brilliance shone as though every nuance had come directly inspired. The intensity of poetic and musical creativity at this time is almost beyond our imagining. The monster Ignorance lurked at every step, to swallow the hard-won learning of True Knowledge—the only efficacious means of stemming the rising tide of Ignorance. True Knowledge was a female personification; sometimes called "Sophia" (or the lover of wisdom), sometimes "Musica", one of the seven liberal arts, all female. Ignorance was a malcontent serpent, less than human and male.

Figure 2: Thomas Campion, "When to her lute Corinna sings"

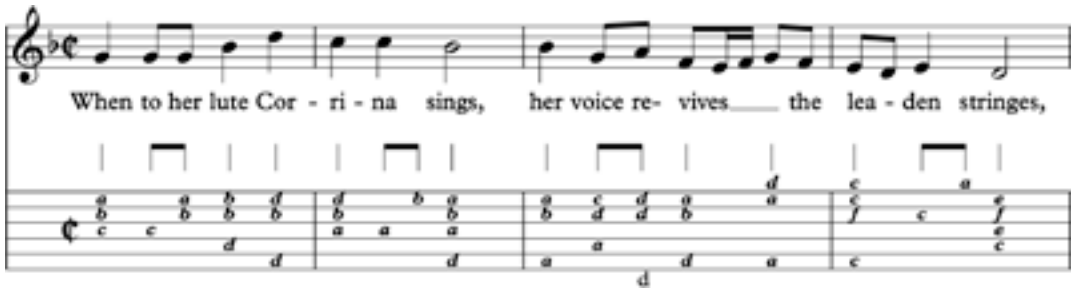
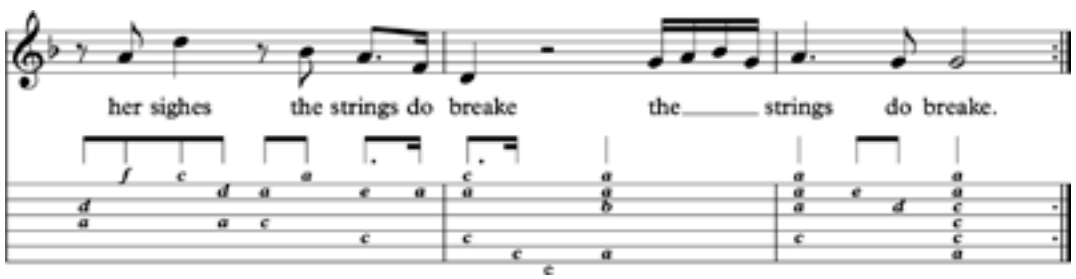


Figure 3: Campion, "When to her lute"



The psychology of the long tradition of personification is subtle and direct at the same time. It sounds often naïve to our minds, trained on Freudian and other 20th-century psychological thought: we would however do well to watch for the Serpent at our backs, for the rising tide of Ignorance has not abated much in 400 years!

The new Humanism, Platonism, Hermeticism, Gnosticism, Rosicrucianism and plain, downright Commonsense-ism immensely enriched the mediaeval world of thought throughout the 16th-century. One of the outstanding heirs to this synthesising process was Thomas Campion—a true Renaissance man, at whose feet Ignorance writhed abjectly. He was a poet, a composer, a classical scholar of distinction and a Doctor of Physic: indeed, he was doctor to Prince Henry himself and therefore must have been thought of as one the finest physicians in the land! Campion's innocent little song, published in 1601, called "When to her Lute Corinna sings" is the modest start of the vogue we are exploring. Nothing along these lines existed in England, or anywhere else in Europe, before that time. Campion got the idea specifically from Propertius, who in his Second Ode recalls the ancient writings of Corinna, a female author from Boetia, active at the same time as Orpheus, playing upon the Aeolian Harp. Propertius was, of course, profoundly influenced by Ovid, who in his Amores continually addressed Corinna in his erotic imaginings. Ovid was widely read and appreciated in the Elizabethan world of letters, and therefore familiar to Thomas Campion.

2

The ethos is established immediately by Campion with his artless melisma on the word "revives". Speech rhythms dictate the pace of the poem's setting, but melodic contours heighten the poetic message. A touch of humour that would surely have been enjoyed by ancient Corinna is displayed at the words "her strings do break" (pause whilst the lutenist finds his bottom F sharp!). This gesture obeys the first rule of a good epigram: the last half-line must reveal a surprise that reinterprets the entire poem. It is a beguilingly simple song, unaffected in its precise diction and unequalled in its subtlety.

3

Cousser and Campion's settings define, I think, the timeframe for the tradition of praising the "fair singer" in song: 1601 to 1705. The appendix contains a list of the songs I consider as belonging to that tradition. We have set the artistic extremes of this trend—from almost prudish simplicity to outrageous excess, both in the poetry and in the musical response. I suggest that there will be an equal framework to be defined in the performance styles of these outer limits, though that is more difficult to pin down.

Tracing the chronology of the tradition immediately after Campion's "When to her lute Corina sings" is challenging, for source materials are at best sketchy. There is little more at this time, and up to 1621, in the printed repertoire of the lute-song genre, a fine exception being a Thomas Greaves song "Shaded with Olive trees sate Celestina singing", published in 1604. The poem is delightful in the way it weaves feminine graces, nature and eroticism together; it owes much, I think, to the inspiration of Ovid:

Shaded with Olive trees sate Celestina singing,
Than the warbling birdes, more sweet harmony ringing;
With curious cost
That gold embost,
Her fingers duelie placed;
Whiles voice and hand
Both at command,
Each other truly graced
Thus using time
Not loosing time,

Right well apaide
Shee closed her ditty
With 'Oh 'tis pretty
To live a maide!

The manuscript sources give but a faint reflection of a living tradition. Presumably, Campion's erudition and inspiration had some offspring, but nothing we can now trace directly. Mute lacunae are our only reference, until certain chance-finds in manuscripts from around 1620.

"My Mistress is in Musicke passinge skilfull" is an anonymous song of considerable cunning from around that time. It begins by appearing to extol the musical virtues and skills of the poet's adored lady, but actually becomes, over several stanzas, a piece of eroticism thinly disguised in musical terms. Verse one begins:

My Mistress is in music passing skillful
And sings and plays her part at the first sight.
But in her play she is exceeding willful
And will not play but for her own delight
Nor touch a string nor play a pleasing strain
Unless you catch her in a merry vein.

The poet pretends to be a man at the limits of his sexual endurance, whilst his mistress has an insatiable appetite from which he begs relief. Sure, every man's fantasy! The simple syllabic setting plays to this fantasy and relies on the performer to bring innuendo. To that extent this setting obeys Campion's desire for artless simplicity, though he might not have enjoyed the drift of the poem. Verse three says:

And then you win her heart, but here's the spite:
You cannot get her for to play alone,
But play you with her and she'll play all night
And next day too, or else 'tis ten to one,
And run division with you in such sort,
Run ne'er so fast, she'll make you come too short.

The date of this innocent lyric is about 1620, though it sounds rather modern, don't you think?

At about the same time, "You that have that dainty ear" was being vocalised and developed: however, the vocal ornamentation there smacks more of the last years of the 16th century with its rapid passeggiati, redolent of Venetian cornett or violin players. More up to date, though from about 1630, is the anonymous "Sing Syren, though thy notes bring death". This poem directly recalls Campion's lyric, with the metaphor of the "heart strings" breaking—perhaps a commonplace by this time but still effective. There are not so many other uses of it in the intervening twenty years to suggest that the figure of speech had lost much of its elasticity.

Sing, Siren, though thy notes bring death.
Perfume the air with thy sweet breath.
The winds are still and river stays,
Delighted with thy pleasing lays.
The gods do listen and Love swears
You drown the Music of the Spheres.

You turn cold winter to the spring
And hearing you, swans die to sing.
The hearts revive that you have slain
And wounded lovers lose their pain.
Whilst I and Love these wonders speak
The trebles of my heart-strings break.

A new departure occurs with the next song in chronological order (see appendix)—a dynamic setting, full of breathless energy and speech rhythms, by William Lawes, "It is her voice! Dear Mistress, sweetest".

It is her voice, dear mistress, sweetest heart,
My little pretty jug, jug, jug, where art?
From that watch-tower, with thorny pikes bespread,
Descend to me on this soft flower-wrought bed;
And let a thousand love songs fill mine ears
With sharps and flats of stranger joys than fears.

The primrose, paigle, cowslip, violet
With heads just nodding to keep time are met.
This tuneful stream shall bear a part with thee,
Or groan forth deep-sighed grounds of woes for me,
Who fear thou'lt leave me, and no more by singing
Breathe airy souls in mortals ever springing.

The poem itself is quite complex and ambivalent on one point: is the adored mistress being addressed directly, wrapped in a mantle of natural imagery, or is nature herself the mistress? The ambivalence is nicely judged and not resolved; Lawes' music applies the quandary. All that is needed is a performer equal to that subtle double play, one who can maintain the poetic fallacy. The second William Lawes song on the list likewise exploits nervous energy in the musical setting; in fact, it is characterised by rapid movement forward, only for each phrase to be suspended on the last syllable, as though "hung out to dry". The Cavalier Wits required such peremptory haste and pausing, for the diction is all of effect and surprise. William Lawes was a suitable musical partner for those games.

His brother's songs, though, are more complex—if only because he lived a fuller life, not cut short by pointless bravura military action. A whole cluster of poems which delight in extolling the mistress's musical accomplishments are to be found in Henry's compositions. There appear to be eight "fair singer" songs in all. To get closer to an understanding of the burgeoning of songs on the "fair singer" theme through the 1630s it is necessary to look more closely at the poetry and at the poetic circle which created the lyrics. Furthermore, there are several poems on the theme not set at the time, either by Henry Lawes, or anyone else, which it would be of interest to examine, for they cover a variety of aspects of the topic. What were the social pressures that encouraged such a sudden flourishing of this genre, when so little of it had existed before? Why did the Cavalier Poets return so frequently to the theme? Who were these songs for and in what circumstances was their performance enjoyed? By the time Henry Lawes' songs were published in the early 1650s, music-making had, through necessity, become a private thing—performances in private houses, to a small devoted coterie, where ladies could enjoy and contribute to performance quite as much as men. Indeed, within the circle around Katherine Phillips, the poetess known as "the Matchless Orinda", not only poetry but performance too was provided by women. It would appear that the singer Mary Knight is one of the first performers for whom it would seem we can provide a name. The song, a setting of a poem by Thomas Carew, is given a tantalising title in its published form: "Upon the Hearing Mrs. Mary Knight Sing".

You that think love can convey
No other way
But through the Eye into the heart
His fatal dart;
Close up those Casements, and but hear this Syren sing,
And on the wings

Of her clear voyce it will appear
That Love can enter at the Ear.

Then unveil your Eyes, behold
The Curious mold
Where that voyce dwells: and as we know
When the Cocks crow
We freely may
Gaze on the day,
So may you when the Musick's done,
Awake and see the Rising Sun.

The identification of the "fair singer" as Mrs. Knight is not unproblematic: in 1674 John Evelyn mentions in his diary a "Mrs Knight, who sung incomparably, & doubtlesse has the greatest reach of any English Woman: she had lately ben roming in Italy; & was much improv'd in that quality". By the time of this entry, Mrs. Knight had become one of the King's mistresses, and received a pension of £200 per annum. Thomas Carew, however, had penned the poem by 1640 (his death in that year also saw the publication of his collected poems). Henry Lawes' setting was not published until 1669, in the second volume of *The Treasury of Musick* but must have been composed quite early, as it is included in Lawes' autograph manuscript. Carew's own title for this poem was "Celia singing" where his use of the name Celia was none specific, for his profligate affairs were referred to under the generic pastoral name, covering any one of his amours. A fine example is his long erotic poem "A Rapture: I will enjoy thee now my Celia, come" or his outrageously flirtatious "To T.H., a Lady Resembling My Mistress: Fair copy of my Celia's face". The strong likelihood is, therefore, that the poem and subsequent song gathered their connection to Mary Knight much later, towards the publication date of 1669, for a thirty-year interval is too great a period for the original Celia and Mary Knight to be one and the same.

The setting by Lawes follows the difficult diction of the poem very well. Carew's poetry was intended for declamation and enjoyed a complex rhetorical style. This required considerable skill from the composer to transpose this declamatory essence into a satisfactory music. Henry Lawes was a consummate master in this matter, which earned him just praise from several of his contemporary poets, though it is this speech-like quality which has in part slowed down the modern-day assessment of his worth. We instinctively look for melodic contour and harmonic interest, features with which we are familiar from the later generation of Henry Purcell. At first, Henry Lawes appears dry and academic: only singers tuned into the poetic metre of the time can do justice to his subtle range of setting. Rhetorical flourishes must inform the performance as much as the poetry and music for this style to live.

Another of Thomas Carew's poems addressed to Celia is of great interest. There are various titles for this poem, in different sources. Carew's title is "Celia singing", but another source simply has "On a lady singing to the Lute". Even more specific is the rubric "Upon Celia singing in the vault at Yorkhouse". York House had a long gallery,

adorned with paintings of great dynastic interest. Yet another manuscript title amplifies this: "On his Mistress singing in a Gallery". Lawes never printed this song setting, yet its popularity is attested by four manuscript versions, more than most other songs of the era. We are close here to an actual performance, by an actual "fair singer", rather than an idealised abstraction. Still, we cannot pinpoint the individual.

A pair of songs by Henry Lawes to poems by Edmund Waller also belong to the period around 1640, though they were not published until 1653: "While I listen to thy voice, Chloris" would seem to allude to a specific person. The continuation, the next song in the 1653 print, is headed: "To the same Lady, singing the former Song". Waller's two poems must be referring to a particular personality, but to whom? Meanwhile, in verse of this nature and in settings of this quality there is very refined courtship of an elevated nature. Were the poems written before or after the seduction? What part did the performances of these intimate jewels play in advancing the poet's (or, by proxy) the patron's desires? The second song, the riposte, is headed by Waller "To a Lady Singing a Song of His Composing", yet Henry Lawes's edition is more specific: "To the same Lady, singing the former Song". Further detailed research might here uncover the lady's identity. That would be rewarding.

Matthew Locke, who bridged the difficult years of the Interregnum (I still wonder at his audacity in setting and mounting the masque *Cupid and Death* in 1653, where Death is a thinly disguised allegory of Sir Oliver Cromwell!) and whose music is typified by a nervous energy, leaves us just one "fair singer" song. The lyric is attractive and contains themes explored by later poets. It is entitled:

To a Lady Singing to Herself by the Thames-Side

Sing forth sweet Cherubim, for we have choice
Of Reason in thy beauty and thy voice,
To call thee so, and not appear profane;
Sing forth, that while the Orbs celestial strain
To echo thy sweet note, our human ears
May then receive the Music of the Spheres:
But yet take heed, lest that the Swans of Thames,
That add harmonious pleasure to the Streams
O'th' sudden hear thy well-divided breath,
Should listen, and in silence welcome Death;
And ravish'd Nightingales, striving too high
To reach thee, in the emulation die:
And thus there will be left no bird to sing
"Farewell to th'Winter, Welcome Spring".

The extravagant conceit of this lyric, thoroughly Baroque in its unbelievable exaggeration, is the herald of a new style of lyric verse extolling the skills of these gifted women, now actual women we can identify and name. How did these talented creatures cope with this kind of inflated compliment? As far as we can tell, at this

distance in time, they loved it, found it endearing and humorous; they also played up to it skilfully. After all, it meant continual interest in their every breath, from some of the wealthiest noblemen around. A particularly personal form of patronage flourished in the last 25 years of the 17th century.

We have now moved on to the time of the creation of the poem that I have chosen to identify this genre of encomia: Andrew Marvell's "The Fair Singer", published in 1681, which itself both defined the mode and manner of praise and caused a new outpouring of songs.

The Fair Singer

To make a final conquest of all me,
Love did compose so sweet an Enemy,
In whom both Beauties to my death agree,
Joyning themselves in fatal Harmony;
That while she with her Eyes my Heart does bind,
She with her Voice might captivate my Mind.

I could have fled from One but singly fair,
My disentangled Soul itself might save,
Breaking the curled trammels of her hair.
But how should I avoid to be her Slave,
Whose subtle Art invisibly can wreath
My Fetters of the very Air I breathe?

It had been easy fighting in some plain,
Where Victory might hang in equal choice,
But all resistance against her is vain,
Who has th'advantage both of Eyes and Voice,
And all my Forces needs must be undone,
She having gained both the Wind and Sun.

Both of these last poems share imagery drawn from that First Lady of singing, Dame Nature. Her little birds, her elements, the wind, sun, seasons and, above all else, the rolling spheres that make up her firmament all join in making a music divine. There is an underlying elemental philosophy here, which holds the key to understanding the daily practical stuff of patronage and noblemen flirting with their latest "moll". Something deeper emerges, an animistic connection with creation that is profoundly pagan, in the way that ancient Greek drama connects with the taproot of the force of creativity itself. Is not the tendency to deify femininity an innate desire in mankind, bucking the trend towards a patriarchal view of creation espoused by these younger upstart religions of recent times? Even our science-ordered world smacks of a patronal hierarchy where women, to succeed, have to act like men and thereby deny their essential anima, vital to our well-being, harmony and balance.

It was in 1692, in The Gentlemen's Journal that the most famous "fair singer" song known today was first published: "If Music be the food of Love", an opening line by Shakespeare, continued by one Colonel Heveningham and set to music by Henry Purcell in the first of two quite different settings. Ironically, this oh-so English song is almost certainly in praise of an exotic visitor from Italy, the brilliant Francesca Margherita de l'Epine, known fondly as "La Margarita", or "the Pearl". It seems that Colonel Heveningham had developed a passion for this donna gentile, for other poems in her praise are set during the next few years. The lyric understood in this context becomes a highly charged seduction piece perhaps not quite so suitable for all the young budding sopranos as their singing teachers, in their ignorance, have led them to think!

A few months later, in 1693, another poem was set, this time by Ralph Courtville, the poet being named as Mr. Heningham (which I take to be one and the same as the previous poet, "Colonel Heveningham"). His passion for this Italian visitor must have been a burning ardour; perhaps he was paying to have songs set and sung to draw him to her attention. In this poem he very specifically locates Italy as the place from which his adored hails:

A Song on the Italian Woman

Where Phaebus with his kindest look
Visits his Neighbours all the year;
That place this Beauteous Nymph forsook
To entertain and warm us here:
So the sweet Choristers of Air,
Who long have felt his scorching heat,
To Sylvan scenes of Woods repair,
And there in shades their Songs repeat.

With this specific identification of a woman who can be biographically identified, although she was a foreigner, we move into a new phase of the "fair singer" genre. From this point for the next ten years or so, numerous texts may be identified in one of three categories: generalised eulogies, songs in praise of the actress Mistress Anne Bracegirdle and songs in praise of the Royal Court singer and lutenist, Mistress Arabella Hunt. Out of around thirty-three songs on the theme (a vast increase in number from all previous decades), about fourteen appear to be for Arabella; twelve appear to be for Anne ; the rest were either intended for one or two other known singers (two for Mrs. Tofts and one for Mrs. Erwin) or were generalised eulogies, the object of which it is not possible to determine with certainty. Since the purpose of this exposition is to survey the totality of "fair singer" songs, I will briefly discuss the two "stars"—Arabella and Anne—by choosing pieces which are consummate examples of their encomia.

They both share "eyes" and "angels" as their emblems of adoration. Anne frequently enjoyed moving her listeners with the spoken voice (always never less than melodious) and with her moving scenes—moments theatrical where she took the stage in still postures, a kind of balletic mime perhaps. Arabella, on the other hand, used silence well, had stillness of posture, grace and, above all, a very high tessitura: it is easy to tell a Hunt piece based on its range, which Bracegirdle could never have managed. Songs in praise, even if not for the subject to sing, typically employed the mode and manners appropriate to the person addressed. Anne was always virginal, pure, unattainable; Arabella soft, yielding and welcoming. All of these attributes have real-life biography behind them, so that the personality of the two stars was woven into their pastoral performing personalities. This changed a little in the early 1700s, when Anne began to attract gossip. One anonymous poem, set to music by Daniel Purcell, would appear to be in praise of Anne, but ends with a gossipy, decidedly bitchy tone:

So fair young Celia's Charms you'd swear,
The blooming Spring whose sweets were there.
And then She dres't with Plumes so gay,
As ev'n outshined the day.
But when she play'd and when She Sung,
On her Sweet Voice, what Raptur's hung?
She chanted that melodious Ayre
You'd think a Quire of Angels there.
Why all this Virgin pains and cost
Is but to have her Heart well lost:
Our best-tun'd Spheres of Beauty move
Only to set a price on love;
We dress, we plume, we Sing we play,
And all to give our Hearts away.

A few pieces are clearly ascribed to one or the other singer: these provide, with careful analysis, the images and references that allow us to identify the larger repertoire of songs not so specifically identified.

Table 1: A comparison of defining traits, features and references used to refer to Anne Bracegirdle and Arabella Hunt

Mistress Anne Bracegirdle	Mistress Arabella Hunt
A Virgin	Of Sapphic persuasion
Hard-hearted in Love	Soft responses
Bright eyes	Soft melodiousness
Aloof	Bright eyes
Pride	Her hand and touch sublime
Enchanting Voice	The Lute
Charming Face	"Trembling strings"
Fair Face	sympathetic vibrations
Her Breath gives Bliss	heart strings respond
Her breath carries our every thought	Fingers move skilfully
Her adorers become "slaves"	Heavenly Voice
Those who hear her become wounded with sweetness	A "careless" touch (that is, easy) Without pretension, natural
Music lives on her tongue	Angels crowd to hear her
Quick-witted	Use of silence
Spoken words are tuneful	Soft words, sweet notes
A thousand Cupids hover or wait on her	Eloquence
Even harsh words seem sweet	Sweet toned
Longing for her to bestow love	Blest by Dame Nature
Can Charm the entire Age	Blooming
The Queen of Love	Warbling lute
Appeals to all the Senses	Cherubim
Sounds like an Angel	Amazed Angels
A "Quire of Angels" attend her	Enchantment
Abundance of Nature's Treasure	A beautiful mind
Plumed headdresses	Alluring Wit
Her acting excels	Skill
The Air is delighted to receive her song	Heavenly Art
She is both Venus and Diana [!]	Powerful Tongue
Charming mien	Lovely Charmer Inspires with Love
Her movement is full of grace	Greater than Orpheus
Her speech is like song	Lips for Kissing
Her singing is like the Muses'	Lofty
Burning images [reference to Eccles' "I burn"]	

Pastoral Names given in Song Lyrics

Anne
Annabell; Celia; Celinda; Cloe; Cloris; Cynthia; Marcella; Myra; Ophelia

Arabella
Amanda; Angelina; Clarona; Corinna; Milanda; Syren

The pastoral names given to "fair singers" from the beginning of the mode first expressed by Campion in 1601 revolved around a few names and were mainly of Greek origin. Interestingly, the songs certainly ascribable to Anne Bracegirdle or to Arabella Hunt never confuse the two women by giving them the same formal pastoral name. This separateness of identity continues through the songs, almost equal in number, I feel can be ascribed to one or the other.

For the sake of brevity, I now leave these two charming "fair singers" and continue with the tradition after their day: it did not dry up, but some of its sap was vaporised into pretty confection, as the following anonymous poem from 1740 shows:

When the bright god of day
"Love and Music"

When the bright God of day,
Drove to westward each ray,
And the Evening was Charming and clear,
The Swallows amain,
Nimbly skim o'er the Plain,
And our Shadows like Giants appear.

In a Jessamin Bower,
Where the Bean was in Flower,
And Zephyr breath'd Odours around,
Lovely Sylvia was set,
With a Song and Spinnet,
To charm all the Grove with the Sound.

'Rosy Bowers' she sung,
While the Harmony rung,
And the Birds all flutt'ring arrive.
The industrious Bees,
From the Flowers and Trees,
Gently hum with the Sweets to their Hives.

The gay God of love,
As he rang'd o'er the Grove,
By Zephyr conducted along,
As she touch'd o'er the Strings'
He beat time with his Wings,
And Echo repeated the Song.

Oh ye Rovers beware,
How you venture too near,
Love is doubly arm'd for to Wound,
Your Fate you can't shun,
And you're surely undone,
If you rashly approach near the Sound.

By now the idea of the "fair singer" was a dream recalled; the theatres waxed strong with new generations of brilliant actors and actresses from the 1740s; though new sopranos stole the hearts, this elegant culture of adoration was somehow diluted. In plays where a "lute" was regarded as an essential prop for poetic purposes, the actress simply mimed her way through, often with the lyric spoken.

With the advent in England of the Pre-Raphaelite artistic movement and the revived passion for things classical from the 1840s, a new perception of femininity was encouraged, at least in the bohemian artistic circles. The "femme fatale", "Circe", "the Syrens"—all dangerous women—fascinated this circle of brilliantly creative, decidedly indulgent male fantasizers. But they were particularly bewitched by their imaginings of the ladies on the Isle of Lesbos, in pre-Homeric times. Feminine charms, magic, wiles, skills and performing arts were all fed by overactive male imaginations, within the context of what was a truly repressed society all around. These artistic enclaves adopted wholly different mores from the peer society, the anguishing, repressive tendencies of which actually gave birth to the beginnings of the pornographic industry and, thus, double standards.

I have briefly traced the tradition of praise of the "fair singer" in English song, from its roots in Jacobean England to its late ramifications, dilution and ultimate metamorphosis in the 19th century. The context for this tradition, which I would like to recall in closing is, of course, the utterly universal praise of the female form in inspired performance. It is a tradition of exalting as ancient as it is cross-cultural, showing us how profoundly elemental the need is for its open expression and flowering manifestation. Without the "fair singer", Man—that is, Humanity—would be awfully wretched and infinitely the poorer.

APPENDIX

The Fair Singer
A Checklist of Songs on this Theme

Title	Composer, Poet and Date
1. When to her lute Corinna sings	Thomas Campion, 1601
2. Shaded with Olive trees	Thomas Greaves, 1604
3. My Mistress is in Music passing skillful	Anon., ca. 1620
4. You that have that dainty ear	Anon., ca. 1625
5. Sing, Siren, though thy notes bring death	Anon., ca. 1625
6. It is her voice! Dear Mistress, sweetest	William Lawes, ca. 1630
7. Had you but heard her sing	William Lawes, ca. 1635
8. Speak you that hear, now Cloris sings	John Wilson, ca. 1635
9. Cease not, thou heav'nly-voiced creature	John Jenkins, ca. 1635
10. While I listen to thy voice Cloris ["To a Lady singing"]	Henry Lawes, ca. 1640
11. Cloris, yourself you so excell ["To the same Lady, singing the former Song"]	Henry Lawes, ca. 1640
12. Celia, thy bright Angel's face ["The Caelestiall Mistress"]	Henry Lawes, ca. 1653
13. Till I beheld fair Caelia's face	Henry Lawes, ca. 1653
14. Sing, fair Clorinda (a3)	Henry Lawes, ca. 1653
15. Strike, sweet Licoris ["On the soft and gentle Motions of Eudora"]	Henry Lawes, ca. 1653
16. Hark how my Celia	Henry Lawes, Thomas Carew, ca. 1645
17. You that think love can convey ["Upon the Hearing Mrs. Mary Knight Sing"]	Henry Lawes, Thomas Carew, 1669
18. Have you e're seen the morning sun	Henry Lawes, 1669
19. Yes, 'tis Cloris sings ["Cloris Singing"]	Henry Lawes, Henry Reynolds, 1655
20. Sing forth sweet Cherubim ["To a Lady singing to herself by the Thames-side"]	Matthew Locke, William Babington
21. Fair Cloris chaunts it in such sort	George Holmes, 1672
22. O Delia! For I know 'tis she ["A Pastoral Dialogue: Celadon on Delia's Singing"]	William Gregorie, 1676
23. Ah! Lay by your lute	James Hart, 1681
24. Whilst I in Shades was musing	Anon., 1681
25. Draw out the Minutes	John Blow, 1681
26. When first Celinda blest mine Eyes	Isaac Blackwell, 1681
27. Whilst Cynthia sang	Henry Purcell, 1685
28. How like Elizium is the Grove	Robert King, 1687
29. Methinks I hear the charming sound	Samuel Ackroyde, 1687
30. Methinks I see as well as hear	Signor Baptist, 1687
31. See the lovely Maid	Thomas Tedway, 1687

32. Never Man had in possessing	Francis Forcer, 1690
33. Youth and Beauty fly away	Anon., 1691
34. Wait all ye Graces	Mr Barrincloe, 1692
35. If Musick be the food of Love [1st version]	Henry Purcell, 1695 [Mr. Hevingham]
36. Where Phoebus with his kindest look ["A Song on the Italian Woman"]	Ralph Courtville, Mr Hevingham, 1693
37. Bright Annabell	Mr Turner, 1693 [AB?] *
38. As fair Amoret	Henry Purcell, William Congreve, 1693(?) [AB] **
39. Pious Celinda goes to prayers	Henry Purcell, William Congreve, 1695
40. Whilst I with wounding grief	[AB]
41. Whilst I with grief	Godfrey Finger, 1695 [AB]
42. Whilst you vouchsafe	Henry Purcell, 1695 [AB]
43. If Musick be the food of Love [2nd version]	John Blow, 1695 [AB]
44. When Myra sings	Henry Purcell, Mr Heveningham, 1695
45. Bright Cynthia's Pow'r divine	Henry Purcell, 1695 [AB?]
46. Oh! Lovely Siren ["Sung by Mr. Pate"]	Ralph Courteville, 1696 [AB?]
47. So fair young Celia's charms ["A Song to a Ground. Sung at the Theatre in Drury Lane by Mr Magnus's Boy"]	Jean-Claude Gillier, 1698 [AH?] *** Daniel Purcell, ca. 1698 [AB?]
48. When Young Milandas Fingers move	
49. Behold and listen while the Fair	William Croft, Feb. 1699 [AH?]
50. Cloris your Self you so excel	William Croft, March 1699 [AB?]
51. Such moving sounds	W.T., 1699 [AB?]
52. When Artists hit on Luckey Thoughts ["On the Excellency of Mrs Hunt's Voice, and manner of Singing"]	William Croft, 1699 [AH?] John Blow, 1700 [AH] ****
53. Clarona, lay aside your lute	
54. Ah Heav'n! What is't I hear?	John Blow, 1700 [AH]
55. Cease your enchanting Song	John Blow, 1700 [AH]
56. Tune thy Harmonious Lyre	Mr Frances, May 1700 [AH?]
57. Celia is soft ["Sung by Mrs Erwin"]	Mr Church, June or July 1700 [AH?]
58. When perfect Beauty ["A Song on a lady in Imitation of Mr. Nicola's Manner"]	Jeremiah Clarke, Sept. or Oct. 1700 John Weldon. Nov. or Dec. 1700 [AH?]
59. Ophelia's Air, her Mein, her Face	
60. When charming Teraminta	Mr Berenclow, Nov. or Dec. 1700 [AB?]
61. Panthea all the senses treat	John Weldon, 1701
62. When Cloe sings	John Weldon, 1701
63. Celestial Harmony is in her tongue	John Barrett, 1703 [Mrs. Tofts]
64. What Pain Corinna he endures ["Sung by Mr Elford at the Consort at Richmond"]	Daniel Purcell, 1703 [AH?] John Weldon, 1703 [AH?]
65. When your Angellick Face I'd seen ['On a Beauteous Lady, who had bin playing, before the Author came in']	John Weldon, 1703 [AH?]
66. Cloe is divinely fair [in The Ladies Visiting Day—sung by Mrs Hains]	Jeane-Claude Gillier, 1704 [AH?]
67. What Pains Corinna	Ralph Courteville, 1704 [AH?]
68. Long have I fear'd ["An Ode Elegiacall on the Death of Mrs. Arabella Hunt; the words by Wm. Meres, Esq."]	Sigismund Cousser, 1705 [AH]
69. Listening she turns [in *The British Enchanters*, sung by Mrs. Hodgson]	Mr. Isaac, 1706 [AB]
70. O Nymph all human race excelling	James Truelove, 1708
71. As Cloe, the soft artist of the plain	Daniel Purcell, ca. 1709
72. When fair Malinda grac'd the Plain ["Sung by Mrs Bowman at the Theatre Royal"]	Anthony Young, ca. 1713
73. Little Syren of the Stage	Anon., ca. 1725
74. False thou she be	Gunn, Congreve, ca.1740 [AB]
75. Singing charms the Bless'd above ["On Mira's Singing and Beauty"]	Mr Turner, ca. 1740
76. When the bright God of day ["Love and Music"]	Anon., ca. 1740
77. Tho'Beauty like the Rose ["The Beauty of Polworth Green"]	Anon., ca. 1740
78. When Sylvia strikes [in *The Musical Miscellany*, words by Mr. Dumbleton]	Mr Monro, ca. 1740
79. While I listen to thy voice (Mary) [!]	L. Stevenson, ca.1800

*[AB?]: *songs likely to be about Anne Bracegirdle*
**[AB]: *songs certainly about Anne Bracegirdle*
*** [AH?]: *songs likely to be about Arabella Hunt*
****[AH]: *songs certainly about Arabella Hunt*

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I Saw Fair Cloris Walk Alone

A Study in Text Transmission Over a Hundred Years

I know of no other poem that enjoyed such a long life as “I saw fair Cloris”. In an age when, once set to music, a lyric was no longer of interest, this work is a brilliant exception, having had no fewer than six settings from around 1630 to about 1705, as well as a further century of reprinting life.

The poem was occasioned by an actual, real-life experience back in the 1620s. The poet, William Strode, was commissioned to write this poem by a young “Doctor of Physick”, one Richard Corbett, who desired to court a young lady, Mistress Corbett by name, who later became his wife. The poem is entitled “On a Gentlewoman, walking in the snow”. The young man knew her habits and customs, one of which was a morning walk in the park. On this snowy morning, he espied her from behind a tree and was inspired by a poetic idea; not having a skill with words, he commissioned a poet to turn the inspiration into a lyric.

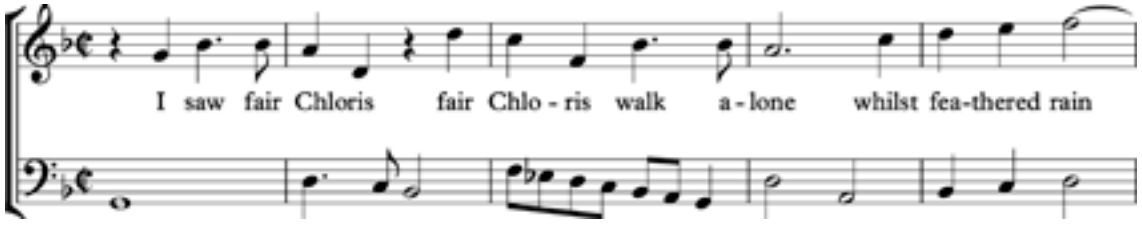
I saw fair Cloris walk alone
Whilst feathered rain came softly down;
And Jove descended from his tower,
To court her in a silver shower.
The wanton snow flew on her breast
Like little birds unto their nest,
But overcome with whiteness there,
For grief it thawed into a tear.
Thence falling on her garment’s hem,
To deck her, froze into a gem.

William Strode (1602–1645)

This charming verse inspired several generations of composers to return to it, so that there survive six different settings over four generations. More than 120 years after the inspiration, the piece was printed with endearing engravings depicting the scene: the park, the snow, the courtship, the young doctor (albeit in 18th-century dress) and, of course, the young lady.

Figure 1: Engraving for "Fair Clora" in George Bickham's *The Musical Entertainer* (1737)

Figure 3: Opening of John Hilton's "I saw fair Chloris"



1

In spite of his temerity, the Doctor must have grown much bolder quite quickly, for he is next depicted, in the springtime by the look of things, hailing his lovely Cloris quite openly.

2

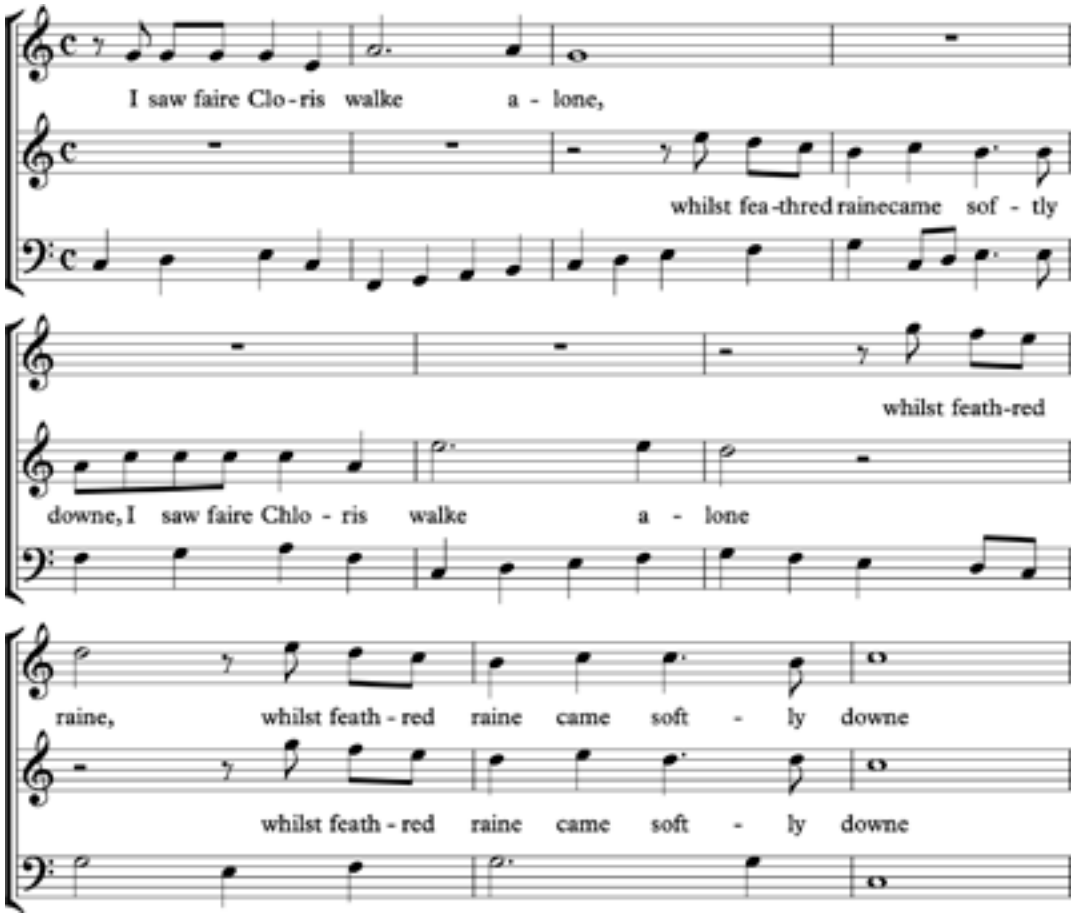
Figure 2: Engraving for "Fair Clora" in George Bickham's *The Musical Entertainer* (1737)

The first setting, by John Hilton, an exquisitely refined piece of song writing, is preserved in two manuscript sources: Bodleian Don. c. 57, fol. 60v and British Library Eg. 2031, fol. 23. The second source is a little clearer, copied in a rather more professional hand: this may be Hilton's autograph.

3

The second setting in chronological order is that of Walter Porter, the only Englishman said to have studied with Claudio Monteverdi in Italy. His music is a pale but beautiful English reflection of that master and deserves to be better known. This lovely duet for two sopranos is a finely constructed minor masterpiece and never ceases to woo a modern audience. He has captured the delicate allure of the poem in a narrative style that is also tuneful.

Figure 4: Opening of Walter Porter's "I saw faire Cloris"

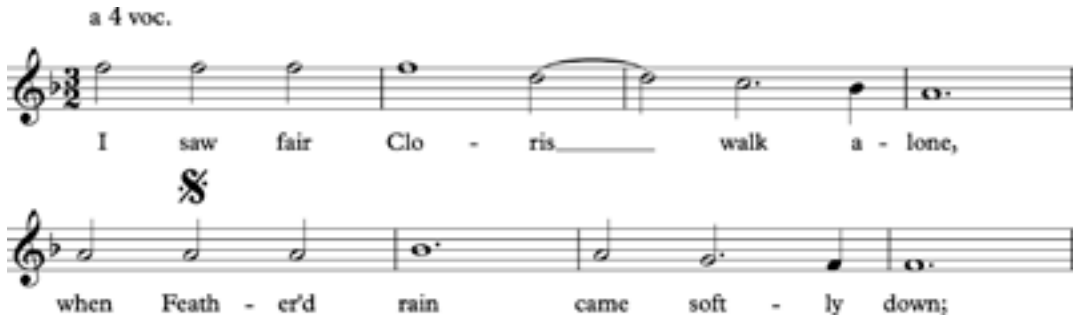


4

The next setting, by Christopher Simpson, first appeared in *The Musical Companion* in 1673 and is very different, being a round for four voices. Henry Lawes' three-part setting, contained in the same publication, is also a round, if a little more complex.

5

Figure 5: Opening of Christopher Simpson's and Henry Lawes' settings of "I saw fair Cloris"



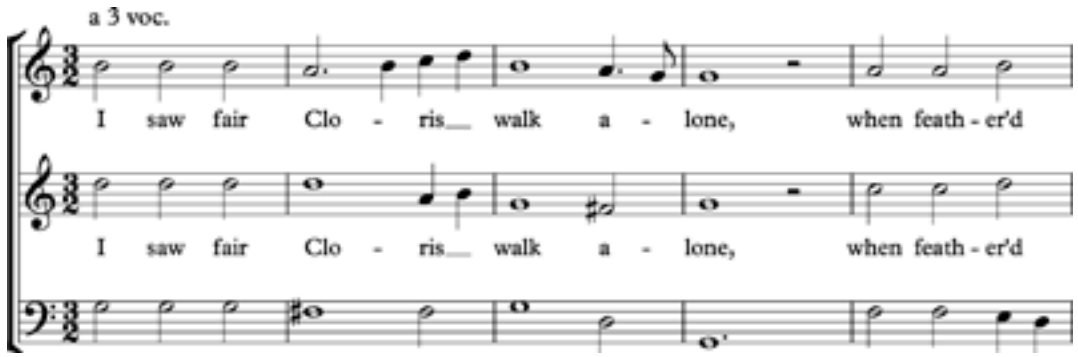


Figure 6: Opening of Purcell's "I saw fair Cloris"

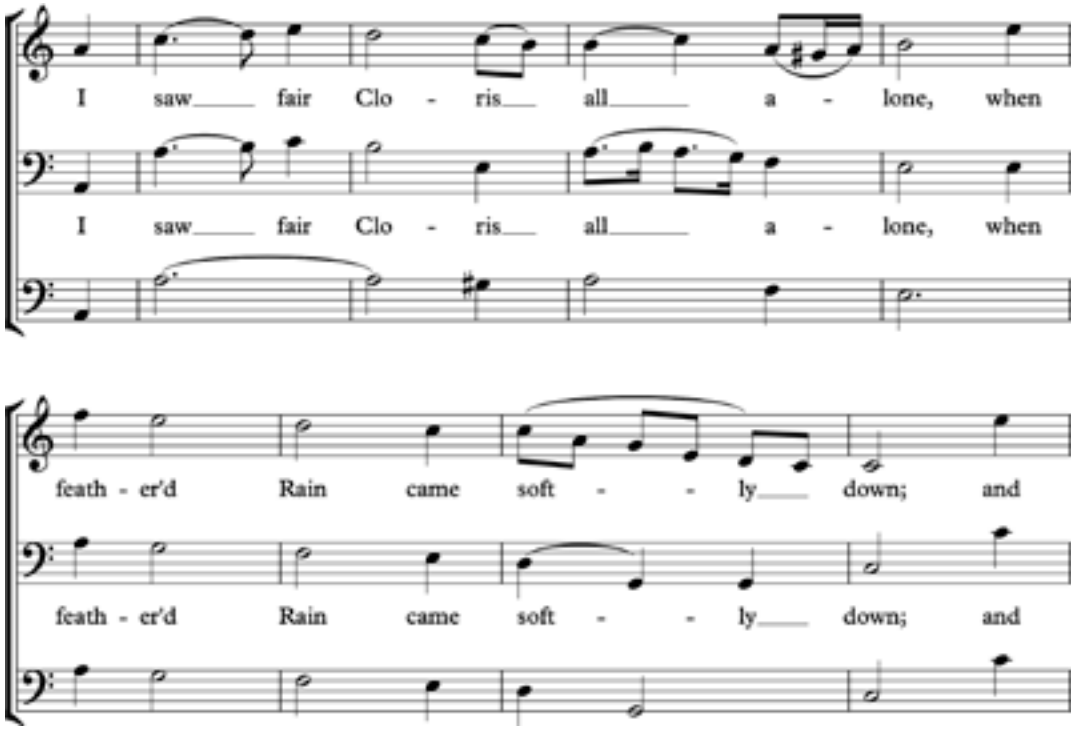
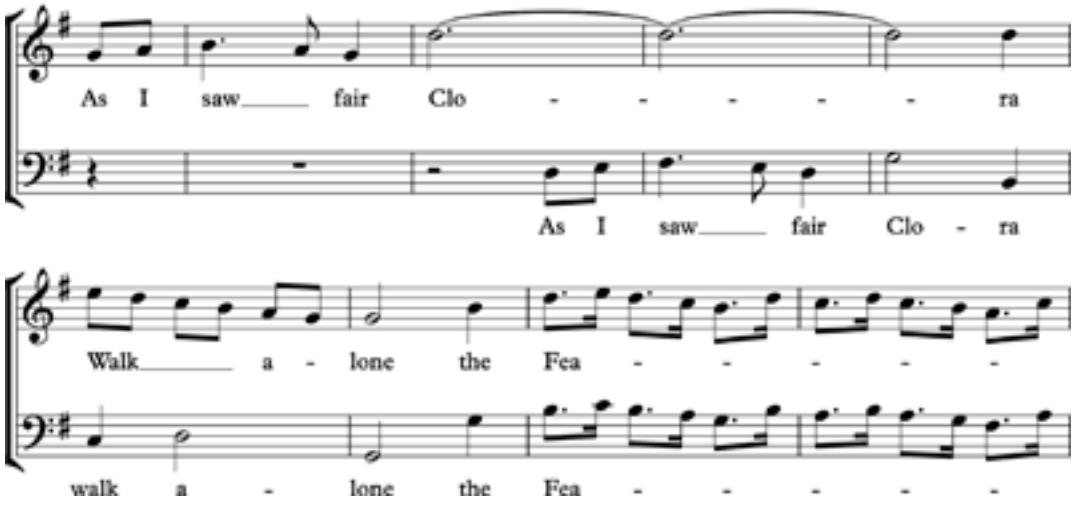


Figure 7: George Hayden, "A Two-Part Song [sung] by Mr Cook and Mr Newberry in the New Theatre" (opening)



Henry Purcell followed the tradition next with a setting in two parts, composed when he was very young, barely older than eighteen:

6

This is a good example of just how much the young Purcell was influenced by the previous generation of Cavalier composers, for Henry Lawes was of a certain age when this piece was created.
George Hayden was of the generation after Henry Purcell; his setting of "I saw fair Clora" (the change from "Cloris" is one of several emendations to the poem) is one of the most sophisticated and beautiful.

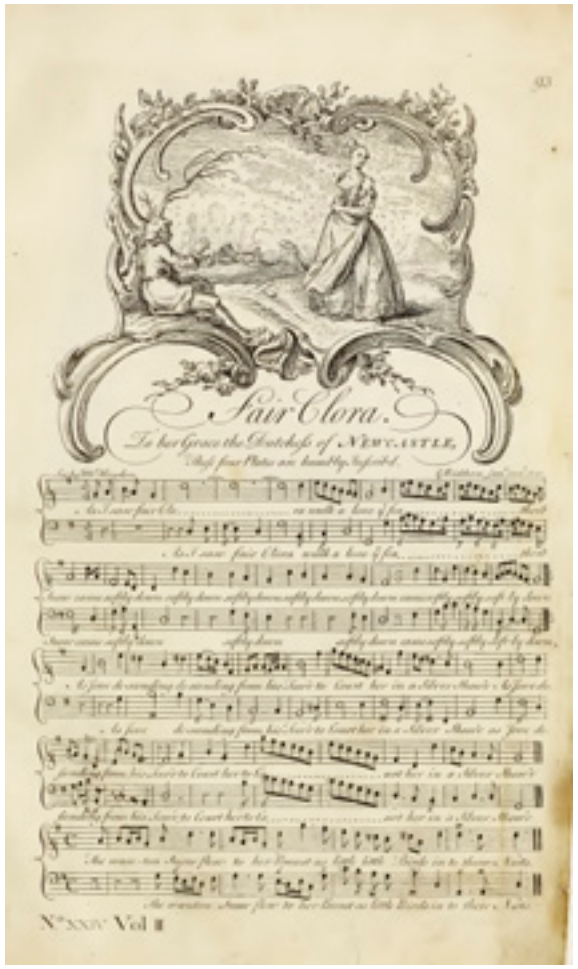
7

This version of the poem, a variation on Strode's original, came out like this:

As I saw fair Clora walk alone,
The feather'd snow came softly down,
As Jove descending from his tow'r,
To court her in a silver show'r.
The wanton snow flew to her breasts,
As little birds into their nests;
But being o'ercome with whiteness there,
For grief, dissolv'd into a tear;
Thence falling on her garments hem,
To her froze into a gem.

Later in the 18th century, the two engravings depicting Cloris and the Doctor discussed above were published in George Bickham's beautifully engraved volumes of music *The Musical Entertainer* (1737). The plates adorn George Hayden's setting of "I saw fair Clora" and are dedicated to "Her Grace the Duchess of Newcastle", herself a kind of later-generation version of the original Cloris from a hundred years earlier.

Figure 8: Engravings for "Fair Clora" in George Bickham's *The Musical Entertainer*



More than 150 years since the good Doctor had witnessed his wife-to-be walking in the snow, a final edition of the duet by George Hayden was printed. However, I am sure this editor thought "Hayden" was Haydn, as in Joseph Haydn, who some ten years previously had been in London to receive an honorary doctorate. Hence, this edition has "Dr. Haydn" at the head, resulting in a profusion and confusion of doctors!

APPENDIX

"I Saw Fair Cloris" Settings: A Checklist

SETTING 1: John Hilton: GB-Ob Don. c. 57, fol. 60v and GB-Lbl Eg. 2031, fol. 23
Set for solo voice and continuo

SETTING 2: Walter Porter in *Madrigals and Ayres*, 1632. No. 25
Set for two sopranos and continuo

SETTING 3: Christopher Simpson in *The Musical Companion*, 1673
Set as a round for four voices

SETTING 4: Henry Lawes in *The Musical Companion*, 1673
Set for for two trebles and a bass

SETTING 5: Henry Purcell in *The Theatre of Music* Vol. 3, 1686, No. 20
Set for treble (or tenor), bass voice and continuo

SETTING 6: George Hayden: "A Two Part Songsung by Mr Cook
and Mr Newberry in the New Theatre". Single sheet publication ca. 1705
Set for soprano (or tenor) and bass (or alto), unaccompanied

SETTING 7: Dr. Haydn "Fair Clora. A duet for two voices" in
The Musical Companion, 1833 p. 95
Set for soprano and bass, unaccompanied.
NOTE: this is in fact the same setting as No. 6!

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John Playford, *The Musical Companion in Two books*, London: Godbid for John Playford 1673

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Take, Oh Take, Those Lips

A Study in the Varieties of English Song Setting Over 400 Years

MEASURE FOR MEASURE
Act IV, Sc.i
[The scene: A Moated Grange]
Enter Marianna, and a Boy singing

Take, oh take those lips away,
That so sweetly were forsworne,
And those eyes …, the breake of day
Lights that doe mislead the Morne:
But my kisses bring againe
Seales of love, but sealed in vaine.

[Enter Duke, disguised as before]

MARIANNA: Breake off thy song, and haste thee quick away. [Exit Boy]
Here comes a man of comfort, whose advice
Hath often still'd my brawling discontent.
I crie you mercie, Sir, and well could wish
You had not found me here so musicall.
Let me excuse me, and believe me so,
My mirth it much displeas'd, but pleas'd my woe.

DUKE: 'Tis good: though Musick oft hath such a charme
To make bad, good; and good provoake to harme.

Shakespeare's lyric "Take, oh take those lips away" has entranced for centuries, captivating every imagination with its underlying eroticism, which allowed it to be enjoyed even in overtly anti-sensual ages. Its function in the play? Apparently, merely to entertain—but looking more closely, Shakespeare is propounding a deep philosophy. The world of sense—of music, theatre, all entertainment and all sensual appetites—may be seen as a kind of indulgence that "pleas'd my woe", or "to make bad, good; and good provoake to harme". Two-thirds of the way through his subtle dark comedy Measure for Measure, the audience is given a delightful song, to entertain, which it mightily does. But then we are twitted for being so entertained, seduced if you like. And just as the Boy who sang it (presumably to his own lute accompaniment) is so speedily dismissed, without a "thank you", so is our pleasure at this timely piece of entertainment disregarded. We are brusquely reminded that that is not why we are here at the play, in the theatre; nor is it the reason why we are here in this body, in this life. This Hermetic philosophy has been named "pessimist gnosis", the belief that all the world is a trap for the unwary; it neatly balances its more apparently attractive counterpart, "optimist gnosis", according to which every aspect of creation and experience is a sign of divine inspiration—"as above, so below". The two attitudes entwine nicely, like the two snakes on the caduceus, Hermes' magic rod. This profound stuff animated the Elizabethan world of thought and frequently found its expression in Shakespeare's works. Others of the time, like John Dowland, Donne, Chapman, Raleigh—a long list of the greatest names of the time—enjoyed the same mode of thought.

"What is Shakespeare's source for the kiss?": this seemingly banal question is in fact a perfectly valid one. His major source (apart from his own personal experience of kissing, as a hands-on human delight) was the oft reprinted *The Book of the Courtyer* by Sir Thomas Hoby, first printed in 1562 (reprinted in 1577, 1588, and 1603). This work is a translation of Baldassare Castiglione's *Il Libro del Cortegiano*, first published in Venice in 1528 and subsequently reprinted in 1531, 1533, 1537, as well as in more than forty further editions, until it was placed on the "Index" by the Spanish Inquisition in 1576. It is probably this action that encouraged the second edition, the very next year, in Protestant England, as a kind of snub to the Catholic world; a defiant gesture of independent thinking that helped liberate the minds of Shakespeare's generation. It is a book of manners, advising courtiers and their ladies on how to act one to another, how to entertain themselves in an ennobling manner and even how to think appropriately. Its influence and wide readership were second only to the Bible in the 16th and early 17th centuries and it spawned many imitations, such as Henry Peacham's *The Complete Gentleman*.

In his Everyman edition of *Il Libro del Cortegiano* (1528) W.B. Drayton Henderson states: "Bembo delivers the rapt eulogy of Platonic Love in Book IV, which is probably one of the sources of the Platonism of Shakespeare's Sonnets". I would agree but go further and suggest it is a specific source for the ecstatic description of the Platonic Kiss, which gives rise to the pertinent tension of the song in *Measure for Measure*. Bembo's eulogy is indeed the major source of Plato's description of the kiss as soul transmission. Towards the end of *Il Libro del Cortegiano*, well into Book IV, Pietro Bembo launches into a superb set-piece about sensual and spiritual love and the nature of kissing:

> Therefore the woman to please her good lover, beside the graunting him mery countenances, familiar and secret talke, jeasting, dallying, hand in hand, may also lawfully and without blame come to kissing: which in sensual love according to Lord Julian's rule, is not lawfull. For since a kisse is knitting together of bodie and soule, it is to be feared, lest the sensuall lover will be more inclined to the part of the bodie, than of the soule: but the reasonable lover woteth well, that although the mouth be a parcell of the bodie, yet is it an issue for the wordes, that be the interpreters of the soule, and for the inwarde breath, which is also called the soule.
>
> And therefore hath a delite to joyne his mouth with the womans beloved with a kisse: not to stirre him to any dishonest desire, but because hee feeleth that that bonde is the opening of an entrie to the soules, which drawne with a coveting the one of the other, poure them selves by turne the one into the others bodie, and bee mingled together, that each of them hath two soules.
>
> And one alone so framed of them both ruleth (in a manner) two bodies. Whereupon, a kisse may be saide to be rather a coupling together of the soule, than of the body, because it hath such force in her, that it draweth her unto it, and (as it were) seperateth her from the bodie.
>
> For this doe all chaste lovers covet a kisse, as a coupling of soules together. And therefore Plato the devine lover saith, that in kissing, his soule came as farre as his lippes to depart out of the bodie.
>
> And because the separating of the soule from the matters of the sense, and the through coupling her with matters of understanding may be betokened by a kisse, Salomon saith in his heavenly booke of Balates, O that he would kisse me with a kisse of his mouth, to expresse the desire he had, that his soule might be ravished through heavenly love to the beholding of heavenly beautie, in such a manner, that coupling her selfe inwardly with it, she might forsake the bodie.

Few of Shakespeare's readers or of the composers who have been stirred to set these words have had some idea of the "secret" agenda behind this simple poem indeed, yet generation after generation has gone on being seduced by the few lines of this lyric. In fact, by 1639 a second stanza was added, by Beaumont and Fletcher, in *The Bloody Brothers, A Tragedy*. The sensuality becomes more explicit (correspondingly, this verse was set only by more *risqué* composers, in more liberated times):

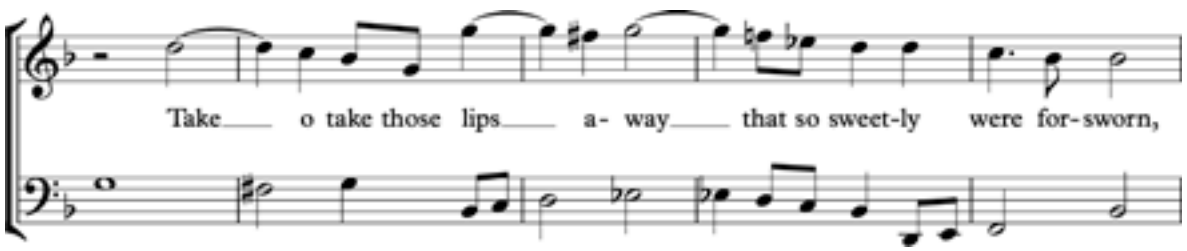
> Hide, oh hide those hils of Snow,
> Which thy frozen bosome beares,
> On whose tops the Pincks that grow
> Are those that April weares.
> But first set my poore heart free,
> Bound in those icy chaines by thee.

Less platonic, for sure, more explicit and truly delightful, together these two stanzas have excited the imagination for almost 400 years. I aim to survey some of these amazingly varied settings, roughly chronologically and, in so doing, will traverse the main route taken by English song during that time.

The first setting by John Wilson may be contemporary with Shakespeare and might have been used in an early revival of the play. It is hardly conceivable that the first performance, before 1608, could have used this sophisticated setting, surely written by a composer at an early stage of maturity, at least. Yet the "Boy" who sang it in the first production may well have been the "Jacke" who appears in *Much ado about nothing*, listed there in the first folio of 1623. It has been speculated that "Jacke" refers to John Wilson and that the composer was therefore connected from

an early age to the performances of Shakespeare's own troupe. He was born in 1595, and therefore stands out for his youth, even in an age of precociousness. What is sure is that the setting of "Take oh take" contained in an autograph manuscript housed in the Bodleian Library in Oxford is certainly Wilson's, and copied in his own hand, though the manuscript was compiled after the opening of the play. Interestingly, both this manuscript source and the first printed version (curiously entitled "Loves ingratitude") include the additional stanza, which in itself would suggest a later composition date. On internal musical evidence also, the date of ca. 1630 suggests itself, for an awareness of the Italian declamatory style is much in evidence, with speech-like rhythms an intrinsic part of the style. Numerous tiny variants in the two sources, printed and manuscript, are sufficient to warrant calling them version A and version B, with A carrying the extra authority of being in the composer's hand, though both have individually attractive features and earn equal respect. Whilst there is a declamatory awareness in the rhythms, there is also an echo of the kind of tunefulness one associates with the English lute song repertory of around 1610, though it still belongs to the continuo song style. A handful of composers—Alfonso Ferrabosco the Younger and Robert Johnson particularly—inhabit this half-world between styles and eras; most attractive it is too, and powerfully theatrical. Wilson's song stands comparison with his older contemporaries' work. The setting takes the standard lyric form of the "canzonet"—ABB, with the repeat from "But my kisses". It is just about possible that the precocious boy, Jacke, composed this lovely song for the first performance, though it is more likely it was written for a revival sometime around 1630.

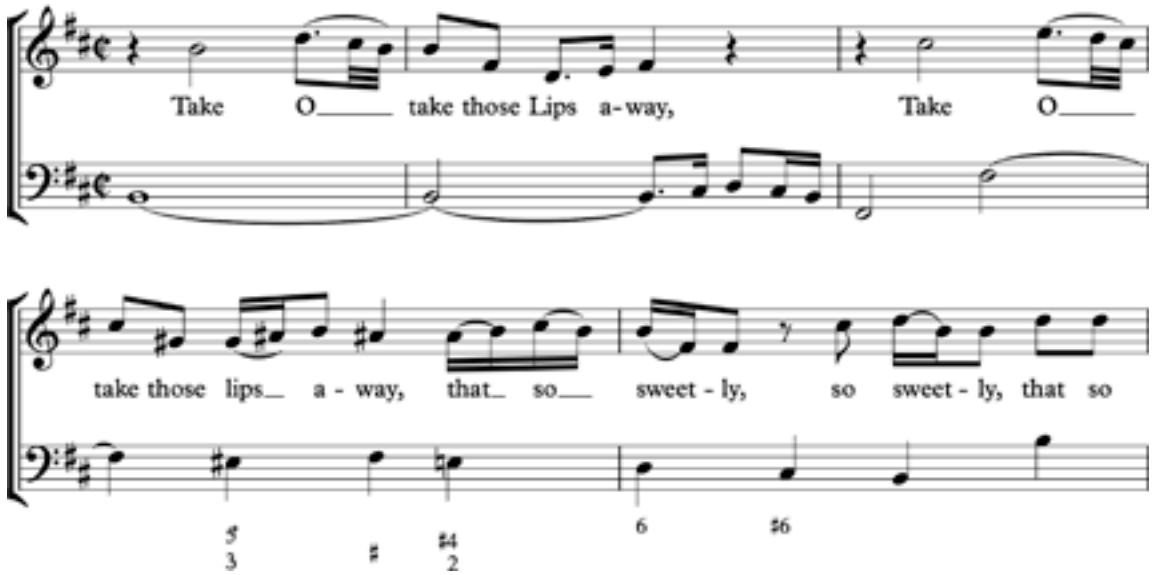
Figure 1: Opening of John Wilson's "Take O Take"



1

Seventy years elapse before the second setting appears—a hauntingly beautiful version by John Weldon, one that does not hide the erotic implications. This version sets only the first Shakespeare stanza; its composing may have been occasioned by a revival or reworking of *Measure for Measure* around 1701–1702. Here the music is warm, languorous, exotic and erotic in equal measure. Weldon turns on all the charms of the most elaborate theatre-song style of his time, using the full artillery of seducing devices: affective rests which sigh or pant in turn; vocal melisma in short or long roulades which rise or plunge in combined scale and arpeggio, seemingly at the whim of the moment. This is vocal improvisation written out, with short notes and long notes occurring apparently at random. Yet the whole is brilliantly controlled, from start to finish—a masterpiece of English song. In the hands of a performer accustomed to this exotic style, Weldon's notes are an invitation to explore the full panoply of expressive performance devices, with subtle shifts of tempo, expressive use of vowel sounds, clipped consonants (like the "k" at the end of the melisma on "break") accentuating the meaning. There is room, even in this already elaborate style, to improvise further vocal ornamentation: what is written is a sketch, an invitation to go further. The accompaniment is more thoroughly worked through than Wilson's earlier setting. There, the bass line was free and relaxed, with potent

Figure 2: Opening of John Weldon's setting of "Take Oh Take"



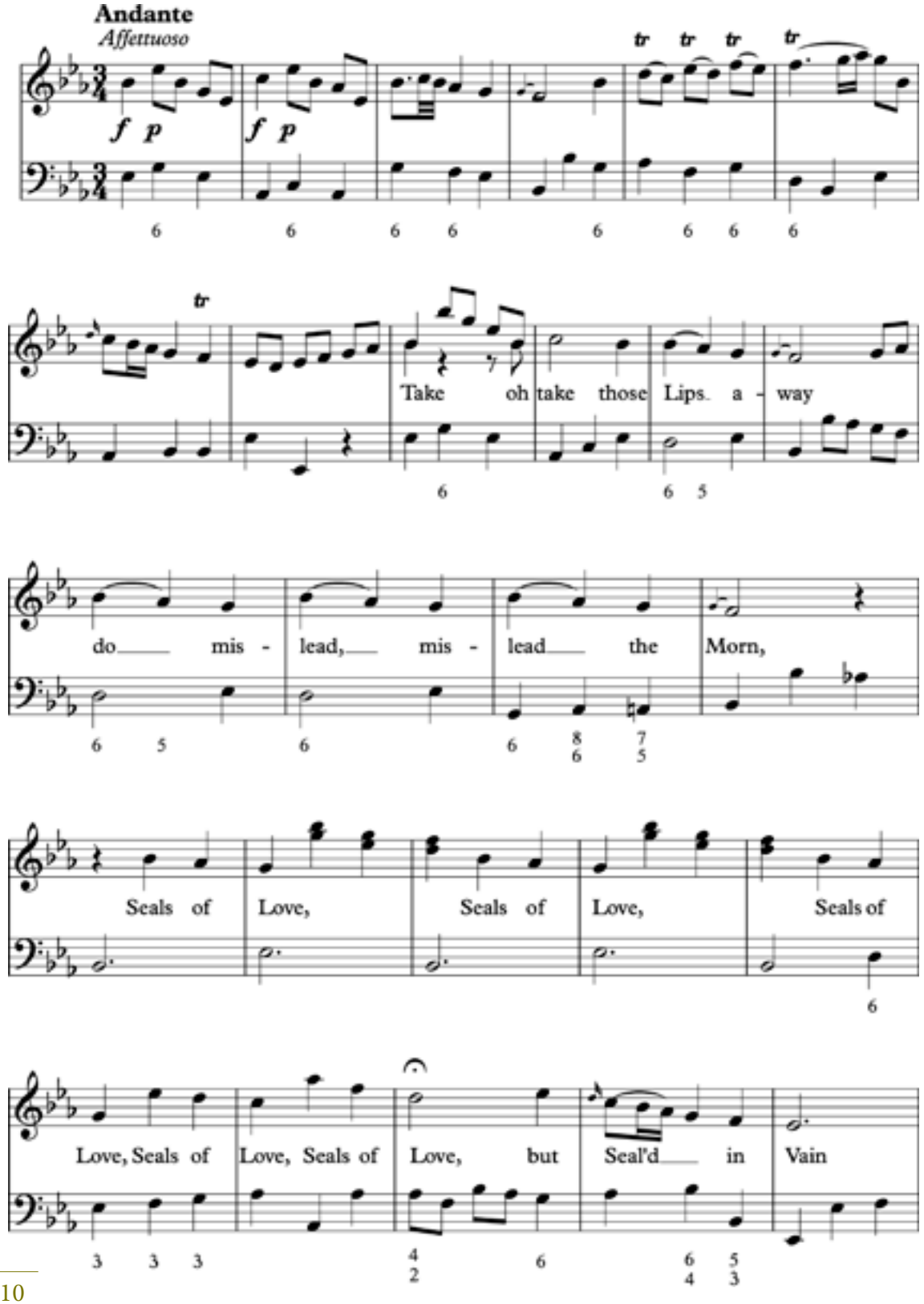
chords arpeggiated or struck with decisiveness on the theorbo, aiding the languishing or pressing mood. Here, in Weldon's world, the sense of unmeasured time is artfully contrived in the first section, before being marshalled and pressing for the second half. The singer could just conceivably self-accompany in this version, but more likely others would provide the accompaniment, leaving the singer free to express the passions in gesture and posture, as well as in utterance. This is a clear case of art improving on nature and, in performance style, art concealing art. Of all the settings of this poem, perhaps the Weldon version is the apotheosis of the performance art of English song.

2

This, however, would seem to prejudge all that is to follow—and there are many worlds yet to explore. The next composer belongs firmly in English society circles, those around Bath and the West Country. Thomas Chilcot's setting was published in his one printed collection of songs, *Twelve English Songs*, in 1744. The scoring for soprano, continuo and four strings (two violins, viola and cello) is the richest we have yet seen: Chilcot excelled in orchestral writing, for which he attained some fame at the time. The melodic material is essentially simple but elaborately decorated in the *galant* style. The second stanza is provided at the foot of the page, not underlaid. The effect of the whole is warm, elegant, poised and very beautiful, set to charm the ears of the cognoscenti of the Bath music circles. This is decidedly not music for the theatre music, but for the salon.

Some settings are full of surprise, like the next, in chronological order. Described as "The Complaint", this version was published about 1760 in a slim volume called simply *A Collection of New Songs*. The setting is exquisite, archetypal Romantic English (an early date for the term "Romantic" to be used, showing the composer to be in the vanguard of compositional style; indeed, looking ahead beyond the current *galant* style). The accompaniment consists of a figured bass with treble *ritornelli*, which could be realised simply on the keyboard or with a violin: the print leaves it unclear. An artful tune revolves on the descending fourth from B–flat to F, which returns gently but insistently over and over. It is first introduced in bar three of the *ritornello* and is then taken up for the words "those lips away". It innocently returns, repeatedly, on the words "do mislead" (linking the two poetic phrases unconsciously in the mind) and is then attempted for "seals of love", though here it does not make it through the fourth, stopping on the G thrice over before resolving with "seal'd in vain". There is simplicity in construction, yet it is also a subtle setting—this is the hand of a master. So, who is the composer? Could it be an English Mozart? Or a Haydn? He is Ignatius Sancho, a black African, as announced on the title page of his book of songs: *A Collection of NEW SONGS Composed by AN AFRICAN Humbly Inscribed to the Hon.ble Mrs. James Brudenell by her most humble Devoted and obedient Servant, The Author*. He has left us a sublime setting of Shakespeare, far in advance of most song composing at that time.

Figure 3: Ignatius Sancho, "Take oh take"



3

The next composer, a foreigner who attempted to stray into this very English world, was the Italian who long sojourned in England and Ireland, Tommaso Giordani—a highly professional all-round musician who did so much to maintain high standards amongst the musical amateurs of Dublin and London. His gift of tunefulness is exemplified in many of his songs (for example, a haunting setting of that other Shakespeare-related text, "The Willow Song", sung by Desdemona). Around 1785 he published two versions of "Take, oh take those lips away", the prime one being described as "A Favourite Glee for Four Voices". The print in which this piece appears also describes the other setting: "The above Song adapted for one Voice with the Harpsichord Accompt. Price 6d". The scoring of the glee is for countertenor (or treble), two tenors and a bass. For a glee, there is some degree of independence of part-writing, creating an attractive texture which is redolent of orchestral scoring. The galant style is pronounced of course, but with delightful moments of detail. For the lovers of the glee tradition, this is a fine example which is very rewarding to perform.

William Jackson of Exeter is another composer generous to the performer, knowing well the little touches that raise a response in performance. His setting of the poem is described as a "Canzonet", number seven in his Opus IX of ca. 1770—and with over six editions before 1800, a very popular version it must have been. Set for two sopranos with continuo, there is much use of thirds and sixths, with solo interjections breaking up the texture. Jackson approaches the text quite differently from others, by taking only the Shakespeare stanza and making up for its brevity not by melisma, but by returning to the first line after every other line, each time reappearing with varied music. This gives the work a breathy urgency, an intimacy between the lovers that is unique amongst the settings under review. The repeated bass notes, in the classical style, gives a Haydn-like quality to the work; this is a little ironic, as Jackson made it plain that he was not in favour of the popularity of these foreigners adored by the English musical public and advocated a return to a purer "English" strain. A well-tempered fortepiano would sound lovely in this version.

4

see next page – *Figure 4:* Opening of William Jackson of Exeter's "Take oh take"

A glee for three voices (countertenor, tenor and bass) by John Stafford Smith takes the stage next, published in one of the countless collections of glees and catches towards the end of the 18th century. The two stanzas share the same music, but there is an unspoken invitation to vary the details as the words suggest, and certainly to take tempo liberties as inspired. John Stafford Smith has been referred to as the first English musicologist, for it is very true that he expended great labours on researching and preparing ancient musical texts. The breadth of his research is really quite astonishing, considering the time in which he was working: he also set an enviable level of editing. It is easy to let that important work overshadow the enterprise he expended in his own compositions, although it has to be said that his "Take, oh take" is one of his slighter works! Certain of his other songs deserve detailed study and revival.

A breathtaking setting comes next, the first for which we know for whom it was composed; in fact, two singers' names are inscribed in the title. The composer is

Figure 4: Opening of William Jackson of Exeter's "Take oh take"

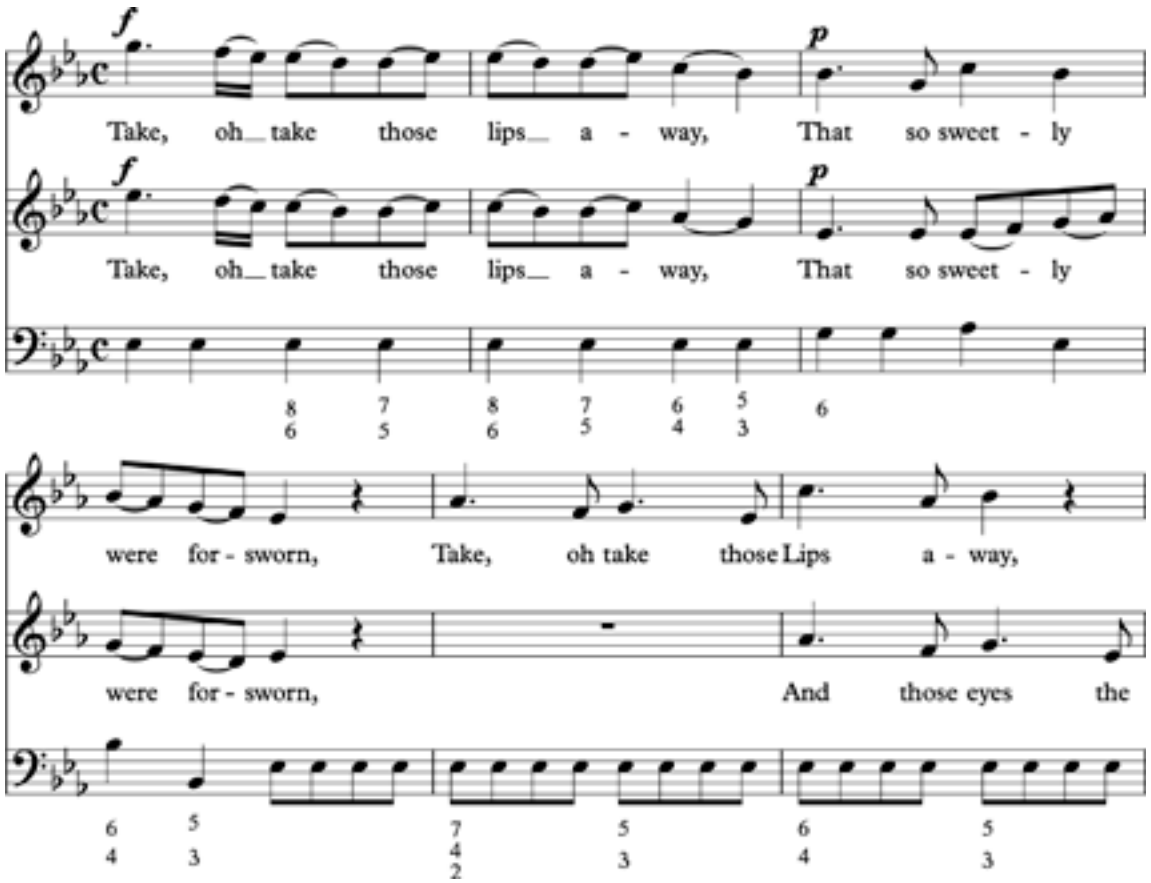
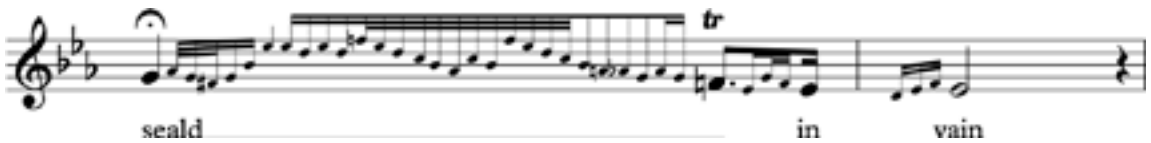


Figure 5: Detail of the cadenza in Bishop's "Take oh take"

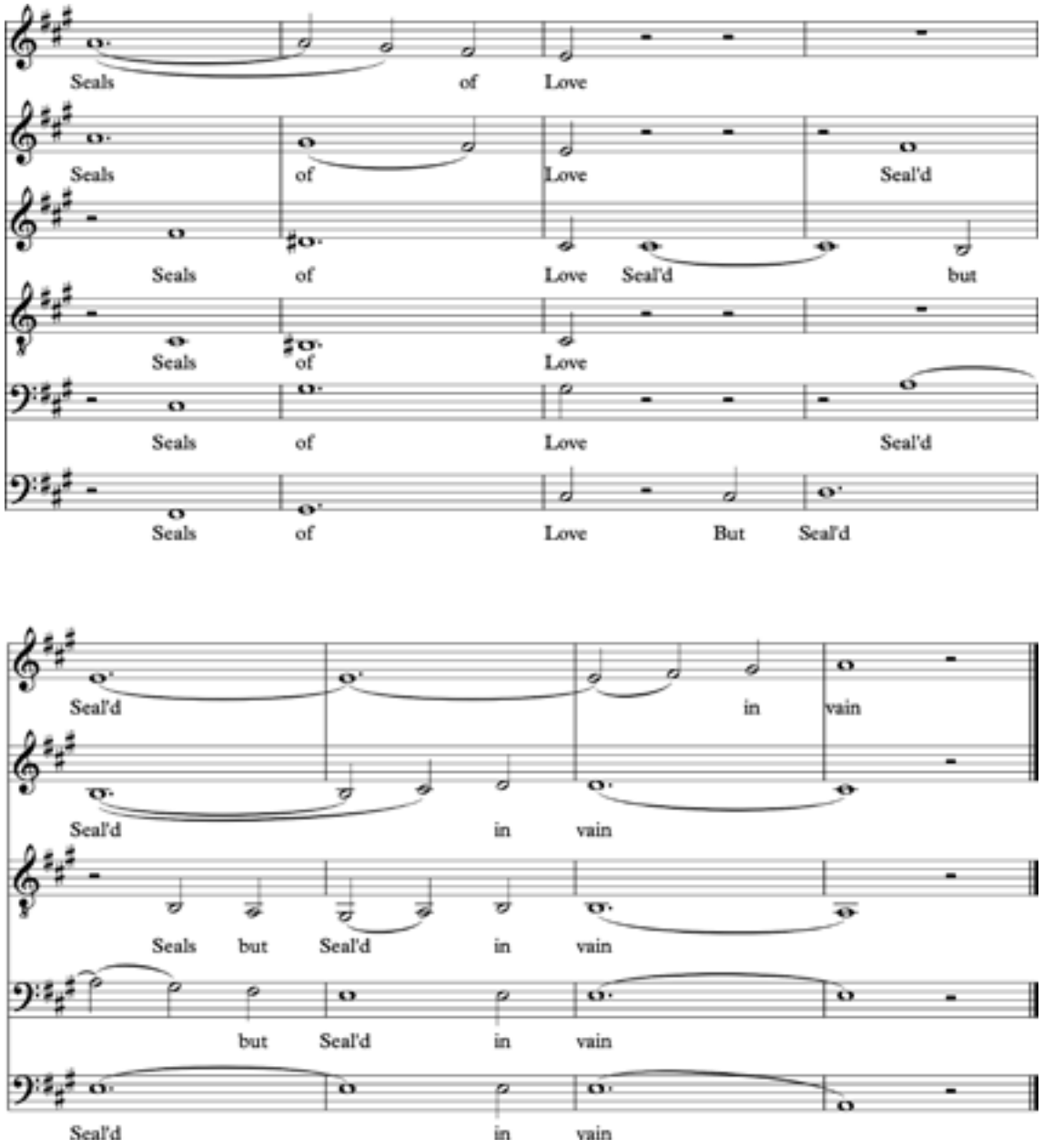


Henry R. Bishop, "Composer and Director of the Music to the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden". Confusingly, the title states that the song was used in Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors* (rather than *Measure for Measure*): as so often in the 18th century, revivals were chopped about a bit! The two sopranos listed are Miss Stephens and Miss Greene but from the layout it looks as though Miss Stephens was the first singer, for the inscribing of "Miss Greene" appears to be a later addition. Both singers must have had formidable vocal technique and performing manner, for the setting is characterised by a plethora of ornamentation. Bishop was clearly in an ecstatic mode when penning this song and must have known the singers' capabilities intimately. It must have brought the house down: such virtuosity is rare to find in any age, but around 1819 this is not what young ladies did in public. How much was the cadential ornamentation by way of suggestion, and how far was the singer free to interpret and further embellish? How controlling was Bishop in his musical direction and was there room for performers' liberties? These are questions for future study. Since the piece was accompanied orchestrally, presumably Bishop himself conducted, or at least directed in rehearsal: this must have identified the parameters of freedom for the singer on stage. In a chamber music performance, with piano accompaniment alone, much more freedom can be envisaged. Bishop was prolific, but judged on the content of this song alone, he deserves much closer study and familiarity than his music presently enjoys. Theatre composers had to compose at speed and often, so their quality tends to vary enormously: here though, we can acclaim a masterpiece, which sits beside the Weldon setting in its beauty and in its ecstatic quality.

5

This inspiring, elevated strain continues with the next, very different example: it is a "Pre-Raphaelite madrigal" by that master of this forgotten genre, Robert Lucas Pearsall. This is a relatively early work (given the Opus No. 9) from the early 1830s, but Pearsall was so thoroughly steeped in the 16th-century madrigal era that his composing takes on a hue reminiscent of the works by the Pre-Raphaelite school of painting in the late 1840s. Though infused with the genre of an earlier era, his composing is no mere slavish imitation of past times, but a progressive search to absorb the craftsmanship and techniques of the past, entwined with modern elements of harmony and style. The result is bewitching and wholly convincing, for Pearsall is certainly a craftsman of the highest order: his setting of the Shakespeare poem is entirely successful. It is described as a "part-song for five voices"—this is not the place to go into the differences between "part-songs" and "madrigals" yet again, for the two descriptions often overlap, as in this case. This setting has features of both—relatively independent part-writing at times, and more homophonic movement elsewhere. The outstanding feature of Pearsall's composition lies in his use of double and triple cadential suspensions, giving a yearning, longing quality such as could never have existed in a purely historical Elizabethan approach to polyphony. The harmonic language is thus extended, adding fleeting dissonances that delightfully highlight the poem. The final cadence spins out the sweet agony with delicious, long-drawn seconds that feel as if there were loathing to resolve. Here is a final cadence it would be hard to match.

Figure 6: Closing bars of Robert Lucas Pearsall's "Take oh take"



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Robert Lucas Pearsall, though a thoroughly English gentleman in his outlook and manner, actually spent most of his composing years studying and working in Germany and, latterly, in Switzerland, where he died and is buried. Another Englishman, Henry Hugo Pierson, likewise adopted Germany as his cultural home, though he never lost his Englishness. Continually turning to great English poems for his compositions, Pierson frequently provided highly literate German translations of them, thereby doing the opposite to what Goethe and other German poets did, providing very poetic English versions. Thus, his song output, which can be compared stylistically with that of Robert Schumann, provides a body of dual-language songs of great merit. The German translation of "Take, oh take" was probably a committee effort, although his own grasp of German was sufficiently refined and advanced for him to be solely responsible.

From the 1860s the number of settings of the Shakespeare lyric increased vastly, though the quality becomes a little more uneven than we have seen thus far. The Romantic indulgence that the lyric affords allowed a certain erotic release in a society that tried so hard to expunge eroticism from its world picture. I think this is a partial explanation for the vast increase in settings from around 1860 to 1914. Many of these do not easily lend themselves to vigorous performance today, though a few stand out. The solo setting of Hubert Parry, for example, is a masterpiece of the epigrammatic art, a true distillation of the music of his circle and generation.

After the First World War (plus a few years needed for the reclamation of creative activity) there came a new spate of songs of great distinction. The settings by Peter Warlock, Roger Quilter and Ralph Vaughan Williams, as well as the so-called unpublished "juvenilia" of Benjamin Britten are all beautiful examples of the art of English Song.

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Mock Songs

A Forlorn Attempt to Keep Italian Composers Away from Native Shores by Using the English Secret Weapon: Humour

In 1612 in *A Pilgrimes Solace*, John Dowland complains, having been away from England for some time, in the following manner:

> I must tell you, as I have been a stranger; so have I again found strange entertainment since my returne; especially by the opposition of two sorts of people that shroude themselves under the title of Musitians. The first are some simple Cantors, or vocall singers, who though they seem excellent in their blinde Division-making, are meerely ignorant, even in the first elements of musicke, and also in the true order of the mutation of the Hexachord in the Systeme, (which hath ben approved by all the learned and skilfull men of Christendome, this 800 yeeres) yet doe these fellowes give their verdict of me behind my backe, and say, what I doe is after the old manner: but I will speake openly to them, and would have them know that the proudest Cantor of them, dares not oppose himselfe face to face against me.

The second category of "opposers" consists of young lute players who affect a new style and vaunt themselves at the disparagement of the older school; they do not concern us at this moment. However, the "blind Cantors" Dowland mentions are central to this study, for it is the first time, in print at least, that there is a criticism of foreign influence at the expense of homegrown talent—a criticism which was to echo down the centuries and, some could say, is still with us yet. To be fair, Dowland does not identify a foreign source for his criticism: what he is in fact pinpointing with his grievance is the wholesale affectation of things foreign without any real understanding of those influences. He had travelled throughout Italy, been to Florence and had probably met Giulio Caccini and the architects of the *Nuove Musiche* in the camerata established in that forward-looking city. John Dowland had firsthand knowledge and deep respect for these mighty intellects who were forging a new kind of music but had no time at all for the uncritical, dissembling audience back home who admired anything and everything foreign without discrimination.

How can we be sure, from this brief and rather dyspeptic statement, that Dowland was disillusioned with his little-travelled, myopic, undiscriminating countrymen? Right at the centre of his last and greatest book of songs are three works unique to the English song tradition: John Dowland describes these works when he writes on the title page "Wherein is contained Musicall Harmonie of 3. 4. and 5. parts, to be sung and plaid with the Lute and Viols". The crucial words here are "musical harmony", for Dowland is contrasting the old and the new—polyphony (the old) and monody (the new). His implicit statement is that any composition of worth must obey the ancient rules laid down in the hexachord system and that any departure from these rules will lead to a debasement of the compositional skills developed over so long. That he was genuinely concerned about the future effect of ignorance of these laws cannot be in doubt: after this volume of 1612 he published no more, preferring silence to succumbing to the degrading practice of bending to current fashionable compositional procedures. In *A Pilgrimes Solace* he offered another

solution which he knew would be ignored: he created three great works, arguably the most intense lute songs to be found in the whole genre, which at one and the same time satisfied the new fashionable dictates of following every nuance of the text in declamatory fashion and obeyed the rules of ancient polyphony.

These works include two English poems, "From Silent Night" and "Go Nightly Cares". The third song, "Lasso mia vita", is unique to Dowland's *oeuvre* for it is in Italian. All three works share a common, unique instrumentation: solo voice with lute, plus two *obbligato* viol parts, which are densely and intricately written, quite unlike anything else published in the lute-song genre. In addition, the lute parts themselves are amongst the most complex and thoroughly composed accompaniments in Dowland's already complex style. Few other songs can compare in density and intricacy of lute writing and, apart from Dowland's works, only a couple of pieces by John Danyel stand comparison in this regard.

Here they are in pride of place, right at the very centre of his final book of songs; an enigmatic statement if ever there was. What was its purpose? Perhaps to counter the trend of the time towards "dumbing down" and meretricious simplification, caused by the prevailing ignorance of the laws "approved by the learned and skilful men of Christendome, this 800 years"? Within a texture that gives the voice freedom and independence of expression of the text—albeit within a vocal line of some complexity—Dowland obeys the new rules of the declamatory style whilst creating a counter-point against them, the dense instrumental polyphony for the two viols. The whole creates a web of sound as dense as a Bach fugue while satisfying the desires of the new style in expressivity. To drive this point home, Dowland creates the first "mock song": "Lasso mia vita" is a send-up, a scherzo, although it is a highly intellectual one. It is the first of a long series: the genre was to gather life and vitality over the next two hundred years, as this essay shows.

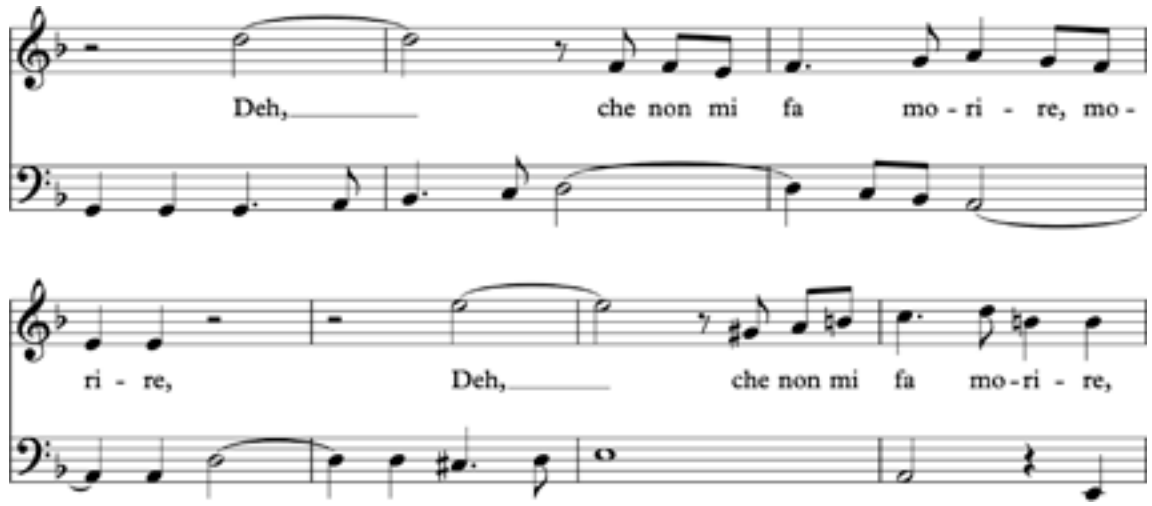
How could such a complex composition possibly be seen as a joke? Surely the sentiment, harmony and texture suggest a high art song of deep seriousness? Yes, and therein lies the point. The poem reads like this:

Lasso vita mia, mi fa morire,
Crudel amor, mio cor consume,
Da mille, mille ferite,
Che mi fa morir,
Ahi me,
Deh,
Che non mi fa morire,
Crudel amor, mi fa sofrir,
Mille, mille martire.

This is not the greatest poetry: it is definitely *poesia per musica* and, even then, lightweight, made up of snippets of amatory verse of no profundity or originality. Dowland, who had travelled and visited Venice, Genoa, Florence and all the places in between must have been well aware of this; yet he chose such banal stuff for his one and only essay into a foreign language. He had an ulterior motive: to show the ignorant cantors up as musical illiterates by using the musical hexachord in such a way as to go against "800 years" of teaching.

The hexachord is comprised of the solmization syllables ut, re, mi fa, sol, la: six tones which can appear starting on C, F or G. The complex melodies of the late 16th century require continual shifting between hexachords, or mutation (which only serves to show how outmoded the hexachord system was by 1600: Dowland was surely backing a loser). The Italian poem of "Lasso vita mia" uses the solmization syllables aplenty, in words which have other meanings: "La", "so", "mi", "fa" and "re" all appear in the first line, for example. At the outset, Dowland takes great care to set each musical syllable to the right tone, mutating from hexachord to hexachord as demanded by ancient musical literacy. The singer, however, is required to become ever more passionate in their delivery as they pour out their heart in a musically expressive and declamatory manner; they reach such fever pitch that, after the climactic "Ahi me", they sing 'morire' on the wrong tone! At no point in hexachord mutation could a well-trained singer sing "re" on such a note: the "blind cantor", however, would give it all the passion he could muster.

1 *Figure 1:* Dowland, "Lasso vita mia"



This, I am afraid, is as funny as it gets. Not exactly side-splitting but, for Dowland, actually epoch-making. Music history was at a turning point and Dowland registered it for us in this complex intellectual parody of musical ignorance. He was laughing at the English singers who had no Italian and little musical training but who fancied they could sing with great expressivity in the new style. There the sad matter would rest, but for the fact that it unwittingly bred imitators and that later generations were to face similar dilemmas in ways adapted for new times, though no different in spirit. The results, fortunately for this study, were often more obviously funny!

Figure 2: Henry Lawes, "In quel gelato core"

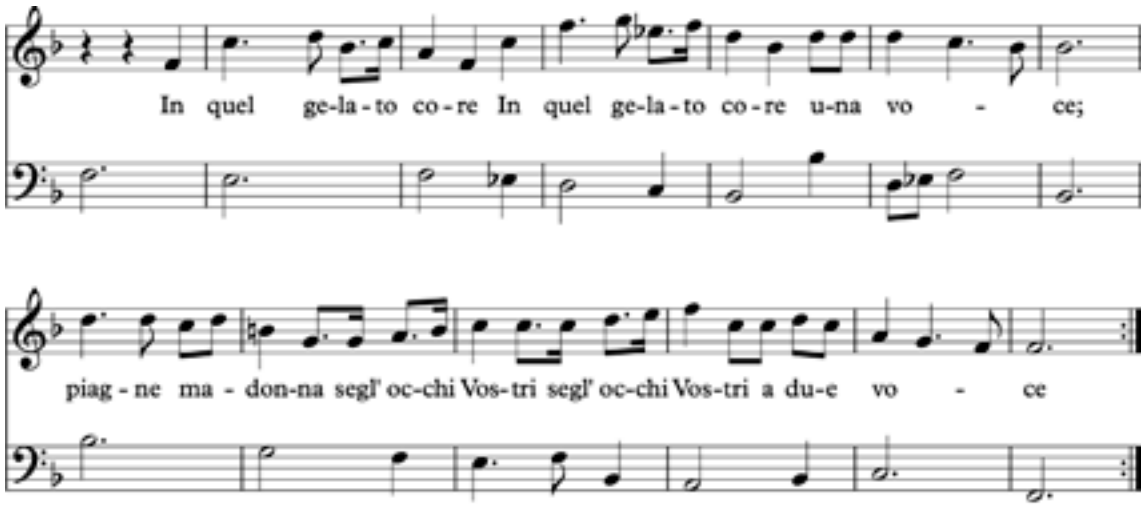


Figure 3: Index in Antonio Cifra's *Scherzi et Arie*, 1614

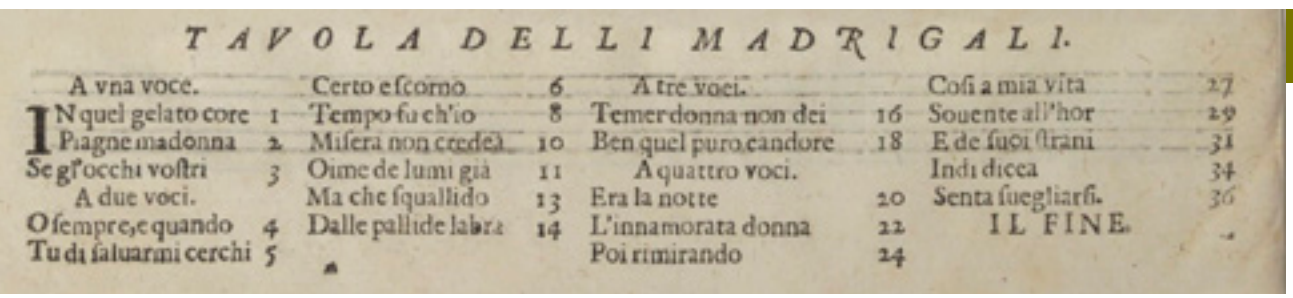


TAVOLA DELLI MADRIGALI.

A vna voce.		Certo e ſcorno	6	A tre voci.		Coſi a mia vita	27
IN quel gelato core	1	Tempo fu ch'io	8	Temer donna non dei	16	Souente all'hor	29
Piagne madonna	2	Miſera non credeà	10	Ben quel puro candore	18	E de ſuoi ſtrani	31
Se gl'occhi voſtri	3	Oime de lumi già	11	A quattro voci.		Indi dicea	34
A due voci.		Ma che ſquallido	13	Era la notte	20	Senta ſueglıarſi.	36
O ſempre, e quando	4	Dalle pallide labra	14	L'innamorata donna	22	IL FINE.	
Tu di ſaluarmi cerchi	5			Poi rimirando	24		

Henry Lawes perpetrated a "mock song" on the English public for a good few years. It was probably an open secret as to who had composed it—that was perhaps part of its success. By the time he published his first volume of songs, *Ayres and Dialogues* in 1653, he was ready to go public with his mocking, as he made plain in his preface, towards the end of this fascinating address to "All Understanders or Lovers of MUSICK" (with the emphasis on "Understanders"?):

> I never lov'd to set or sing words which I do not understand; and where I cannot, I desir'd help of others who were able to interpret. But this present Generation is so sated with what's Native, that nothing takes their eare but what's sung in a Language which (commonly) they understand as little as they do the Musick. And to make them sensible of this ridiculous humour, I took a Table or Index of old Italian Songs (for one, two and three Voyces) and this Index (which read together made a strange medley of Nonsense) I set to a varied Ayre, and gave out that it came from Italy, whereby it hath passed for a rare Italian Song. This very Song I have now printed.

2

In the hands of a capable performer this song is indeed hilarious, with its juxtaposition of Italian first-line fragments of disjunct passions and the prosaic instructions "una voce", "a due voce", "a tre voce" scattered randomly through the "verse". Perhaps ignorance is consciously played with in the deliberate wrong spelling of "voce", since the plural should be "voci". The table or index from which Henry Lawes took these words can be traced, for the print he speaks of, the "old Italian Songs", was a collection by Antonio Cifra published in 1614 called *Scherzi et Arie*. Perhaps this little-known publication commended itself to Lawes for the inclusion of *scherzo* in the title—a further musical joke!

3

Henry Lawes succeeded in several ways; despite its nonsense, the song is in fact quite convincing as a musical trifle, if performed with commitment. It gained notoriety, drawing attention to the ignorant phenomenon for which Lawes, understandably, had little patience. However, it is humour in very good taste—not something that can be said of certain later examples we will see!

Polite mirth characterises the next curiosity: the first song ridiculing the extravagant excess of the popular Italian style while using English words. The humour is in the imitation of certain Italian singers who relied on excessive roulades and endless word repetitions, something that was to become endemic in the 18th-century Italian cantata style, recorded here as early as 1678. The song was published in *New Ayres and Dialogues* "By Sundry Authors", gathered by John Bannister (a "Gentleman of his

Majesties private Musick"). The composer of this mock song is known only as "Seignior William in Northampton-shire" hiding, perhaps, his real identity behind this rustic designation. The song itself, though, refers to the metropolis in the first line, with a poetic reference to the River Thames:

> A Song after the Italian Mode
>
> See how the Thames' Silver Streams
> Are now detain'd for you,
> Like Xerxes it hath chain'd,
> That it forgets to run,
> Till your sweet Song be done;
> The ocean admires its stay,
> Which ne'er was wont to make delay,
> But now seems checkt like the Helespont:
> Small Brooks the pebbles chide,
> 'cause unto Thames they now would smoother glide.

As strained a lyric as this is, it might be a reference to Pietro Reggio, the Italian master who found some support in England at this time and published songs in Italian, as well as in English. Some of his English musical colleagues were highly critical of his "meddling" with their tongue and thought he should leave that to them. The song was published without a bass line, the intimation perhaps being that an Italian singer lost in their roulades would hardly notice the accompaniment anyway! The first lengthy roulade appears deliberately on the word "forgets" (as the listener "forgets" what is being said?); then, even more extensive roulading on "sweet Song", but only after those words have been repeated three times. The end of the roulade coincides with the words "be done"; finally, the vocalise on "smoother" is very much in the "Italian mode". Reggio was known to have been hurt by these witty barbs, having yet to learn that dry, caustic humour is very much the English way of dealing with irritations.

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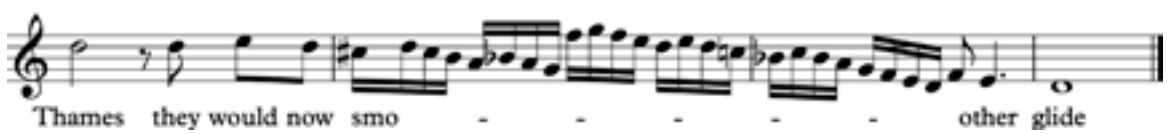
Figure 4: "See how the Thames' Silver Streams" by "Seignior William", ending



By chance, the same publication included some of the earliest printed music of the very young Henry Purcell. There were sixty-eight songs in the edition, looking back to William Lawes (some thirty-five years before) and forward to the unknown potential of Purcell's generation. Indeed, such was the flowering of English song through the '80s and '90s that there was little need to devote creative energy to songs mocking foreign influence and style. Englishness was praised and fashionable; composers were also writing prolifically for the burgeoning theatre and its voracious appetite for ever new songs to adorn the plays.

This trend was to run out of steam in the early years of the new century in a way that greatly affected the livelihood of all native English composers. The surge of fickle public taste towards all things exotic, particularly Italian, in the theatre and concert rooms made life exceedingly difficult for English composers who had hitherto enjoyed considerable acclaim. Hybrid works consisting of English singers singing in English and Italian gave rise to quite ludicrous situations on stage as well as searing criticism. In 1701 the *cognoscenti* of English opera raised funds for *The Prize Competition*, with a brilliant libretto on the theme of The Judgment of Paris by William Congreve—still, at that point, in his prime as the preeminent playwright of the time. Though it was a great success, it was to be the last significant, all-English production for many years. The next attempt, a full-scale opera, *Semele*, also by Congreve with music by John Eccles was never performed, despite some astoundingly good music throughout that intensified the dramatic plot in a highly skilful manner. Popular opinion today veers to praising the much later Handel setting of the same libretto, with numerous aggressive cuts at the expense of the Eccles setting, despite the Eccles work being quite unfamiliar. Here, perhaps, is a modern example of the cultish adoration of the familiar and fond; praise be to Ignorance!

The title role in *Semele* was conceived for the singing actress Mistress Anne Bracegirdle: she had by that time, however, decided to take retirement from the stage. This was perhaps judicious: she had come off badly in a competition with the young Anne Oldfield fairly recently; she probably felt some qualms, as a seasoned actress in her mid-forties, about playing Semele, the young coquette. She was in receipt of a handsome sum of money from one of her many noble admirers, so financial pressures were relieved: most recently, she had also played a subsidiary role in *The Temple of Love*, with the Italian singer Signora Gallia (married to the composer of the opera, Gioseppe Saggione) playing the lead. Anne Bracegirdle could be forgiven if she took all this as a sign to retire gracefully.

In the years from 1705, the theatres resounded with numerous concoctions that satisfied a hunger for exotica and a taste for the bizarre. Numerous writers commented on this dire state of affairs, but a statement by Daniel Purcell in his preface to *Six Cantatas for a Voice*, published in 1713, is particularly poignant. He begins:

> The Introducing Italian Opera's upon the English Stage, has so altered the Taste of this Nation, as to Musick, that scarce any thing, but what bears some Resemblance of the Italian Style and Manner, is received with Favour or heard with Patience.

He generously goes on:

> It must be acknowledg'd that those Opera's have a great deal of Beauty and Spirit.

He remarks, however, that for want of understanding much of that beauty is lost to an English audience:

> We seem pleas'd, we know not why; […] the most we make of it is a transient Amusement.

The applause is in the wrong place, for the slightest effects and the deep, grave and rich moments are passed by unnoticed. "This is a calamity to be lamented" he cries. He fondly recalls his brother's time, when Henry's music thrilled the London public:

> I am pleas'd with the Remembrance of my Brother's good success this Way; His Works speak so well for themselves …

However, he goes on, he now attempts to apply the Italian style to English texts and presents six cantatas. He ends with this modest plea:

> If my Endeavours herein shall be candidly receiv'd, it may encourage abler Persons to improve on the Method I have taken, and by that means we may hope to take some Pleasure in the labours of *our own Country-men* [italics added] to whose Judgments these Compositions are humbly submitted, by Dan: Purcell.

The cantatas feature various pastoral themes of love; none mock the models on which they are moulded.

That was left to Daniel Purcell's contemporary, John Eccles, who at about the same time published the cantata "Love kindled in a breast too young". The words for this beautifully modelled Italian-style cantata are very pertinent to the London stage at this time and the fickle public. The immature pastoral shepherd, "Strephon", is the London audience of the day, whilst "Celia" is Anne Bracegirdle. "Charming Flavia" represents all the Italian singers (particularly Signora Gallia) who had won the hearts of the town:

> Love kindled in a breast too young
> Is but a wand'ring, but a fleeting passion;
> In riper years it grows more strong
> When reason seconds inlination.
>
> Young Strephon did on Celia doat,
> His tend'rest vows were all for her.
> Yet soon his vows were all forgot
> When charming Flavia did appear.
>
> So tender plants by milder rays,
> Are cherish'd and preserv'd till noon,
> But soon their fading bloom decays
> When shin'd on by a warmer sun.

The tone of this cantata is one of regret tinged with irony, making for a mock song that is of great delicacy and fading beauty befitting the poem. Perhaps we might see this piece as an epitaph for the native English music of that era.

More vigorous, pointed and rough are the mock songs of the next generation, where a jovial English rusticity is frequently and blatantly contrasted with the effete airs and graces of foreign (usually Italian) intruders. "If it does not rain tomorrow" by "An Outalian" uses the exaggerated repetition of phrase fragments to make nonsense of the Italian operatic aria that abuses this device. The silly, mindless repetition of "If it does not rain tomorrow" (which, at one point becomes "If it does, if it does not", then "not rain to Morrow, not rain—not to Morrow—but to Morrow"!) is a negation of what little sense there is and so becomes a mockery. The second phrase that completes the lyric "I'll go to Oxford" confirms the verbal banality but is set in the "high" style, as if something of epic importance were intended. There is no doubt that Georg Frideric Handel is the intended butt of humour here: although his admirers were legion, certain wits saw the dangers early and clearly of too great an adulation for one composer (and a non-native too) placed above all others. Topics of no consequence, merely gossipy fragments and the whirling of a mind concerned with minutiae were ideal for such mockery, especially as singers (particularly sopranos—Faustina and Cuzzoni—and castrati—Farinelli and Senesino) were generally thought to possess not too much grey matter, other than for matters pertaining to golden guineas, that is.

Mock Songs moved into a new league with the arrival of one Henry Carey on the scene. Carey was a gifted librettist and an able composer of good tunes which adorned many of his poems. He worked closely with his friend John Lampe, a talented, skilled composer and, like Handel, an *émigré* from Germany. Unlike Handel, Lampe had a rare gift for humour and burlesque; together with Carey, he created an entire genre of such works in the middle years of the 18th century. Carey sometimes signed himself "Signor Carini", a thin disguise intended to fool no one. He was a lad from Yorkshire but was rumoured to be an illegitimate son of a nobleman. When he came to London as a young man, he was made a member of an exclusive club (Button's) and later published some of his works in a grand style, including a handsome self-portrait which would certainly not have been within the means of a country lad!

Figure 5: Engraving of Henry Carey by J. Faber, 1737

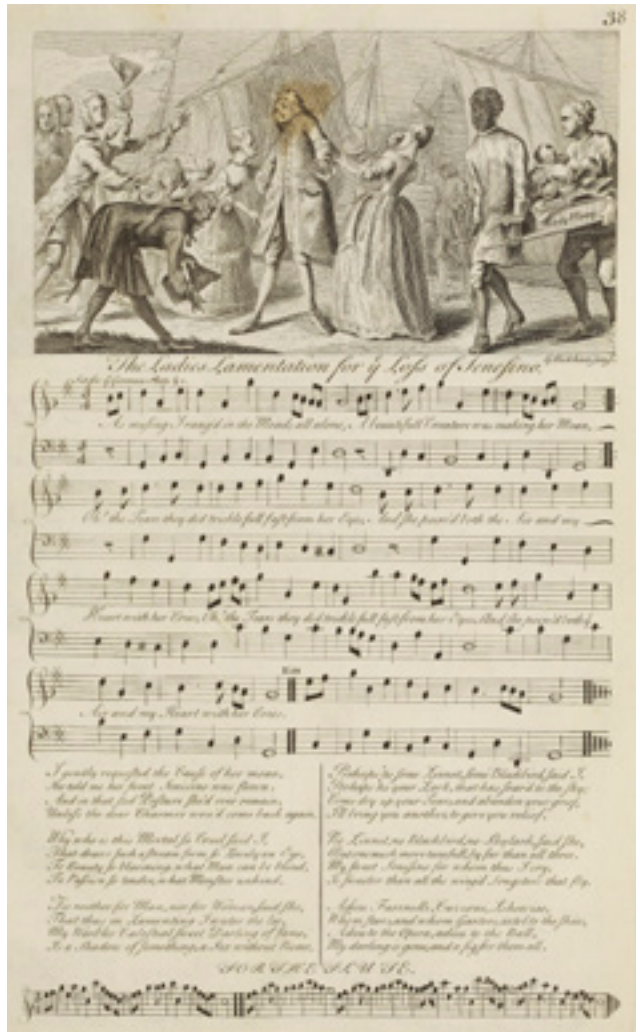


Figure 6: "As Musing I Rang'd in the Meads All Alone" in George Bickham Junior's *The Musical Entertainer* (1737)

5

The change of forename from "Harry" to "Henricus" runs in his style too. As we have seen, his surname becomes "Carini" or indeed "Signor Carini" for several of the mock songs. Undoubtedly, Henry Carey was a humourist, a wit and a *bon viveur*. Like so many such clever men, he lived much of his life in near poverty and ended his life by his own hand in 1743, leaving a pregnant wife and three children.

Carey's larger works lie outside this present study; these are his collaborations with John Lampe—Carey was the librettist for the hugely successful *The Dragon of Wantley*, a burlesque on the grand style of Handel's operas. There is little doubt that such parodies caused Handel to turn to oratorio rather than opera, thus avoiding the lampooning that gathered momentum in the late 1730s. Henry Carey wrote the music as well as the libretto for his mock-grandiose *Chrononhotonthologos* (1734), which he first published under the pseudonym Benjamin Bounce. He often returned to mocking the *castrati,* especially Farinelli and Senesino; in this regard, his mocking cantata "A Musical Hodge Podge" can probably be judged his masterpiece of burlesque.

If we suspect that certain other anonymous mock songs might well have Carey behind them, it is certainly true that the popular success of his wit, which caused a perceptible shift in public response, generated imitators. Several "laments" for Senesino's departure from England mocked the elegant ladies who adored him, including the following splendid example, adorned with a Bickham engraving showing Senesino with his famous leaning-back posture (his one dramatic gesture, according to the rakes). He is about to board ship while his admirers fawn at his feet:

6

Farinelli came in for similar treatment, as can be seen in two settings, "England's Lamentation for ye Loss of Farinelli" and "The Beau's Lamentation for ye Loss of Farinelli". In the latter, the very first line, "As sauntering I rang'd in the park all alone", is a parody the Senesino mock-lament.

The objects of parody were not only the *castrati*, who clearly invited mockery from the very "laddish" English gentlemen; Faustina and Cuzzoni, the Italian sopranos famous for the unseemly brawling on stage as divas trying to outwit each other, were also ridiculed. With "Sally Cuzzoni and two Eunuchs stony" the level of humour becomes degrading; worse comes later in the song with her "hoh, hoh, hoh" (her famed *coloratura*!). She is said to be "hotter below", a slighting of her virtue without doubt. The "Syren of the Stage", again benefiting from George Bickham's engraving skills, is more polite; but whilst praising the gentle arts of this exotic *soprano*, its author firmly wishes them to return to where they came from, for they have a lewd effect on good English morals.

Figure 7: "The Syren of the Stage" in George Bickham's *The Musical Entertainer*

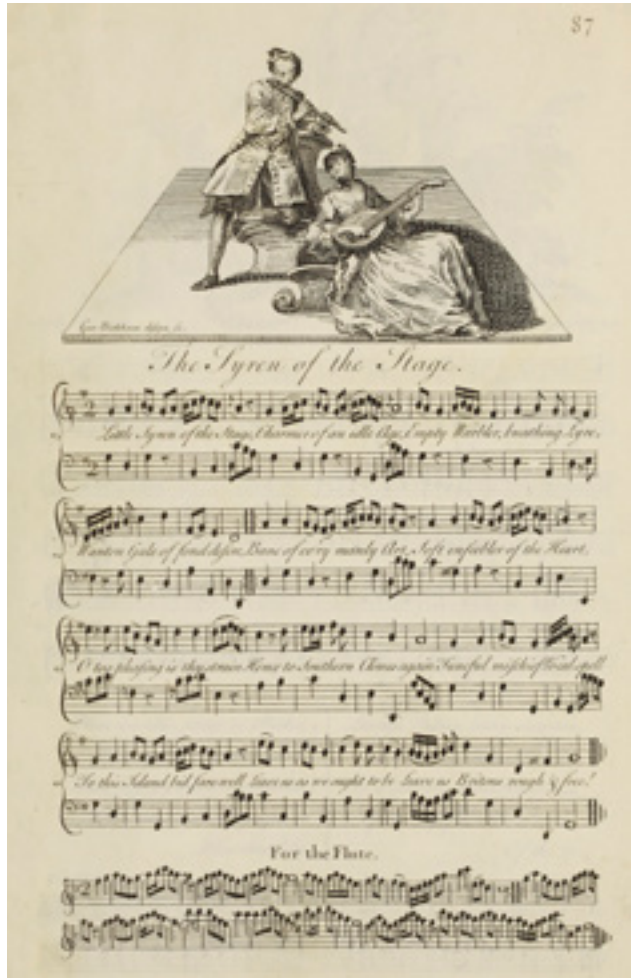
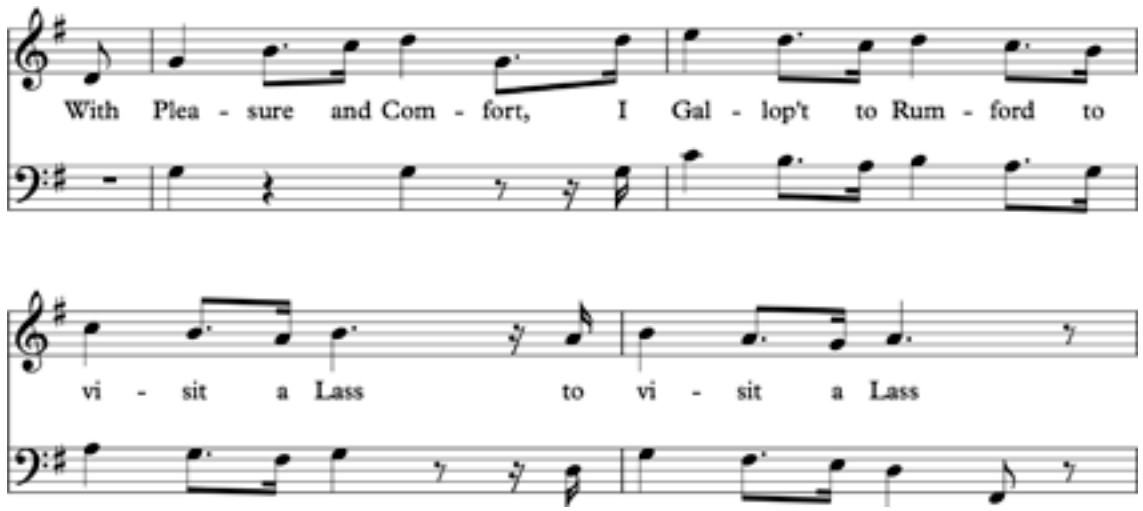


Figure 8: "A burlesque […] made to the celebrated aire in Astartus" (opening)



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Several burlesques lampooning the new operatic style were actually set to Handel's own music. One example is "O my pretty Punchinello", published in Bickham's *Musical Entertainer*: Handel, Senesino, Farinelli and Carestino are all named in the lyric, set to the Handel's pre-existing music, cast in the form of a dialogue between Pulcinello and Colinette, the message being that English taste is actually better served by Italian *commedia dell'arte* than by the operatic high style. Another treatment of the composer's work is "A burlesque […] made to the celebrated aire in Astartus":

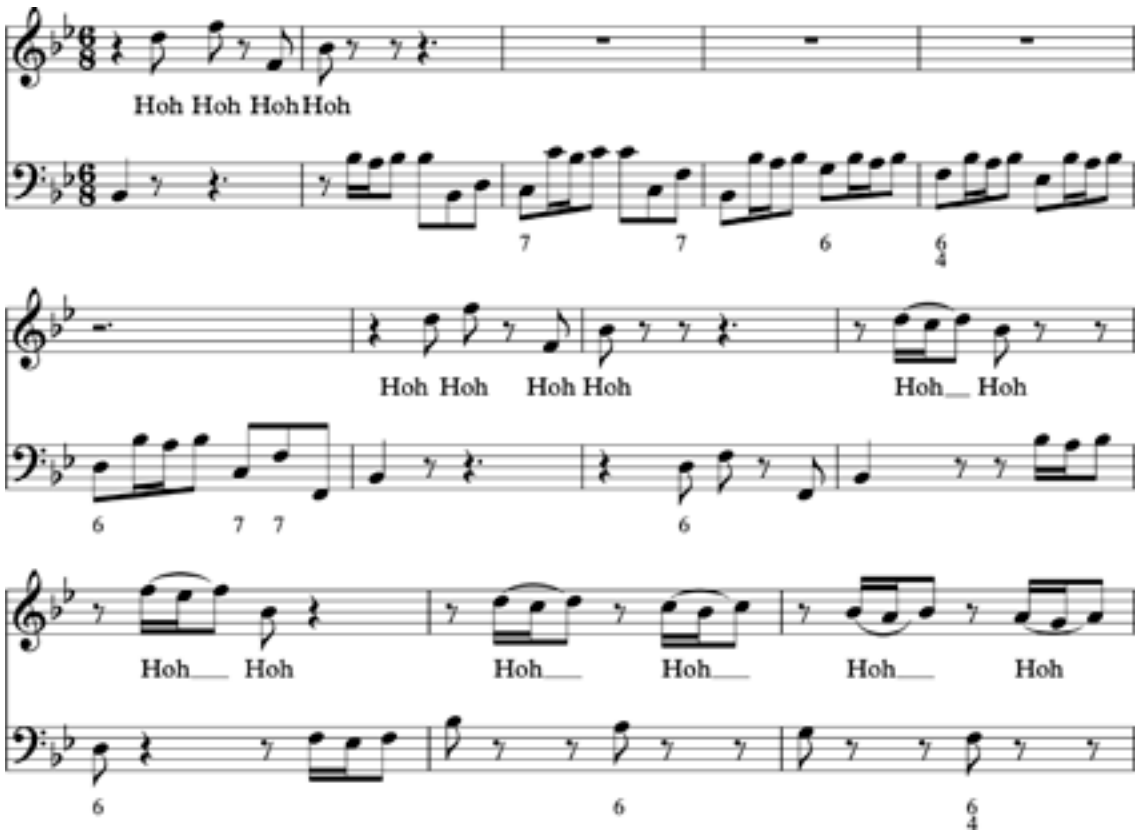
8

A further stage of integration follows with what became one of the most famed English cantatas of the middle years of the 18th century, the "Wheelbarrow Cantata" by "Mr Oswald". The author, in my opinion, is James Oswald, a Scots composer who came to London in the late 1740s and enjoyed great popularity for his ability to weave the current vogue for Scottish tunes with the classical style. In this instance, tunes from the London markets—the trade calls—are brilliantly woven into a very Italianate cantata in a manner both witty and musically engaging. Detailed engravings adorned each page of some of the editions, amplifying the story: the sad progression of Porter Will's hopeful love for fair Cerissa, a seller of cherries. She develops empty-headed notions beyond her station and cruelly puts poor Will down. In each engraving there is a second-scene commentary observed through an open window of what looks like a *bordello*. These seasoned ladies laugh at the antics of the innocents out front. In this composition the mock song genre had, I would say, come full circle, developing into a style both assured and entertaining: full of social comment, true to its original impetus of making valid criticism of overpraising foreign styles at the expense of English works, yet valuable in itself and for its own sake. It is a nice irony that it was a Scotsman who composed in praise of Englishness! With its sequence of recitative, aria, recitative and aria, the "Wheelbarrow Cantata" obeys the classical form of the Italian cantata style, quite as skilfully as the best English works in that genre.

Having come of age, the mock song fulfilled the age-long cycle of subsequently moving into decline; there followed a satiated stage of very late 18th century-style manifestations. No less a person than David Garrick, the famed and adored English actor-manager joined the concoction of a pseudo-cantata of bad taste. Its subject was a young lady of society, Lucy, who suffered the inconvenience on one occasion in high society of having a bad bout of wind—"fix't air", in their parlance. The Italian high style is used to great effect in the unfolding of the story of her unsavoury fart and her leaving the room while leaving her traces behind her. Everyone at that time thought it hilarious: schoolboy humour if ever there was! The cantata is unusual in that it proceeds from being for one voice, becomes a duet and finally concludes as a trio, in the manner of a glee, to which company it partially belongs. It is still a successful piece of music, though bordering on the unsavoury.

After this display, things can only go downhill; this time in the hands of two people hidden by pseudonyms: John Rumfish Esq. and Dr Merriwagg. As yet it has not been possible to identify these two—one the poet, the other the composer, at least if their title page is to be believed. This edition has not hitherto received notice from any scholarship, so far as I can ascertain. Yet their contribution to the mock-song genre is considerable, if over-inflated: it has a whiff of "noble rot", carefully cultivated by the perpetrators, for their art is highly skilful, developed and assured. In their collection called Splenetic Pills (perhaps echoing Thomas Durfey's *Pills to Purge Melancholy* from a century before) published towards the end of the 18th century, the creators gather a number of humorous songs. Not all should be classed as mock songs; four of them, however, display features of and, to some degree, parody the Italian style.

Figure 9: Rumfish and Merrinwagg, "The Modish Musician" (excerpt)



"The Modish Musician" employs the by now ubiquitous "Hoh, hoh, hoh" to imitate Italian roulades, decorative cadenzas and other such devices. Here, however, a degree of "virtuosity" is required to bring it off—that is, the singer has to be more than capable to sing the parody. "Robin Hood" renders the archetypal English figure in the Italian style for comical (some humour doesn't pass from age to age). In rather the same vein the next two songs follow the same theme as Lucy of "the fix't air"; the young lady creates a kerfuffle, protesting overmuch that "her lace has broke". The solo song is followed by a catch for three voices, for three gentlemen who know exactly the nature of the problem. She was caught short, created a distraction as a

smoke screen and left the room with "a fuzz, fuzz, fuzzing fart" and an unpleasant odour too! It would seem that mock songs had degenerated into parlour room bawdy, with the merest veneer of criticism of things Italian.

For our grand finale, perhaps the most famous piece of mockery can be presented in a fresh light. I refer to the so-called "Rossini Cat Duet" for two sopranos: it has been proved beyond doubt for some time that the most likely composer of this piece is in fact Robert Lucas Pearsall. In the preface to the 1973 edition Edgar Hunt laid out the incontrovertible evidence:

> When Pearsall moved from Carlsruhe to Schloss Wartensee on Lake Constance in 1843, the contents of a number of parcels and boxes of his music were listed, and there we find "The Cat Duet". It also appears in the full score of his *Die Nacht eines Schwärmers* […] Now Pearsall was always punctilious in acknowledging any borrowing from another composer, but there is no acknowledgement here. We also know from his "Cobbett" letters […] how Pearsall could satirize the operatic style of Rossini and his contemporaries. All this points to Pearsall, not Rossini, as the true composer of this duet.

However, such is the magnetic pull of the familiar, especially the familiar tale, that nothing, it seems, can break the false story that this is by Rossini. Maybe, in the final analysis, this is the ultimate jest: the mock song to end all mock songs is thought to be by one of the most famed and adulated Italians of all time—Gioachino Rossini—when in fact it is by a little-known, much underrated English composer of the early 19th century: Robert Lucas Pearsall! Let the mocking continue: it is good for the blood.

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Mistress Anne Bracegirdle's "Passionate Postures"

William Congreve's *The Way of the World* had a remarkable first-night cast in May 1700: the men included Betterton, Verbruggen, Bowen, Mr. Bowman; amongst the women were Leigh, Bracegirdle, Barry and Mistress Bowman. Such a star line-up represented the best that London theatre could muster, while the play itself is arguably Congreve's finest comedy. This did not prevent a cold reception on the first night; even more curiously, a new production didn't take place until 1718, by which time most of the original cast were dead. Such a delay, even for plays of mediocre quality, was almost unheard of.

Though they are intriguing, these facts do not concern me at the present moment. What I would like to focus on is the presence, on that first night, of one woman of considerable importance, though she was not listed in the *Dramatis Personae*. I believe her first name was Mary, though I cannot be completely sure: her surname was Hodgson. She married the actor John Hodgson in May 1692, two weeks after the premiere of *The Fairy Queen*, where she was listed under her maiden name Dyer; she played *Mystery*, singing "I am come to lock all fast" and, later, the song "Love's a sweet passion". She was never famous for her acting, known rather as the professional singer. In this role, she fulfilled a most important task, performing songs for plays from her first appearance in 1692 until her retirement in 1706. Some of you might have noticed that her retirement date fits with Anne Bracegirdle's retirement, along with the virtual disappearance from public view of William Congreve, and John Eccles. The "gang of four" worked incredibly closely together, being an important creative entity of the company that broke away in 1695, under the leadership of Thomas Betterton, in order to set up in Lincolns Inn Fields.

Over half of the 57 identified songs composed for Mistress Hodgson to sing were composed by John Eccles, including some designed not for the theatre, but for the music concerts at York House and other places. Undoubtedly, her main function was to provide songs, often difficult and quite virtuosic, within the context of plays.

This she did on the opening night of *The Way of the World*. This song is one of those vocally demanding pieces, a tirade against innocent love and a brilliant, sour lyric from Congreve:

> Love, Love, Love!
> Love's but the frailty of the Mind,
> When 'tis not with Ambition join'd.
> A Sickly Flame which if not fed expires,
> And feeding wastes, in self-consuming Fires.
>
> 'Tis not to wound a wanton Boy,
> Or Am'rous Youth that gives the Joy,
> But 'tis the Glory to have pierced a Swain,
> For whom inferiour Beauties Sigh'd in vain.

Then I alone the Conquest Prize,
When I insult a Rival's Eyes;
If there's delight in Love,'tis when I see
That Heart, which Others bleed for, bleed for me.

Although in the printed song-sheet Mrs. Hodgson is identified as the singer and in the playbook the song is said to be "Set by Mr. John Eccles, and sung by Mrs. Hodgson", I think we can deduce that initially John Eccles had Mrs. Bracegirdle in mind as the singer. This is not simply on the grounds that the poem's content is perfectly fitting to the character of Millamant, "a fine Lady … who … loves Mirabell"; the song is also introduced by Millamant in a curious manner. She is sharing the scene with Mrs. Marwood in a pointedly bitchy dialogue and has these lines:

MILLAMANT: I'm resolved, I'll have a Song to keep up my Spirits.

Enter *Mincing*.
Desire Mrs—that is in the next Room to sing the Song I wou'd have learnt Yesterday. You shall hear it, Madam—Not that there's any great Matter in it—But 'tis agreeable to my Humour.

The song not only has dramatic function, but actually defines the underlying feelings of Millamant—these are her thoughts towards Mrs. Marwood, her rival in love. In a dramatic sense, the song achieves much while entertaining at the same time. Ever since Anne Bracegirdle's famed performance of John Eccles' mad song "I burn, I burn" back in 1695, playwrights and composers had been trying to find an equal success to it. This is what really lies behind this Congreve lyric and Eccles' setting of—it was designed for Anne but, as she says, "I would have learnt yesterday". This line was surely inserted at the last minute in the dress rehearsal, because she had not been able to learn the song quickly enough for the first performance. This must have been disappointing to her many admirers, thirsting for another "winner" from the mouth of their darling. Anne was an actress first, with a charming singing voice used to good effect at times, but she was not a natural or trained musician. When comparing songs created for her to those composed for Hodgson, the professional singer, it is immediately clear that simplicity dominates the one, while subtle ornamentation and rapid roulades are more a feature of the other. There are of course many "simple" tuneful songs for Hodgson, too—this is, after all, music for the theatre, where directness of style naturally dominates.

Anne learned everything by rote and directly from the composer himself, John Eccles. We even have an engraving of her, dressed in her theatre costume for her role of Marcella, learning the song "I burn, I burn". Look closely, and you can see her lips pursing to make the "b" of "burn", with John Eccles accompanying her on the theorbo. They are both seated at a table, no doubt in the "tyring room" backstage, just before she goes on to do her unforgettable performance. But the trouble she has reading and learning the notes! See her finger tracing its way across the roulades, as one in doubt! And her right hand beating time, holding on to whatever security she can!

2

Figure 1: Engraving from title page of John Playford's *Deliciae Musicae* (1695-96)

Incidentally, if I am correct that this is John Eccles tutoring her, this is the only known depiction of him—a portrait, though stylized, of great significance, therefore. That the female is indeed Anne Bracegirdle has never been contested—it is a title page adorning the new series, *Deliciae Musicae*, which came out very soon after her unforgettable performance; many of the songs included are in praise of her skill and beauty. This was a publication dedicated to the theatre star of the day—she was undoubtedly the star of that year and of the entire decade that followed.

Stylized portraiture in engravings of the time are not infrequent. The classical mode found in the title page of *The Judgment of Paris* is understandable, given the subject matter drawn from ancient Greek mythology. However, it is possible to find local and contemporary taste in the details of the goddesses: Anne Bracegirdle played Venus, while Mary Hodgson played Juno. This is how the complete engraving appears:

Figure 2: Title-page engraving of John Eccles' *The Judgment of Paris* (1700)

2

In this idyllic landscape, looking closely at Venus there is, at the very least, a facial resemblance to Anne Bracegirdle: what is more, she appears in a state in which many of her admirers would have like to see her, their overheated imaginations fed by so much innuendo in plays and by the hack gossipmongers.

3 *Figure 3*: *The Judgment of Paris* (detail)

This is a lifelike engraving, the accuracy of which is well attested:

4 *Figure 4:* Engraving of Anne Bracegirdle by James Stow, after *Harding's Biographical Mirrour*

Figure 5: The Judgment of Paris (detail)

If Anne Bracegirdle was being portrayed in her role as Venus, then perhaps we might expect to see a likeness of Mary Hodgson as Juno, the part designed for her. Although she was not regarded as an actress but as a singer, she did play certain roles in special circumstances. For example, it would appear that she took the title role of Dido in the revivals of 1700 and 1704. Both Juno and Dido can be seen as heroic females, matriarchal, not needing to move with speed, but with gravitas. The unperformed role of Jealous Juno in *Semele* was, I am sure, designed for her. This perhaps says something of Mary Hodgson's physique—she may well have been of stouter build and not the kind of idealized feminine beauty in fashion at that time. If there were a likeness in the Juno engraving, this would seem to be borne out, as here she is given a face and neck of such a build:

5

Mistress Bowman played Pallas Athena, but she is cast in the shadows in the engraving. The men who played Mercury and Paris are anonymous and depicted as such in the engraving.

I could be criticized, of course, for exercising an overworked imagination—and that would be fair enough. However, we lack so much precise and certain knowledge—little enough about famous characters such as Anne Bracegirdle, but even less about the supporting roles like Mary Hodgson—that we have, I think, a duty to explore possibilities, providing they are not presented as certainties. Creative imagination can spark new enquiries yielding new finds and new perspectives. Within these plays and songs there are many topical references to real events and real people; playwrights like Congreve, furthermore, could not bear to leave things alone. He thrived on polemic and debate: words were his trade.

In Act V Scene One of *The Way of the World* Congreve gives Lady Wishfort a very topical speech against the backdrop of the real tirades between himself and Jeremy Collier, who published in 1698 a vituperative paper against the theatre and its perceived immorality entitled *A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage, together with the Sense and Antiquity upon this Argument*. Congreve never left this alone, attacking Collier when silence may have been more judicious. Indeed, the initial poor reception of what has, with hindsight, become to be seen as his finest comedy may well have had to do with his handling of these delicate public arguments. Yet true to his lively pen he embeds in this play a renewed direct attack on Collier:

> LADY WISHFORT: I warrant you […] she would never have heard his long Lectures against Singing and Dancing, and such Debaucheries; and going to filthy Plays; and Profane Musick-meetings, where the lewd Trebles squeek nothing but Bawdy, and the Basses roar Blasphemy. O, she would have swoon'd at the Sight or Name of an obscene Play-book – and can I think after all this, that my Daughter can be Naught? What, a Whore? And thought it Excommunication to set her Foot within the door of a Play-house.

It takes a brave man to carry his argument into the very place—the theatre—that was so recently treated with lacerating criticism.

I mention this as an example of how closely argued, how specifically topical, how close to biography much of what now appears to us as art for its own sake is. This, I think, helps to understand the next step in my exploration. Here is a song published in *Mercurius Musicus* for November/December 1700, composed by John Berenclow. It is almost certainly a response to a recent revival of Hamlet in which Anne Bracegirdle played Ophelia:

Ophelia's air

Ophelia's air, her mein, her face
And easy shape conspire to please;
But when in moving scenes she shines
And to her beauty action joins,
From ev'ry grace the arrows fly
And crowds of gazing lovers die.
Against variety of charms
'Tis hard to find defensive arms,
Yet her bright eyes and tuneful voice
Give but imaginary joys.
What real ones she may bestow
The happy swains can tell that know.

I propose to study this lyric line by line, reading it as any theatre enthusiast of the time, even the most casual, might have read it.

Ophelia's air, her mein, her face

Ophelia in *Hamlet*, with her snatches of "mad songs" is a perfect role for Anne Bracegirdle; her "Air" (manner), "Mein" (spirit) and "Face" (her physical beauty, especially her eyes and lips) were extolled in numerous poems and songs.

And easy shape conspire to please;

Bracegirdle's body was praised highly: Aston notes, in his *Brief Supplement to Colley Cibber's Lives*, that "she was finely shap'd, and had very handsome Legs and Feet; and her Gait, or Walk, was free, manlike and modest, when in Breeches […] of a lovely height, with dark-brown Hair and Eyebrows, black sparkling Eyes, and a fresh blushy complexion; and whenever she exerted herself, had an involuntary Flushing in her Breast, Neck and Face, having continually a cheerful Aspect, and a fine Set of even white Teeth." Clearly, her admirers had inspected every visible part of her anatomy and saw it was good!

But when in moving scenes she shines:

"Moving scenes" might be interpreted two ways: both are, I think, intended. A moving scene is of course one which is packed with emotion, the observer being moved by it emotionally; this Anne could certainly do (so too could Elizabeth Barry and several other of the popular actresses of the time). The second inference is harder for us to understand and is the prime basis for this present exploration: she moved, physically, in still scenes, miming and gesturing in a manner which was unforgettable for the audience. It would seem that her ability to express the passions in eye, head, hand and body gestures had reached a zenith. Her fabled skill is often reported: these were her "passionate postures". It was also linked with the modulation of her voice in speech and in song, but more of this later. The next line of the lyric spells out her skill:

And to her Beauty Action joins

I think the interpretation of this is clearly that she added gestural skills of some kind to her natural beauty.

From ev'ry grace the arrows fly
And crowds of gazing lovers die.

All of her gifts and charms (her "ev'ry grace") were each like a Cupid dart fired into the hearts of her gazing lovers, gathered in crowds because of the extent of her popularity.

Against variety of charms
'Tis hard to find defensive arms

Bracegirdle not only had an extensive and carefully rehearsed armoury of devices and techniques, but also the skill and sureness to improvise and play with the moment, as well as with the audiences' emotions. These are skills any good performer has to develop (any stand-up comic of today knows this, as did such a performer, Thomas Doggett, then). Taking an audience by surprise, off guard, is the hallmark of performing success.

Yet her bright eyes and tuneful voice
Give but imaginary joys.

These pleasures are imagined and are in the minds of the beholders. Their fantasy may be exercised, but this is not real experience:

What real ones she may bestow
The happy swains can tell that know.

The "real ones" implies sexual favours, desired by many. Though her chaste persona was her preferred image—she was "the famous Virgin Actress"—the theatre and London gossip would not let that be. The "happy swains that know" (note the plural swains!) was the subject of much debate. Who were the lucky fellows that had enjoyed Bracegirdle's embraces, her genuine passionate postures? This delightful lyric turns out to be yet another part of the stream of gossip, an example of playful soft porn à la 1700.

Long before, in the early 1690s, many had believed the actor William Mountfort to have been her lover. Indeed, a jealous suitor, Captain Hill, and his friend, Lord Mohun, had had Mountfort murdered. Anne Bracegirdle had weathered that trial, keeping her reputation as a virgin intact. This was announced publicly, for in her next song in the very next play she sang "I'm still a Maid, I'm still of Vesta's Train". Vesta was the Roman goddess of virginity; her vestal virgins were undefiled, noted for their purity of living. Anne's believing audience probably expressed a sigh of relief, or at least a knowing nudge and wink.
Many years later, the actor Colley Cibber wrote in his *Apology*:

> Blooming to her Maturity, her Reputation as an actress gradually rose with that of her Person; never any Woman was in such general Favour of her Spectators, which, to the last Scene of her Dramatick Life, she maintained by not being unguarded in her private Character. This Discretion contributed not a little to make her the Cara, the Darling of the Theatre: For it will be no extravagant thing to say, Scarce an Audience saw her that were less than half of them Lovers, without a suspected Favourite among them: And tho' she might be said to have been the Universal Passion, and under the highest Temptations, her Constancy in resisting them served but to increase the number of her Admirers …

As a "theatre luvvie", Cibber had a protective attitude towards his own colleagues. Not everyone was so noble: Tom Brown, the sharpest gossip-hack of the day showed no mercy! By 1700, William Congreve was thought by many to be first in line for being her secret lover and Tom Brown indulges himself with this little piece in his collection called *Amusements Serious and Comical*, 1700:

> [William Congreve] dines with her almost every day, yet she's a maid; he rides out with her and visits her almost every day, yet she's a maid; if I had not a particular respect for her, I should go near to say he lies with her, yet she's a maid. Now I leave the World to judge whether it be his or her fault that she has so long kept her maidenhead, since gentlemen of his profession have generally a greater respect for the Ladies than that comes to.

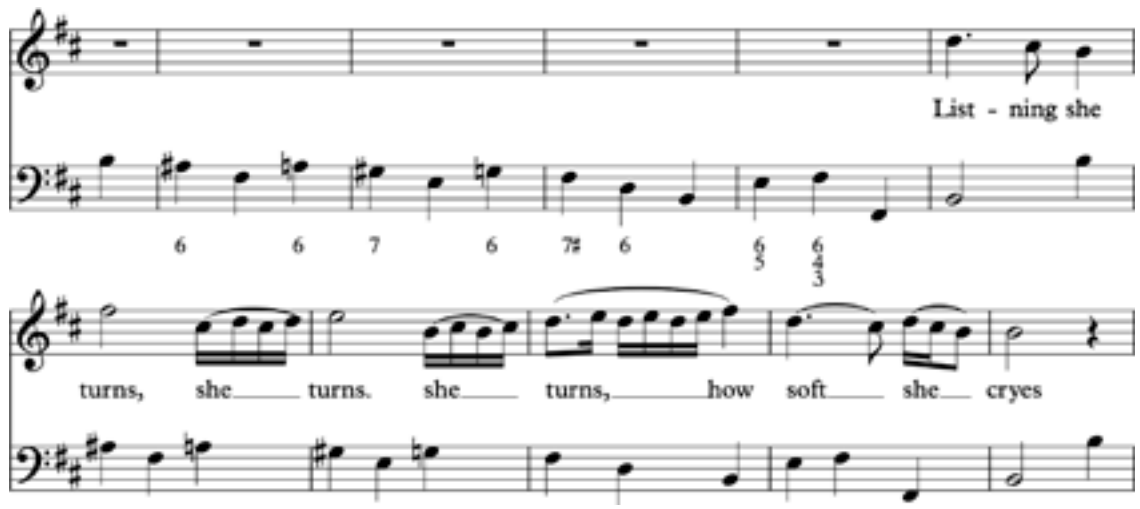
Other suspected lovers were named, including her music tutor, the composer John Eccles, and several members of the nobility: Lords Scarsdale, Halifax, Devonshire and Dorset, who were all known to have a *tendre* for her. At least one other playwright, Nicholas Rowe, courted her through the parts he created for her. All of this adoration suggests Anne Bracegirdle embodied certain powers, natural gifts transformed by art and skill.

To get closer to these fabled skills, I will look at several specific contexts, where Anne used still postures, movement, mime and gestures to create an overall powerful effect. Extrapolating from these cases we can return to the famous scene in *The Way of the World* and hypothesise as to exactly how Anne and Mary Hodgson might have worked as a double act.

Take the *British Enchanters*, for example: the play begins with a beautifully contrived piece of theatre choreography with solemn music, with classically arranged statues which then come slowly to life, by implication through the power of music and harmony. Anne Bracegirdle is amongst these statues, and no doubt took centre stage as the song *List'ning she turns* was sung by Mrs. Hodgson. It was set by the dancing master Bartholomew Isaac to a chromatic ground, recalling Dido's famous lament from Purcell. The musical means are of the simplest, yet subtle and powerfully moving is the effect.

6

Figure 6: "Listning she turns" set by Mr. Isack from *The British Enchanters*



The play begins with an opening set piece using incantation, magic, music, movement and potted history. The scene is set thus:

> The Curtain rises to a Flourish of all Sorts of loud Musick. The Scene is a Grove beautify'd with Fountains, Statues, &c. Urganda is discover'd as in the midst of some Ceremony of Enchantment. Thunder during the Musick.

Oriana (Anne Bracegirdle) is to be wedded to the Roman emperor Constantius (the name Oriana of course recalls the Tudor era and Queen Elizabeth, being one of her many pseudonyms). This intended wedding is against her wishes for she is in love with and loved by a "famous Knight-Adventurer, Amadis", who is of true British stock. Urganda is a good enchantress; this druid-like opening scene in a forest with statues is intended to summon the archetype of proud, independent ancient Britain. Oriana is the centrepiece of this large scene and the music all around creates a sense of wonder and enchantment. A chorus of voices sings words drawn from familiar St Cecilia Odes (probably Henry Purcell's music was used here, since it fits the context admirably and not). A solo voice tells of a conversation between Jason and Orpheus:

> Take thy Harp, and melt the Maid;
> Vows are vain, with Musick warm her,
> Play my Friend, and charm the Charmer

Anne Bracegirdle is the maid, always the charmer and is now fused with Eurydice for good measure. Here is contemporary biography, a famous Tudor queen, ancient British invented history and ancient Greek mythology all wrapped together, with music from pseudo-Christian St Cecilia odes and a Carthaginian queen's dying lament. It might be declared a total mishmash, yet it worked. The song "List'ning she turns" plays on the concept of turning. It begins with a musical turn; then a bringing to life of statues and trees or turning as metamorphosis; Oriana turning away from the intended betrothal; Orpheus' turning which caused Eurydice to be turned back to Hades; all this held in place by the repeated returning of the chromatic ground. The Caecilian chorus sounds again, then another solo voice declares the following, the music for which does not survive, though the scansion suits a solo section of a Purcell ode:

> When with adoring Looks we gaze
> On bright Oriana's heav'nly Face,
> In every Glance, and every Grace,
> What is it that we see,
> But Harmony;
> Celestial Harmony.
> Our ravish'd Hearts leap up to meet
> The Musick of her Eyes, and Dance around her Feet.

Though embedded in a song lyric, here is very specific instruction on what Anne was doing through all of this magic-making: she was using glances and graces, that is eye and head gestures, together with hand and body movements, creating "Harmony". Her still postures were at the very centre of this huge theatrical set piece: indeed, the whole opening of the play was built around the audience's expectation of seeing their "darling of the stage" treated with near-superstar status. Those who desired it were not disappointed, though other tastes were in the air: that was in 1706, when English talents were beginning to be submerged and besieged by the adoration of things Italian and the fickle public were being wooed with novelty. Anne was shortly to retire, along with Mistress Hodgson, Congreve and Eccles.

Back in 1700 however, all four were at the height of their popularity and it was indeed a very busy time for each of them. In those few months, aside from *The Way of the World*, Anne, Mistress Hodgson and Elizabeth Barry worked together in other new productions, *The Beau Defeated* and *The Ambitious Stepmother*, as well as numerous revivals. 1701 was even busier, dominated by *The Prize Competition*, but with at least four other new works in which they all performed. The music was mostly by John Eccles; occasionally, Congreve contributed additional lyrics to be sung and interpolated in other playwrights' work. 1701 and 1702 saw the revival and complete reworking of *Alexander the Great: or The Rival Queens*, an historical tragedy by Nathaniel Lee. Anne was bequeathed the role of Statira from Mistress Boutell, for whom it was written back in 1677, and made it her own.

New music was created for this production: two songs composed by Daniel Purcell were printed and achieved considerable popularity as independent songs: "Is Innocence so void of care" and "She walks as she dreams". Both songs are about Statira (Anne), asleep in a scene filled with heavy foreboding, where music is used to intensify the atmosphere of impending tragedy. Fortunately, the complete music for this revival survives in manuscript form, complete with annotations and extra stage instructions, in the Fitzwilliam Library in Cambridge. The instrumental ritornelli, choruses and duets between Darius and the Queen (both ghosts revisiting their daughter who is asleep) are complete. The scene is manipulated to focus on Anne's postures and movements in the guise of sleepwalking: though asleep, with this device she is still the centre of the action. How powerful it must have been, given the lighting techniques achievable at this time, witnessing an almost total blackout, ghosts hovering in the air and a bloody dagger appearing suspended, threatening the "darling of the stage" as she innocently sleepwalked to dramatic music! The scene was created for Anne Bracegirdle to display her skills; an elaborate set intended to give the audience exactly what they desired. It happened also to be not too much of a wrench for the actual drama, but I do think the design was personality-led.

One more example shows scriptwriters creating a scene designed to show off Anne's passionate postures. The year is 1697 and William Congreve finally produced a tragedy, his only one: *The Mourning Bride*, set exotically in Granada, Spain at the time of the Moorish era. Anne played the eponymous bride, as ever not desiring the marriage, hence her mourning. The opening scene establishes the mood, for Congreve decides to give the audience their desire at the outset, a scene dominated by the "bewitching Bracegirdle" in deep despair. There is no song here, but the stage directions call for atmospheric music:

> A Room of State.
> The Curtain rising slowly to soft Musick, discovers Almeria in Mourning, Leonora (the Princess' attendant) waiting in Mourning. After the Musick Almeria rises from her Chair, and comes forward.

The curtain music fortunately survives for this play: it is by Gottfried Finger, one of the four composers to enter the *Prize Competition* in 1701. He was a close friend of Eccles and Daniel Purcell. The play begins then with music and with Anne seated, going through a sequence of mourning postures, probably in a style we today would find somewhat melodramatic and highly artificial, though the sharp observers of the day would judge this opening scene on how well portrayed this particular emotion was expressed. The music lingers and pauses, as does Almeria: she rises slowly, comes forward with expressive hand and body movements in silence, holds the attention for a moment, then speaks.

Her words are amongst the most famous in the English language and, aside from Shakespeare (who is often thought to have penned these lines!) amongst the most oft quoted. Anne's delivery, with every part of her being expressing each changing passion, would have been witnessed by a packed audience with bated breath, hearing these magical words for the first time; she would have known how to make the most of every small delay, every nuance, every diminuendo. The speech is designed in two parts: first, a eulogy on the power of music to soften all hearts; then, using opposition and disjunctive emotion, Almeria declares that the very beauty of the music causes her great turmoil and that her condition is worsened, whilst all others experience relief. The audience are taken on a journey: initially experiencing delight and pleasure, it is then turned completely around and thrown into a state of utter dejection. I cannot do the speech justice, being no Bracegirdle, but your imaginations might cloth this pedestrian utterance with fantastical thoughts of "passionate postures":

> ALMERIA: Musick has Charms to sooth a savage Breast,
> To soften Rocks, or bend a knotted Oak.
> I've read, that things inanimate have mov'd
> And, as with living Souls, have been inform'd,
> By Magick Numbers and persuasive Sound.
>
> What then am I? Am I more senseless grown
> Than Trees, or Flint? O Force of constant Woe!
> 'Tis not in Harmony to calm my Griefs.
>
> Anselmo sleeps, and is at Peace; last Night,
> The silent Tomb receiv'd the good old King;
> He and his Sorrows now are safely lodg'd
> Within its cold, but hospitable Bosom.
> Why am not I at Peace?

Is this not a brilliant speech for the very start of a play? It displays such an individual use of the English language and this in what is today the least respected of Congreve's plays, by those who know about these things. Yet these same experts have no word of praise for Congreve's last works: *A Hymn to Harmony, The Judgment of Paris* and the operatic masterpiece of a libretto, *Semele*. No one even mentions his knockabout farce-cum-satire *Squire Trelooby*, nor his perfectly judged *Irregular Ode to Mistress Arabella Hunt*. None of these works fit into the accepted canon of performance works, yet each one is a succinct, perfect example of the particular genre represented. It is time for them to be studied in this manner and therefore newly appraised.

What were Anne Bracegirdle's sources and inspiration for her "passionate postures"? First and foremost must have been her adoptive father, whose own awareness of stagecraft was unequalled: Thomas Betterton. His pedigree can lay claim to being linked back to the greatest era of English theatre, that of Shakespeare and the Jacobean stage. As a youth he worked closely with Sir William Davenant, who some, including himself, claimed was fathered by Shakespeare himself. This detail would not matter, save for the fact that it provides firm links with the time before the Civil War. In 1662, at the age of twenty, Betterton was sent to Paris for a year to study stagecraft, scenery and other devices. In a word, he represents the link with the old and the awareness of the new. He was a father-figure not only to Anne Bracegirdle, but to a whole generation of actors whom he held together as a family. Criticisms of him there might have been—how could there not be, in such a tumultuous, rambunctious kind of milieu? Really though, he represented stability in an otherwise unstable world. His writings, and those written in his name, must be amongst the most important documents of the time in relation to theatre practice. Read *The Life of Thomas Betterton* carefully, for it is stuffed full of insight and wisdom regarding stagecraft, voice production, posture, gesture and even singing! Anne grew up with all of this, not as theory, but as daily practice, learning on the wing at the white heat pace of real theatre life. It is interesting to note, in passing, just how many times Betterton played father to Bracegirdle in the theatre, as in life: yet another reminder of how closely fused reality and drama were.

Thomas Betterton urged a close study of "historical paintings" in order to strike a more affective pose, especially for the great tragic roles. When he was a youth several works were in circulation, translated from the French, which studied the passions of man: Descartes' *The Passions of the Soul* and Cureau de la Chambre's *The Character of the Passions* were both in circulation from around 1650. Earlier yet were several English works, including the now famous *Chirologia* by John Bulwer, a work dedicated to hand gestures appropriate for the orator, preacher and actor, as well as the less well known *The Passions of the Mind*, by T.W. which appeared as early as 1601.

Nathaniel Crouch's *Unparallel'd Varieties: or, The Matchless Actions and Passions of Mankind* was published in 1683, with three editions before the end of the century. This acted, I imagine, as some sort of reference book for actors, for it was unequalled in its thoroughness. Crouch's preface claims the reader will find:

> Displayed in near Four Hundred Notable Instances and Examples.
> Discovering the transcendant Effects: Of Love, Of Magnanimity,
> Of Chastity. And on the contrary the Tremendous Consequences
> Of Hatred, Of Cowardice, Of Ambition.

In the book are several engravings depicting scenes and a complete survey of history and fable with teachings on the effects of passions on society. It was a reference book for painters depicting tragic scenes, for playwrights embroidering history and for actors who were to play these roles. This is not yet a well-known source; for us, the reading is tough going. More immediately attractive to modern scholars has been *The Characters of The Passions* by Monsieur Le Brun, designed as a manual to assist "history painting" (I think art scholarship is possibly still some years ahead of musicology and theatre studies). It is easier to digest pictures and engravings than it is heavy prose on ancient tragic stories, although I find Le Brun's rather schematic drawings of the passions decidedly uninspiring.

Next, in 1710, comes Charles Gildon's aforementioned *The Life of Thomas Betterton, the late Eminent Tragedian. Wherein the Actions and Utterances on Stage, Bar and Pulpit, are distinctly consider'd'*. Gildon purports this to be a report of a last conversation with the aged actor, in addition to some of the actor's own writings given to Gildon on that occasion. It is certainly close to the source, to the very backbone of the entire era we are considering. As such, this book forms the prima materia for our studies. We might read and study every detail in this amazing book, but Anne Bracegirdle actually lived it, day in and day out, and put its wisdom into practice daily with her mentor, her adopted father, and co-actor, being the great acting "guru" of the age.

After Betterton's death there appeared a flood of studies on the passions, occupying much energy in many fields of endeavour. The reading list I have produced on the subject in the appendix is not complete and only English sources are considered; nevertheless, the detail and importance the 18th century attached to the topic is staggering. Much of this later data can, with due care, be applied retrospectively to this generation. The era of David Garrick was not a break with the past, but a revitalising of it. What was new was the depth of debate and scrutiny given to actors and their styles, quirks and mannerisms. Everyone became their own theatre critic and expert and the spread of daily news, discussion and gossip provided an opportunity for many thousands of words to be engaged and ink to be spread. Coffeehouse debate never enjoyed so many experts.

Remember this, though: every writer of worth begins by saying something like "all action and gesture arise from nature". Certainly, then, art and skill develop this basis, to heighten presentation in performance. Being used to television–style acting today, with close mugshots, we would not see much that is natural in Anne Bracegirdle's style. Her spoken voice covered a range of six tones (Betterton lays down the law very clearly on this) forming a kind of cantilena speech – somewhere between ordinary speech and song. Betterton picks out the perfect example for this: Mistress Barry, specifically in her opening speech in Otway's *The Orphan*. Yet she was not a singer, and this was high tragedy. Gestures must follow the rhetoric of the words; punctuation and word capitalisation give important clues to the execution of action and utterance, especially in tragedy. Modern editions that "rationalise" spelling, punctuation and capitalisation are in fact doing away with much very important information regarding emphasis and movement. I think Congreve and his colleagues knew the language well enough to know what they wanted: we, in a relative state of ignorance, adapt and improve at our peril and our loss.

If we were to read all the items on the reading list below, if we were to look at all the history paintings and were to study (not just read, but study) Thomas Betterton's writings, we would begin to have some clues as to the power and memorable effect of Mistress Anne Bracegirdle's "passionate postures".

APPENDIX

The Passions: Reference Works

THE PASSIONS OF THE MINDE

Th.[omas] W.[right], London 1601

A firmly moral approach steeped in ancient classical authority and the Bible. Worth returning to if the older style, scholastic humanism, is needed.

MICROCOSMUS: A Moral Maske

Thomas Nabbes, London 1637

Presented at Salisbury Court, "To Generall liking", this is a delightful work; although not exactly about the passions (more about the elements, humours, temperaments and senses) it is very much in sympathy with the idea.

CHIROLOGIA, or the Natural Language of the Hand. Composed of the Speaking Motions, and Discoursing Gestures thereof

John Bulwer, London 1644

Expressing the passions through hand gestures, carefully portrayed in engravings. Bulwer takes his inspiration from an earlier Italian treatise—not yet inspected—and addresses the use of gesture to the orator, the preacher, and the actor.

THE CHARACTER OF THE PASSIONS

Marin Cureau de la Chambre (translated into English by John Holden), London 1650

An immensely practical book, from the point of view of a physician attached to the French royal court, addressing the problems created by the passions being unleashed and how to harness them for the good.

THE PASSIONS OF THE SOUL: In Three Books

René Descartes (translated into English), London 1650

Concerned with the movement and communication between the soul, mind and body within a surprisingly archaic mode for Descartes, using the authority of the Classical sources more than direct observation. Book II is very specific on particular passions. Important reference point, not least because of the writer's standing, but also for the French link and for the time of the Interregnum.

UNPARALLEL'D VARIETIES: or, The Matchless Actions and Passions of Mankind

R.B. (Richard Burton, a pseudonym for Nathaniel Crouch), London 1683 (and three further editions before 1700)

> Displayed in near Four Hundred Notable Instances and Examples. Discovering the transcendent Effects; Of Love […] Of Magnanimity […] Of Chastity […] And on the contrary the Tremendous Consequences Of Hatred […] Of Cowardice […] Of Ambition …

There are about six engravings of scenes depicting stories. A complete survey of history and fable of the effects of passions on society. With three further editions over twenty years, this must be one of the most widely read sources of the day, providing examples for playwrights, painters etc.

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PASSIONS, according to the Rules of Reason and Religion, viz. Love, Hatred, Desire, Eschewing, Hope, Despair, Fear, Anger, Delight, Sorrow etc.

William Ayloffe, London 1700

Written by a soldier, to a soldier: the dedicatee is John, Earl of Marlborough, as a model of a man with his passions regulated. The book is on how to use the passions constructively.

THE CHARACTERS OF THE PASSIONS, Done after the Originals of Monsr. LeBrun

Translated by John Smith, London 1701

A set of plates from *The Conference* of Monsieur Le Brun, designed primarily for the study of history painting, the functional illustrations are diagrammatic depictions of the Passions.

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PASSIONS: A Sermon preach'd in the Temple-Church, on Midlent Sunday, March the 30th 1701

Musidorus Burghope, London 1701

A PRACTICAL TREATISE OF THE REGULATION OF THE PASSIONS

Francis Bragge, London 1708

THE LIFE OF MR. THOMAS BETTERTON, the late eminent Tragedian. Wherein the Actions and Utterances on Stage, Bar and Pulpit, are distinctly consid'rd. With the Judgment of the late Ingenious Monsieur de St. Evremond, upon the Italian and French Music and Opera's; in a letter to the Duke of Buckingham

Charles Gildon, London 1710

Full of brilliant insights, a most important source of the passions enacted on the stage.

AN ESSAY ON THE NATURE AND CONDUCT OF THE PASSIONS AND AFFECTIONS, WITH ILLUSTRATIONS ON THE MORAL SENSE

Francis Hutcheson, London 1728

"By the Author of the Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue". Essentially concerned with what is good, true and natural; with the attitudes and behaviour which will contribute towards these states; and with the dire warnings of the reverse pull to evil. A quiet reasonable calm pervades the writing; worth returning to, for a gentle meditation.

> The main practical Principles which are inculcated in this Treatise, have this Prejudice in their Favour, that they have been taught and propagated by the best of Men in all Ages.

THE HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH STAGE

Thomas Betterton, London 1741

Not in the same depth as Gildon, but many fresh insights: "Including the Lives, Characters and Amours, of the most Eminent Actors and Actresses. With Instructions for Public Speaking; wherein The Action and Utterance of the Bar, Stage, and Pulpit are Distinctly considered". Bound with this edition is *The Memoirs of Mrs. Anne Oldfield*, who had died 1731 aged forty-one. There is much on her use of the passions in her performances, which were a veritable "recital of the Passions".

THE DOCTRINE OF THE PASSIONS

Isaac Watts, London 1739 (Third edition)

This was probably the most popular 18th-century treatise on the passions, running into many editions. Here is the gentle voice of reason, in the age of reason.

> Where Passion runs riot, there are none of the Rights of God or Man secure from its Insolences. But when these vehement Powers of nature are reduced to the Obedience of reason, it renders our Conduct amiable and useful to our fellow Creatures, and makes Virtue shine in the World.

THE PASSIONS, An Ode for Music

William Collins, 1746, Set first by William Hayes ca. 1750

NB: The concluding lines of this setting are contributed by The Earl of Lichfield; then by Benjamin Cooke, 1784. Both composers were using their very substantial composition to commemorate Handel's style and genre, even though their own settings contained much that was wholly original.

HUMAN PHYSIOGNOMY EXPLAINED: in the Crounian Lectures on Muscular Motion, for the year 1746. Read Before the Royal Society

James Parsons, London 1747

Two lectures on the human face and the muscular processes for expressing the passions. The whole of the second lecture is copied, with the very descriptive illustrations. A quite remarkable work, and central to the subject.

LIFE'S PROGRESS THROUGH THE PASSIONS: OR, THE ADVENTURES OF NATURA

Eliza Fowler Haywood, London 1748

A narrative of a Young Man (Natura!) and his experiences through life, as he meets with various passions.

A MEDICAL DISSERTATION CONCERNING THE EFFECTS OF THE PASSIONS ON HUMAN BODIES

William Clark, London 1752

TREATISE ON THE PASSIONS: SO FAR AS THEY REGARD THE STAGE

Various writers in open correspondence, ca. 1747 (in British Library, shelfmark 641.f.8)

A collection of papers, prints and correspondence relating to David Garrick's skill on the stage, and his ability (or inability!) to express the passions in roles like Macbeth. There is much more of this kind of observation in the library, for this type of commentary almost became a sub-genre of writing.

AN ESSAY ON ACTING: In which will be considered The Mimical Behaviour of a Certain fashionable faulty Actor

Anonymous author attacking Garrick, London 1744

Part of the gathering listed previously. It reads like a typically sour Zoilus, finding nothing good in Garrick, early in his career.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE PASSIONS; Demonstrating their nature, properties, effects, use and abuse

A translation of *De l'usage des passions* of Jean-François Senault, London 1772, two volumes bound in one

Book I, general essays; Book II, Hope; Despair; Courage; Fear; Anger; Pleasure; Pain. General tone more Christian in outlook.

THE ART OF ACTING: Why Sleep the Silent Powers?

Anonymous, ca. 1770

A long ode composed in rhyme, which describes the expression of the passions very well. An excellent resume in verse. Full of brilliant quotations.

THE PASSIONS PERSONIFY'D IN FAMILIAR FABLES

Herbert Lawrence (formerly attributed to Edward Young), London 1773

Adorned with charming engravings.

THE ART OF SPEAKING

James Burgh, Dublin 1779 (Fifth edition)

A very practical set of rules are given in Part One, which is followed by a series of "Lessons" drawn from ancient and modern writers, as examples for study, with emphasis expressed in italics, and notes for practice.

COLLINS'S ODE ON THE PASSIONS set to music by Benjamin Cooke

William Collins, London 1784

Composed for "The Commemoration of Handel" in that year, under royal patronage.

THE PASSIONS, TAUGHT BY TRUTH: An Allegorical Poem

Thomas Beck, London 1795

This is an excellent "invention", being based on Collin's Ode on the Passions; it is a kind of response to it, giving it a moral context – somewhat Christianised, but not too overpoweringly. "Truth" answers all the passions, by transforming them to good.

AN INQUIRY INTO THE NATURE AND ORIGIN OF MENTAL DERANGEMENT, comprehending a consice system of the physiology and pathology of the human mind, and a history of the passions and their effects

Alexander Crichton, London 1798

A SERIES OF PLAYS: in which it is attempted to delineate the stronger passions of the mind. Each passion being the subject of a tragedy and a comedy

Joanna Baillie, London 1798-1812

Brief inspection only, but the characters in the plays are all passions personified. It looks as though the plays were written for the moral education of young ladies.

ELEMENTS OF SELF-KNOWLEDGE: intended to lead youth into an early acquaintance with the nature of man, […] and an enquiry into the genuine nature of the passions

R. C. Dallas, London 1802

A SHORT TREATISE ON THE PASSIONS, ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE HUMAN MIND

"By a Lady", London 1810 (two volumes)

A beautiful work in clear and eloquent English – deserving of close study and familiarity. Volume II covers a range of varied emotions, whereas Volume I sets the scene in a sequence of general essays.

THE PASSIONS, HUMOROUSLY DELINEATED

Timothy Bobbin (of Lancashire), London 1810

A very high-quality parody of the serious works, using exquisite engravings in colour. Low life and deviousness replace the high-minded philosophising and moral cant of the serious works.

THE PASSIONS, a Novel

Rosa Matilda (pseudonym for Charlotte Dacre), London 1811 (in four volumes)

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE ORIGINS AND PROGRESS OF THE PASSIONS

Samuel Walter Burgess, London 1825 (two volumes)

A BOOK OF THE PASSIONS

George Payne Rainsford James, London 1839

A sequence of six stories or melodramas which illustrate each of the major passions (remorse; jealousy; revenge; love; despair; hatred) adorned with fine engravings by Charles Heath. A set of fine poems on nine of the passions by Charles Swain is bound at the end of the copy of the British Library (12621.h.1).

GEMS OF BEAUTY: THE PASSIONS

Marguerite Blessington, the Countess of Blessington, with illustrations by Edmund Thomas Parris, London 1838

Twelve passions in fantastical verse, with exquisite engravings depicting: affection; anger; pity; jealousy; hope; despair; cheerfulness; remorse; joy; envy; fear; love.

A CANTATA, THE PASSIONS, Setting of William Collins' Ode for George Holden, the Conductor

John Richardson, London 1842

Dedicated to Holden and the Liverpool Festival Choral Society, the work uses the chorus extensively, with occasional solos. However, the whole could be effectively done with four voices (SATB) with an accompaniment for the pianoforte.

THE LANGUAGE OF THE PASSIONS

Alexander Melville Bell, Edinburgh 1852

Expressive extracts emphasised and rhetorically punctuated. A series of emotive elocutionary exercises.

THE RIGHT USE OF THE PASSIONS AND EMOTIONS IN THE WORK OF INTELLECTUAL CULTURE

Edward Beecher, 1854

Published as a speech delivered for the American Institute of Instruction (The Introductory Discourse and Lectures).

THE PASSIONS, Setting of William Collins' Ode

Alice Mary Smith (alias Mrs. Meadows White), 1882

Commissioned for the Three Choirs Festival held in 1882 in Hereford. "Very near to greatness", said the critic S. S. Stratton. Set in oratorio style, with good use of chorus, this really is a fine work. She studied with Sterndale Bennet and G.A. Macfarren. Her mature vocal style is also embodied elsewhere in about thirty songs.

ODE TO THE PASSIONS, Setting of William Collins' Ode

William Baird Ross, 1905

At a brief glance this work appears very accomplished, but there is nothing easily found out about the composer, except that he was Mus.D.Oxon, and FRCO, or the circumstances of its composition.

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Elegy

A Study of Two Parallel Traditions in the Use of Music for Mourning and Consolation

William Jackson of Exeter writes of the Elegy in the preface to his *Six Elegies for Voice and Continuo* (1760) in these terms:

> This Species of Composition appears to me very difficult to succeed in, for I imagine its Characteristic to be Elegant Simplicity. The Subject should be tender and pathetic—The Air chaste and affecting—The melody easie—The Harmony full—The Disposition of the Parts learned, but not formal: and from the Union of the whole, must be produced Effect, the ultimate End of Music.

He writes of the elegy from the point of view of the classically oriented mid-18th century, when the Passion of Reason held sway and emotions, in theory at least, were held in balance. Excess in anything was viewed with suspicion; yet around the corner, just a few years ahead, the taste for the gothic, for melodrama and indulgent sentimentality was to corrupt the arts completely. Only a few years earlier, Henry Purcell's outpouring for the death of Queen Mary (in *O Dive custos*, for example) was a relishing of grief expressed in the performing arts. Sopranos duetting, entwining, with dissonance and tortured suspension were a more than graphic rendering of uncontrollable grief in barely controlled composing and performing. Here, the essential theatricality of music performance was given full sway by the master of theatrical utterance. History judges: William Jackson is forgotten, whilst Henry Purcell's fame grows daily, though there is time yet for many such forgotten areas and eras to be reassessed and appreciated for their judicious craftsmanship and veracity to the mores of another age. This study will explore much forgotten repertoire, partly left uncovered hitherto due to the intrinsic doleful character of the subject not being a topic studied with enthusiasm by many. I relish and revel in doleful deadly pangs, weary weeds of woe, for to "pine, fret, consume, swell, burst and die!" in poetry, music and performance is to experience some of the greatest art of Western Culture.

The two strands of musical elegiac utterance I will examine are closely entwined and are a little different from the purely literary encomia to which they are obviously closely related and much indebted. Both music and literature share a source of inspiration: the patron. "He who pays the piper calls the tune", as every scurvy fiddler knows. Where would any of us in the performing arts be today without our patrons? When that source of succour dries up through death, natural it is to express grief in the format for which one has been paid for so long—it becomes the inspiration for another song. Who knows, if the lament is well-judged, the patron's family may just keep up the support, for after all much of the desire of the patron (for centuries, at least in Western culture) was to perpetuate the family name in glorious works that would live and resound long after. With poetry, the situation is a little different, only in that many patrons tried their hand at verse—and not a few, such as Sir Philip Sidney, reached inspiring heights of creativity. The patrons who could lay such a claim in music are hard to find. Lord Mornington, in the later 18th century is a noble exception, though he would not rank himself as more than a worthy composer, a true amateur. One strand, then, draws inspiration from a patron: that inspiration

becomes a flood if the patron dies young. Sir Philip Sidney is again an example, as is Prince Henry—just two whose untimely deaths opened the floodgates of musical mourning on an unprecedented scale.

The other strand is of a different order: musicians lamenting the death of their own kind. Here is a rich seam of melancholy tribute; it is of course natural, within the profession, to find solace in the very art that death has interrupted. Again, if the deceased died young and was a favourite amongst his own brethren, then much was made of the loss. Not only Henry Purcell's death—undoubtedly the most famous—but, from the generation before, William Lawes' early demise (he got in the way of a bullet at the Battle of Chester) occasioned numerous elegiac strains. Some of the most memorable elegies belong to this genre: they are heartfelt paeans of lament and praise in equal proportions, more personal in their wailing utterances than most of the patron-inspired elegies and more thoroughly musical, in a profound sense. In performance, even centuries later, laments for fellow composers and musicians strike to the heart, even though the characters are not known to the listener. Naturally, music eases those of a musical disposition.

In my subtitle I suggest that music is for mourning and consolation; it is probably more complex than that, yet the mourning scours go deep, want to stay a time, and are "lothe to depart", as the elegiac Elizabethan folksong says. In contrast, consolation is a shedding, a release, the beginning of whatever lies on the other side of bereavement. It is to the credit of our artform—music and poetry in performance—that this complex state, which looks in two directions at the same time can, to some degree, be assuaged by the expression of the art. This is catharsis, which lies at the very nub of the purpose of the arts, echoing ancient powers and divine inspiration, evoking primordial memories. The stuff of death is the source of life, as Dame Nature knows well, but mere mortals forget so easily through attachment. Dislodged attachment becomes flotsam, the heart glimpses another reality and the sandbags of familiarity drop away. Bruised by bereavement, sometimes black and blue, sometimes permanently, art expressed with truth and skill carries us through to a further stage beyond. Catharsis is the knowledge of things divine. If music-making has any truthful part in human affairs beyond mere entertainment, it is this for which the ritual of performance exists. Pouring through the narrow channel, inspiration, ecstasy and elevation are tasted and "Lady Musicke" may soothe the sorrowful breast.

Before the earliest examples of Elizabethan musical elegy, the grammarians had defined it and given us the etymology. Here is Thomas Elyot, from the first Latin–English Dictionary, 1538:

> *Elegia*—a lamentable songe or verse
> *Elegiacus*—pertaynynge therto
> *Elegiographus*—a writer of lamentable versis, or balades

Next, sometime after the first musical masterpieces, we find in John Florio's *New World of Words*, from Italian to English, 1611:

> *Elegia*—an elegie, or mournfull verse
> *Elegiaco*—an elegiacall or mournfull verse
> *Elegiare*—to singe or make elegies in wailfull verse
> *Elegidio*—a kind of wailfull verse
> *Elego*—a writer of elegies

Now, if we peruse the *New Grove*, Malcolm Boyd gives this sound basis:

> The setting of a poem, or an instrumental piece, lamenting the loss of someone deceased […] from the Greek elegos, a poem written in distichs of alternate dactylic hexameters and pentameters, and sung to the flute […]. Classical elegies embraced a wide variety of subject matter […].Well-known English examples are Spenser's *Astrophel*, Milton's *Lycidas*, Shelley's *Adonais*, Arnold's *Thyrsis* and Tennyson's *In memoriam*, most of which have been set to music […] the mediaeval Planctus […] from at least the 7thC […] two parallel traditions […] those commemorating patrons [...]; and those mourning the deaths of colleagues and mentors …

Ironically, the first elegy I would like to focus on breaks all the parameters I have established: it is not a true elegy, in that the writer of at least the poetry and, in all likelihood, the music too was writing about herself, for she was about to die: she was Henry VIII's one-time Queen, Ann Boleyn. The story may be apocryphal of course, but legend holds very strongly that she penned this in the Tower on the eve of her execution. She was highly literate, could sing and could play the lute. There is no evidence to suggest other than that she eased her final hours in solitary performance, true consolation, profound meditation in the absolute fullest sense. The song "O Deathe, rocke me asleepe" carries that kind of veracity: it knows what it is saying, and knows it profoundly, from inside. It is a majestic masterpiece.

The tolling of the death knell reiterates continually in the lute part in a direful slow triple time; the compass of the voice is constrained, limited to a sixth; the extraordinary effect of the continual false relations clashing between the B-flat and B-natural mesmerizes and at the same time disturbs. The alliteration in the choice of words, with many reiterated "d"-sounds, rocks the senses; and a cruel punning on "remedye" and "dye" creates ironic, black humour. All the while the inevitable fate steals on: here is one final cadence you wish never to be completed, though its presence is with the listener from the first note. The end is imminent and palpable yet faced with a quiet nobility.

Thomas Tallis and the younger William Byrd met when Byrd joined the Chapel Royal in 1572; their personal bond was strong, leading to a joint right, granted by the Queen, to the sole privilege for printing music. They jointly created the famous

Cantiones Sacrae, a collection of thirty-four motets, seventeen composed by each. Though this landmark in English music printing appears not to have had commercial success, it undoubtedly drew the two men into a close bond of friendship. Tallis' death in 1585 was therefore a deeply felt personal bereavement for Byrd, who responded with a most moving elegy "Ye Sacred muses", scored for Treble (or Alto) voice and four viols. This lovely work is a sublime example of the English consort-song genre, where the melding of voices and viols was worked into a high art form without its parallel elsewhere in Europe. In Byrd's hands, many fine works for this combination were created, none more successful than the Tallis elegy. With the abstract polyphonic interweaving of the four viols, a complex texture of dissonance and suspension is created, making a bed of sound for the single voice. The text is declaimed in slow moving melody, the contour of which exemplifies William Byrd's approach to word-setting: the words carry their own melody and the composer must meditate on them for the music to spring from them, "discovered" rather than "composed". Here is word-painting of a most subtle kind. The simply stated text dictates all:

> Ye Sacred Muses, race of Jove,
> Whom Music's lore delighteth,
> Come down from crystal heaven's above
> To earth, where Sorrow dwelleth,
> In mourning weeds with tears in eyes:
> Tallis is dead, and Music dies.

Each vocal phrase is stated, followed by silence, as the viols weave their way in simple harmonic movement made compelling by a gentle rhythmic drive. In this manner, the words are weighted, considered and unhurried. Within the musical law of tactus, timelessness is achieved. The penultimate repeat of "and Music dies" flows into a melisma of the most liquid, tearful kind; such art hidden by such simplicity. Tallis' memory is thus perpetuated into our time. His epitaph included this oft quoted couplet:

> As he dyd lyve, so also did he dy,
> In myld and quyet Sort (O! Happy Man)

This mood is also captured in Byrd's elegy. How curious that no matching elegy was created by anyone for William Byrd at his death.

In the very next year, 1586, the English nation was shaken by the death of Sir Philip Sidney. He died at Flushing, Holland from complications received after a wound at Zutphen. When the news broke back in England, the mourning was as if for a royal son. Nothing like it had been seen before: the encomia were numerous and from many sources—from Oxford, from the Court, from his many friends in protestant Europe, and of course from the literary and musical circles. It was his youth, and the frustrated potential, the snuffing out of genius that provided the themes of the tributes. William Byrd published two, in 1588, in his first collection of secular song:

Psalmes, Sonets and Songs of Sadnes and Pietie. In the "Epistle to the Reader" Byrd writes that these songs, "originally made for Instruments to expresse the Harmonie, and one voice to pronounce the dittie, are now framed in all parts for voices to sing the same". That is, they were originally conceived along the lines of the Tallis elegy, as viol consort songs, but adapted to the more Italianate madrigalian style which was becoming fashionable in city trading musical circles; "Musica Transalpina" was all the rage in the late 1580s. In this new format, one of the Sir Philip Sidney elegies particularly benefits from having words in all parts: "Come to me, Grief, for ever". The poem's six stanzas unfold across the polyphonic voice-leading, like murmuring exchanges of a group of Sidney devotees too shocked to speak out loud. This is a poem of close, heartfelt grief, written by someone very close to the Sidney circle: perhaps even his own dear sister, Mary, with whom Philip had shared so much of his poetic furore? Byrd responds with measure, in an incantation that strengthens as it laments. The last line embodies all: "Just grief, heart tears, plaint worthy". These are measured words for unmeasured grief.

Their tolling brings to mind the refrain of the next elegy I choose to focus on. John Danyel published his only song book in 1606: it is a masterful collection of fine works, the very apogee of the English lute-song genre. At the centre of this great collection is a very special example of the elegy: "Mrs. M.E, her Funerall teares for the death of her husband; Griefe keepe within". The refrain, reiterated at the end of each of the three sections pummels the mind and the senses in its uncompromising Jacobean revelling in despair: "Pine, fret, consume, swell, burst, and die". That is the unknown poet's contribution, but Danyel seizes the opportunity in casting this to music by extending each appearance of the refrain through rhythmic play: long notes on "die" and the reiteration of these words one more time, each time they return. The effect in performance is stunning. As a piece of architecture in music, this song deserves fame, for it is unique in the lute-song output, challenged only by another Danyel song in the collection which is also built on a tripartite through-composed structure, "Can doleful notes".

The song opens with a lute prelude, drawn from the inner heart strings, a private internal musing to which the voice, after six beats, murmurs "Griefe", low in the soprano range. Pause for more luting, then again "griefe", a tone higher. The luting continues, expanding with a downward bass movement, and again "griefe", now a tone higher. Finally, a fourth "griefe", joined to the words "keep within, and scorn to shew but tears", is torn unwillingly from the singer's breast. The very word "grief" expresses the birth of sound. With the guttural placed as low as possible in the throat, drawn out by the rolling sound of the "r", pressed through the mouth chamber with as tight a vowel sound as a human can utter, then forced through the closed lips with the airy "f" to be expelled into the outside world. Consider that the entire intent of this poem is that outward expression of grief has to borrow from other passions, which by comparison are trivial, and therefore the very expression of grief is compromised. Outward show and performance therefore compromise the true essence of the nature of grief. Yet here is this complex song doing just that: this is, surely, a prize example of a Jacobean conundrum. How well Danyel serves the

unknown poet (possibly his own brother, Samuel) and the unknown wife (no one knows who Mrs. M.E. was, nor the identity of her husband: how strange to have such a masterpiece, yet not know to whom it was addressed!). How well, too, he composes for the lute—so idiomatically, like an independent lute fantasia—and for the voice, with every phrase, every repetition so well designed. The rhythmic subtleties between voice and lute are so fine, with more syncopation being revealed with greater familiarity in performance. Silence, weight, tension and resolution are all perfectly gauged, making this threnody one of the greatest songs in the English language. Then again, it has to be said that John Danyel's song book of 1606 is, taken as an entity, one of the highest points of creativity in English song viewed over the last thousand years. Yet it is still unknown.

In the same year, an epoch-making volume of songs was published, *Funeral Teares*, composed by John Coprario. The reason why I regard this publication as so important is that this is the first "song cycle" in the English language—a sequence of seven songs designed to proceed from one to seven, to tell a specific story. Although each song can exist separately, they each benefit from context; as the narrative unfolds in performance, so does the import of the work deepen. Indeed, the final song summons up the ghost of the deceased in the grief-deluded mind of his lover. The history of this partnership is of interest and relevance: the death of the Earl of Devonshire Sir Charles Blount, 8th Baron Mountjoy was the cause of this elegy, intended for the comfort of his wife, Lady Penelope. They had been married less than a year and their marriage had caused offence in certain quarters: it was an open secret they had been lovers for many years, whilst Penelope was married to Lord Rich. Divorce laws were stringent then and the two lovers (idealized as "true" lovers by poets at the time) had to wait for long for the divorce to be concluded. She could bear Charles' children, whilst married to Rich, yet flouting the divorce stigma was too much. With unseemly haste the two married, but their joy was short-lived. He was dead before a year was out. Penelope had been eulogized from her youth (she was the sister of the earl of Essex) as the perfect noble maiden, likened inevitably to the ancient Greek Penelope, waiting for years for her beloved Ulysses. Blount's title of "Mountjoy" was used by gossips who enjoyed the sexual innuendo, but the word "joy" recurs frequently in the seven poems set by Coprario, particularly in the seventh, where the ghost of Blount summoned reacts against the unfair criticism of the pair. Thus, poetic fantasy and biography are woven together. The cycle may have been performed by proxy, as though Lady Penelope was singing, but there is evidence to suggest she may have actually been the "fair singer" herself:

> Sing Lady, sing thy Dev'nshires funerals,
> And charme the Ayre with thy delightfull voyce,
> Let lighter spirits grace their Madrigals,
> Sorrow doth in the saddest notes rejoyce.
> Fairest of Ladies since these Songs are thine,
> Now make them as thou art thy selfe, devine.

Coprario offers two ways of performing the songs on the title page:

> Figured in seaven songes, wherof sixe are so set forth that the wordes may be exprest by a treble voice alone to the lute and basse viole, or else that the meane part may be added, if any shall affect more fulnesse of parts. The seaventh is made in the forme of a Dialogue, and can not be sung without two voices.

The provision of the second voice makes for another unique feature—these are the first vocal duets for soprano and alto voices designed and published as such.

In this form, I now look at the middle song of the cycle in some depth, for it is the heart of the cycle, the equivalent of the "Lachrimae Tristes" in John Dowland's instrumental cycle of two years earlier. Coprario must have been familiar with that work and had features of it in mind when composing this song sequence. Indeed, the Dowland link is strengthened, for the middle poem's first verse is that of one of Dowland's most famous songs, "In Darkness let me Dwell", which was not published until 1610; it may have been composed some time before going into print, but probably after Coprario's setting. In the long, Jacobean, convoluted paean of praise for Devonshire, where gossip, rumour and malice are firmly put down, there is much of biographical interest. The recurring theme, "Dev'nshire did Love. Love was his errour made" or "Did Dev'nshire love? And lov'd not Dev'nshire so?" is mingled with other shafts of insight:

> Lov'd he? And did he not natheless assist
> Great Brittaines counsils, and in secret cells
> The Muses visite? And alone untwist
> The riddles of deepe Philosophick spells?

Whatever riddles he, Dowland, Coprario and a number of other "philosphick" wits of the time were unravelling, the poem "In darkness let me dwell" can be seen as some kind of creed, an obscure reference to "deep myst'ry" shared by the best minds of the age. Dowland sets only the first verse:

> In darknesse let me dwell, the ground shall sorrow be,
> The roofe despair to barre all chearefull light from me,
> The walles of marble black that moistned stil shall weepe,
> My musicke hellish jarring sounds to banish friendly sleepe.
> Thus wedded to my woes, and bedded in my tombe,
> O let me dying live till death do come.

Only in a generalized sense of unspecified "world-weary grief" does this stanza have any bearing on the *Funeral Teares*. However, its placement here at the centre implies that it had considerable significance for Blount and his circle. The second verse comes closer to specific grieving of his death; the key word "joy" appears in the final line:

My dainties griefe shall be, and teares my poisned wine,
My sighes the aire, through which my panting hart shall pine:
My robes my mind shall sute exceeding blackest night,
My study shall be tragicke thoughtes sad fancy to delight.
Pale Ghosts and frightful shades shall my acquaintance be:
O thus my hapless joy I haste to thee.

These words in Penelope's mouth make tragic utterance, the very essence of personal grief at the darkest of times. There are, though, certain signposts here pointing to secret rituals practiced by that mystical part of the Protestant faith called Rosicrucianism—a brotherhood that maintained ties across all of northern Europe at this time. The music of Dowland, Coprario and others was a means by which that circle communicated. Death imagery was frequently employed, so that the elegiac Muse fostered the brotherhood in life as in death. It is no surprise then that this should be where funeral song cycles first developed.

Convoluted, hidden meanings give rise to musical convolutions too. The way that Coprario wraps the two vocal lines around each other is most rewarding for performers and listeners alike. He uses word-repetition sparingly: when it occurs, it is for excellent rhetorical effect; the threefold reiteration of "O let me dying live" has ritual power. The lines swoop in ascent and descent; having begun with stepwise movement, intervals become larger as the work proceeds, thus increasing tension with great subtlety. The lute part has many "ghostly" quotations from Dowland's "Flow my tears", having much more than the A–minor tonality in common and confirming an elusive link with his "dark" philosophy. Wrapped in so many internal cross-references, wreathed in the shroud of obscurity, *Funeral Teares* nevertheless still continues to fascinate us today, enigmatic though it be.

Seven years later, John Coprario was again called upon to provide mourning music for one of his patrons, the young Prince Henry—the most promising patron of art and artists of all callings at that time. Henry was likened to the ancient Maecenas, the model for all noble patrons who desired to support the arts, and young Henry took this role very seriously. Before his death at eighteen, he had already assembled his own court circle of poets, musicians and artists, who together were beginning to rival any other Protestant court in northern Europe. His death was a bitter blow, leaving many gifted craftsmen without protection. The flurry of tributes bears testimony to their love and devotion to their young prince, but also to their degree of desperation in an otherwise distinctly frosty climate for the arts. Coprario partnered with the poet Thomas Campion to create the *Songs of Mourning* in 1613. This is a song cycle of seven parts with a unique feature. Each of the songs was dedicated to and written as from the mouths of seven different personages: King James, Queen Anne, Prince Charles (his younger brother), Princess Elizabeth (his adoring younger sister), Fredrick the Fifth, Count Palatine of the Rhine (betrothed to Elizabeth, and a close Protestant League friend of Henry), Great Britain (written as from the heart of the nation) and, finally, the World (that is, the Protestant, Christian world).

As one examines this remarkable musical and social document, the effect is of two apparently opposing feelings. First, the breadth of the mourning: that of a father and King and of a mother and Queen; of an admiring younger brother, who now becomes the next in line for the throne; of an adoring sister, about to be married and to leave her country of birth for ever; of a young prince who, together with Prince Henry, had been planning a new, Protestant Crusade against the Turks who were at the gates of Vienna at this time. Then, Henry is mourned by a barely united Great Britain (Ireland was a never-ending source of rebellion) and by the World—anti-Turk, anti-Papist, anti-Spanish, suspicious of the French, jealous of new lands in the Americas, fascinated by stories of the Far East and agog with all things exotic. All of this wrapped up in seven short songs!

This leads to the second feeling: that here is a masterpiece of epigrammatic art, the art of distillation. Campion chooses a spare style that allows him, paradoxically, to luxuriate in extravagant statements, to be elliptical, to imply much in brevity. John Coprario's musical response is quite astonishing. He resorts neither to the prolixity of the style of the *Funeral Teares* nor to the recitative-style inspired by the *Nuove Musiche* from Italy, much discussed at that time. He actually creates a new fusion, which blends arioso with recitative, well-suited to the English language—a kind of half-world between speech and song, a ululating declamation, fitting to the epigrammatic poetry of Campion. All the rhythms spring from the language, sometimes terse, sometimes gentle. It has not been observed before but here, in this song-cycle is the nascence of what became the song style for the entire Cavalier generation—the Lawes brothers, Wilson, Lanier, Locke and the rest. Even the young Henry Purcell drew on this English stock (accepting, of course, that time had, by Purcell's time, transformed many features beyond immediate recognition). John Coprario should be acknowledged as one of the chief architects of this vocal style and the *Songs of Mourning* the first fruits of this advance. It has been long acknowledged that his influence on the viol consort literature was fundamental (again, finally fruiting in the late harvest of the young Purcell): to this must now be added his vocal contribution.

To ascertain more clearly and specifically his influence, I consider the second song dedicated to Queen Anne, "Tis now dead night". What must come first is the poetic diction: Campion chooses a vocabulary appropriate to each dedicatee, a lyric structure and verse form appropriate. The poetry is imbued with its own music, yet Coprario's response is never obvious; rather, an elevated dialogue between the two art forms takes place, where musical rhetoric and poetic rhetoric explore their tensile relationship. Coprario's first phrase is a good example: it is a fine musical emblem to match the words "Tis now dead night". A falling phrase it has to be, yet it is imbued with a tension because of the long syncopation against the main beats. This does not reflect the recitative style at all: instead, it points to Coprario's origins in subtle counterpoint and polyphony. The descending bass line in the lute and viol falls in affective intervals, not stepwise but forming a gentler, more delicate feeling from the outset. Throughout his settings in this cycle Coprario creates a continual male-female alternation, matching the dedicatees—odd numbers are male, evens female (in tune with numerology, commonplace at the time and obvious to them, though we are

ignorant of the lore). The grief of a mother and Queen is distilled in this opening emblem: note values become more agitated as the phrases unfold, rhythms more word-based as a noble recitative takes over. In his second stanza, Campion creates verbal images sympathetic to those in the first verse. His long, nay profound, experience in writing lyric poetry for musical setting is applied to inspired effect: "Sleepe Joy, dye Mirth, and not a smile be seene" suits Coprario's opening phrase at least as well as the first line. The role of performers must be acknowledged here, of course, for the subtle agitation of the unfolding melody needs be noticed and, to a subtle degree, emphasized by the singer and players. It is so easy for this style of songwriting to die in the hands and mouths of artists unprepared to commit to vivid performance. In the stillest work, there is a degree of theatricality essential in vibrant performance. Animated diction and emphasis are vital for all 17th-century English song.

John Coprario was born into the great Renaissance musical tradition of polyphony—the equal contribution between a number of voices moving in horizontal motion simultaneously, each with an independent line. He refined this early training into an emancipated vigorous instrumental polyphony for his viol consorts, and for his vocal writing in the main he benefited from the rigorous disciplines this style demanded: yet he chose to step out and look to a future song style that gave a greater emancipation to the words. He was fortunate to live at a time of quite literally dramatic musical change, of which he was a part. At the same time however, other composers in England were carrying the development of vocal polyphony to quite extraordinary heights, taking the madrigal style to strange and beautiful shores.

Thomas Weelkes, a brilliant but unstable genius, was one of these explorers. His personal life deteriorated through brawling and drunkenness and he was continually reprimanded for unseemly behaviour. Extremes of mood are borne out in his composing, where at best his madrigals are of the finest, unmatched by even the very best of his contemporaries. His erratic genius shows up well in two richly polyphonic elegies: one for the composer Thomas Morley, "Death hath deprived me of my dearest friend"; the other for a patron who died young, the brilliant wit, skilful dancer and supporter of artists of individuality Sir Henry Noel. He too enjoyed the high life and was a spendthrift, having much in common on that level with Weelkes. The elegy occasioned by his death in 1597 at the age of twenty-eight is one of the finest polyphonic elegies in the English language, "Noell, adew thou Court's delight" for six voices.

The death knell tolls with Noel's name announced by the soprano voice; then, all six take up "adew", recalling his handsome youthfulness ("upon whose locks the Graces sweetly played") reflecting for a moment his vitality in life. Then the playfulness is brought to an end with a homophonic passage, "Now thou art dead". Each part has a falling phrase, "our pleasure dies outright", the last statement of faster moving notes, for from here on all parts become solemn, lengthened, sometimes in homophony briefly, but more frequently in ever more drawn polyphony. The suspensions extend, the dissonances build until, like howling banshees, the entire ensemble wails his loss in poignant harmonies. From silence to double forte, the civility of fine music is sundered into howls of unassuaged pain. The words tell us that "time helps some grief", but for Henry Noel's death "no time your grief out wears"; this is repeated like a mantra unto the final cadence. In the mouths of a disciplined ensemble, free to explore the further extremes of vowel colour, this piece is a great gift and a reminder that music is more than mere entertainment.

I end not in conclusion of a story, but merely of a first chapter. I had hoped to outline the deep beauty of William Lawes' elegy on the death of John Tomkins and the extraordinary set of elegies occasioned by Lawes' own death in 1645. I had wanted to explore the Purcellian elegiac style, especially his *Dive custos*. The Georgian elegies from the Age of Enlightenment are even further off and if I delved into the era of Melodrama, I am sure it would be not only your grief I would outwear, but also your patience. These chapters await another time but do be assured: they are as rewarding and rich as the masterpieces surveyed here. For now, it is time for this *elegiographus* to sign off.

APPENDIX

Elegies I have known and Loved

This list is a personal worklist of elegies and related material I have had the good fortune to work with over the years. It does not pretend to completeness yet is of sufficient size and scope perhaps to be of use to others in search of elegiac material and might in the future serve as the basis for a complete index of such works.

1. ELIZABETHAN AND JACOBEAN

Anon.: Come Sorrow Wrap Me [GB-Ob Don. c. 57, fol. 25v]	S, continuo
Anon.: O Death Rock Me Asleep (Anne Boleyn)	
Version I	S, lute
Version II	S (or T), 4 viols
Anon.: Alas, Alack, My Heart Is Woe	S (or T), 4 viols
Anon.: Come Tread the Paths	A (or Bar), 4 viols
Anon.: Farewell the Bliss	S (or T), 4 viols
John Bartlet: If ever Hapless Woman (Sidney?), 1606	S, A, T, B, lute
Thomas Bateson: Sadness Sit Down, 1618	S, S, A, T, B
Thomas Bateson: Why Do I, Dying, Live?, 1618	S, S, A, T, B
William Byrd: Crowned with Flow'rs and Lilies (In Memory of Queen Mary I)	S, 4 viols
William Byrd: Ye Sacred Muses, 1585 (Thomas Tallis)	A, 4 viols
William Byrd: Come to Me Grief for Ever, 1586 (Sir Philip Sydney)	S, S, A, T, B
William Byrd: O That Most Rare Breast, 1586 (Sir Philip Sydney)	S, 4 viols / S, S, A, T, B
William Byrd: In Angel's Weeds, 1587 (Sidney / Mary Queen of Scots)	S, 4 viols
William Byrd: Delight is Dead (lament for a lady?)	S, S, 3 viols
William Byrd: Fair Britain Isle, 1612 (Prince Henry)	S, 4 viols
Thomas Campion: All Looks Be Pale, 1612 (Prince Henry)	S or T, lute

Richard Carlton: Sound Saddest Notes, 1601 (Sir John Shelton)	S, S, A, T, B
William Cobbold: For Death of Her, 1588 (Mrs. Mary Gascoigne)	A (or Bar), 4 viols
William Cobbold: Ye Mortal Wights (Venus for Adonis)	S, 4 viols
John Coprario: Funeral Tears, 1606 (Sir Charles Blount)	S, A, lute, bass viol
John Coprario: Songs of Mourning, 1613 (Prince Henry)	S or T, lute, bass viol
John Danyel: Grief Keep Within, 1606 (Mrs M.E. For the Death of Her Husband)	S, lute, bass viol
John Dowland: Funeral Psalmes, 1597 (Sir Henry Noel)	S, A, T, B
John Dowland: Sir Henry Umpton's Funeralls (Sir Henry Umpton)	5 viols, lute
Michael East: Come Shepherd Swains, 1618	S, S, 4 viols; S, S, T, B (Chorus)
Michael East: Fair Daphne, Gentle Shepherdess, 1618	S, S, 4 viols; S, S, T, B (Chorus)
Michael East When David Heard, 1618 (perhaps for Prince Henry?)	S, S, A, T, T, B
Richard Farrant: Ah, Alas, You Salt Sea Gods (Abradad)	S (or T), 4 viols
Richard Farrant: O Jove, from Stately Throne	A (or Bar), 4 viols
Thomas Ford: Not Full Twelve Years Twice Told (Death of a Youth)	S, A, T, B, lute
Orlando Gibbons: Nay let me weep, 1612 (Prince Henry)	S, 4 viols / S, A, T, T, B
Nathaniel Giles: Cease Now, Vain Thoughts	A (or Bar), 4 viols
Anthony Holborne: Countess of Pembroke's Funeralls [Pavan] and Galliard to the Funeralls, 1586 (Sir Philip Sydney)	5 viols / lute solo
Robert Jones: Come Doleful Owl, 1607	S, S, T, T, B
George Kirbye: Up Then Melpomene, 1597	S, S, A, T, Bar, B
Patrick Mando: Like as the Day	A (or Bar), 4 viols
Robert Parsons: Enforc'd by Love and Fear	A (or Bar), 4 viols
Robert Parsons: Pour Down your Pow'rs Divine (Pandolpho)	A (or Bar), 4 viols
Nathaniel Patrick: Prepare to Die	A (or Bar), 4 viols
Nathaniel Patrick: Send Forth thy Sighs	A (or Bar), 4 viols
Martin Peerson: Where Shall a Sorrow, 1630 (Sir Philip Sydney)	S, S, A, T, B, continuo
Francis Pilkington: Weep Sad Urania, 1624 (Thomas Purcell)	S, S, 3 viols
Francis Pilkington: Come, Come All You, 1605 (Thomas Leighton)	S, A, T, B, lute
Francis Pilkington: Sound Woefull Plaints, 1605 (Harwood)	S, A, T, B, lute
Robert Ramsay: What Tears Dear Prince, 1613 (Prince Henry)	S or T, continuo
Robert Ramsay: Dialogues of Sorrow, 1615 (Prince Henry)	S, 5 viols
Nicholas Strogers: A Doleful, Deadly Pang	A (or Bar), 4 viols
John Tomkins: O Thrice Blessed Earthbed	A (or Bar), 4 viols
Thomas Tomkins: When David Heard, 1622 (perhaps for Prince Henry?)	S, A, A, T, B
Thomas Vautor: Melpomene Bewail, 1619 (Prince Henry)	S, S, 4 viols
Thomas Vautor: Weep mine eyes, 1619 (Thomas Beaumont)	S, S, 3 viols
John Ward: If Heaven's Just Wrath [ms] (Henry Fanshawe)	S, S, A, T, T, B
John Ward: No Object Dearer [ms] (Prince Henry)	S, S, A, T, T, B
John Ward: Weep Forth your Tears, 1613 (Prince Henry)	S, S, A, T, T, B
Thomas Weelkes: Noel, Adieu Thou Courts Delight, 1597 (Henry Noel)	S, S, A, T, T, B
Thomas Weelkes: Cease Sorrows Now (personal elegy)	S, A, T
Thomas Weelkes: Cease Now Delight, 1600 (Lord Borough)	S, S, A, T, Bar, B
Thomas Weelkes: Death hath deprived me, 1608 (Thomas Morley)	S, S, T, T, Bar, B

2. CAROLINE AND CIVIL WAR

Walter Porter: Wake Sorrow, Wake, 1632 (Arabella Stuart)	S, S, A, T, B, continuo
William Lawes: Musick, the Master of thy Art is Dead (John Tomkins)	S, S, B, continuo
John Cob: Deare Will is Dead (William Lawes)	A, T, B, continuo
Captain Edmond Foster: Brave Spirit, Art Thou Fled? (William Lawes)	S, S, B, continuo
Henry Lawes: Cease You Jolly Shepherds, Cease (William Lawes)	S, S, B, continuo
John Hilton: Bound by the Neere Conjunction (William Lawes)	A, T, B, continuo
Simon Ives: Lament and Mourne, He's Dead and Gone (William Lawes)	S, S, B, continuo
John Jenkins: Why in this Shade of Night? (William Lawes)	S, S, B, continuo
John Taylor: But That, Lov'd Friend (William Lawes)	S, S, B, continuo
John Wilson: O Doe Not Now Lament and Cry (William Lawes)	S, S, B, continuo
Edward Colemand: The Glories of our Birth and State	
Version I	S (or T), continuo
Version II	S, A, T, B

3. RESTORATION

Henry Purcell: What Hope for us Remains (Matthew Locke)	S, continuo (+ B in Chorus)
Henry Purcell: Draw Near you Lovers (lover's elegy)	S, continuo
Henry Purcell: Gentle Shepherds (John Playford)	S, continuo (+ B in Chorus)
Henry Purcell: Young Thirsis' Fate (Thomas Farmer)	A, continuo (+ B in Chorus)
Henry Purcell: Lost is my Quiet (Charles II)	S, B, continuo
Henry Purcell: If Pray'rs and Tears (Charles II)	S, continuo
Henry Purcell: Dive Custos (Queen Mary)	S, S, continuo
Henry Purcell: In Cassum Lesbia (Queen Mary)	S, continuo
John Blow: No Lesbia, You Ask in Vain (Queen Mary)	S, continuo
John Blow: Alexis, Dear Alexis (On the Death of a Lovely Boy)	S, continuo
John Blow: Amintor on a Riverside (A Lover's Dying Plaint)	S, continuo
John Blow: As on his Deathbed Gasping Strephon Lay (Earl of Rochester)	T, continuo
John Blow: Mark How the Lark and Linnet Sing (Henry Purcell)	A, A, 2 recs, continuo
John Blow: No More the Dear, the Lovely Nymph (Death of a Young Maiden)	T, continuo
John Blow: She, Alas, whom All Admir'd, Is Dead (Death of a Young Maiden)	T, continuo
John Eccles: "The Dirge", Sleep Poor Youth, 1695 (Theatre Funeral)	S, B, 2 recs, continuo
Sigismond Cousser: Long Have I Fear'd, 1704 (Arabella Hunt)	S, continuo

4. GEORGIAN

Johann Mattheson: Auf das Absterben des Königs von Groß Britannien Georg I.	S, A, T, B, B soli, Chorus, Orchestra
William Hayes: My Pensive Muse (?), 1760 (G.F. Handel)	
The Pastoral Elegy: William Jackson of Exeter (1760s):	
OPUS III: ca. 1760 (2nd ed. 1765; ca.1770; ca.1800)	
Elegies composed by William Jackson of Exeter	
Invocation: Thou to Whose Eyes (*Larghetto; C maj.*)	A, T, B, continuo
Elegy I: On a Day, Alack the Day! (*Andante; A min. Aria; A maj.*)	A, T, B, continuo
Elegy II: Whilst from our Looks Fair Nymph (*Larghetto; B-flat*)	A, T, B, continuo

Elegy III: Could He Whom my Dissembled Rigour Grieves (*Andante; G min.*)	A, T, B, continuo
Elegy IV: In a Vale clos'd with Woodlands (*Andante; E maj.*)	A, T, B, continuo
Elegy V: Ye Woods and ye Mountains (*Larghetto ed Amoroso; E-flat*)	A, T, B, continuo
Elegy VI: Thou Fairest Proof (*Largo; G maj.*)	A, T, B, continuo
Thomas Linley of Bath: The pastoral Elegy, London 1770	
Invocation: Fly to my Aid O Mighty Love (*Vivace, Largo, Recit., Allegro, B-flat major*)	S, T, B, continuo
Elegy I: Ah, What Avails (*Affettuoso; B-flat maj., Allegro; G maj., Andante; G maj./min.*)	S, T, B, continuo
Elegy II: Ye Sportive Loves (*Allegro, Amoroso; B-flat maj.*)	S, T, B, continuo
Elegy III: From Blushing Morn (*Andante, Moderato; F maj.*)	S, T, B, continuo
Elegy IV: Parent of Blooming Flow'rs (*Allegro, Siciliana; G maj.*)	S, T, B, continuo
Elegy V: He who Could First Two Gentle Hearts (*Affettuoso; F min./maj.*)	S, T, B, continuo
Elegy VI: In Thousand Thoughts of Love (*Andante; F maj.*)	S, T, B, continuo
John Lampe: Whilst Endless Tears (The Dying Nymph)	S, continuo
John Callcott: At thy Lone Tomb (Charlotte's Lament)	S, continuo
Steven Storace: The Curfew Tolls (Gray's "Elegy")	S, continuo
Anon. (Webbe?): The Curfew Tolls (Gray's "Elegy")	S, A, T, B
Various: A Requiem to the memory of the late Mr. S. Webbe, London ca. 1820	
1. Lord Burghersh	S, A, T, B, Choir
2. William Linley	A, T, T, B
3. C.S. Evans (gold medal)	A, T, T, B
4. William Knyvett	A, T, T, B
5. James Elliott	A, T, T, B
6. William Beale	A, T, T, B
7. William Hawes	A, T, T, B
J.B. Gray: The Voice of Maria No Longer is Heard	S, fortepiano
James Fisin: Where Yonder Thoughtless Shepherd	S, fortepiano
John Marsh: Hark! 'Tis a Voice from the Tomb	S/T, flute, vlns, vla, vc, continuo
W.E. Miller: Hark! The Bell of Death (Marie Antoinette)	S, fortepiano
T.A. Rawlings Junior: Come Mourn (Marie Antoinette)	S, fortepiano
J. Relfe : Loud toll'd the Stern Bellman of Night	S/T, 2 vlns, cembalo

19th-CENTURY ELEGIES AND LAMENTS

Thomas Attwood: The Cold Wave my Love Lies Under	S, pfte
Robert Lucas Pearsall: Lay a Garland	S, S, A, A, T, T, B, B
Hubert Parry: Dirge in Woods	Bar, pfte
Hubert Parry: Lay a Garland	T, pfte
Henry Hugo Pierson: Dirge: Fear no More	MS/Bar, pfte
Arthur Somervell: Dead, Long Dead	Bar, pfte
Charles Villiers Stanford: To the Soul: Darest Thou Now	MS/Bar, pfte
Charles Villiers Stanford: Tears! In the Night	MS/Bar, pfte
Charles Villiers Stanford: Joy, Shipmate, Joy!	MS/Bar, pfte
Thomas Thorley Junior: Alas! The Dear Clarissa's Gone (An Elegy)	S/T, pfte

MISCELLANEOUS 20th CENTURY

Armin Knab: Engelsgruss (Das Knaben Wunderhorn): Zwei Nachtigallen	S, flute, pfte
Armin Knab: Vanitas Mund, "Was ist die Welt?"	S, flute, pfte

VANITAS VANITATIS: Score details

William Lawes: Gather your Rosebuds While You May	S (or T), continuo
Orlando Gibbons: Lais Now Old	S, A, T, T, B
Orlando Gibbons: The Silver Swan	S, A, A, T, B (or S, 4 viols)
Orlando Gibbons: What is Our Life?	S, 4 viols + S, A, T, T, B chorus
Thomas Ravenscroft: Laboravi in Gemitu Meo	S, S, A, T, B

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Chro-matic Ululation

The aim of this exposition is to explore the use of vocal colour in the performance of 17th- and 18th-century English song and to search out a manner of performance that would have been familiar to and approved by the original auditors.

Vocal colour, or chromatic ululation, is an ephemeral thing, even in today's digital age; witness the "squeaky-clean" sound of many recordings and their bland taming of high soprano notes, or witness the distortion and break-up of the voice on a mobile phone that is just going out of signal reach. Vocal colour is hard to define, yet it probably constitutes that part of the experience of listening to singing that gives the deepest pleasure or causes the most discomfort. Much of it is to do with taste, which is true of all aspects of the performing arts, though the voice draws forth the most passionate responses today—and always has.

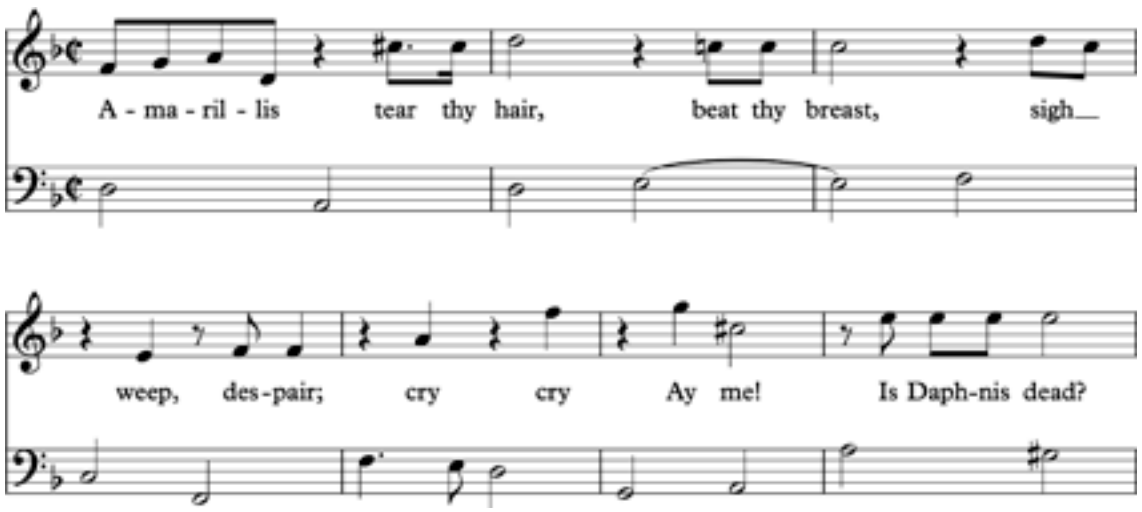
As it is so ephemeral, leaving no record other than a passionately written eulogy by an adoring admirer, or vitriolic diatribe by a dyspeptic critic, how can we hope to pinpoint the range, style and use of vocal colour from a previous era? Well, it is simply not feasible, or at least not in a complete way. What is possible is to draw its limits or parameters: to be able to say, with some conviction, that this or that feature, or range of expression, or even technical expertise was enjoyed or loathed. To that extent, it is apparent that certain features adopted then contrast starkly with the received taste and expectations now.

The material at our disposal is both literary (metaphors, similes and descriptions in poetry and prose) and graphic (rare moments of detailed depiction). We can also draw parallels with non-vocal requirements—especially gesture, posture, utterance and action—and with the demands inherent in the music, poetry or dramatic situation of certain songs. Analysing the psyche of playwrights, directors, performers and audience alike also casts some light. With all this secondary material, it is possible to define quite closely the parts of the spectrum of vocal colour enjoyed or hated in any particular age. The negative response is as important as the praising eulogy, for the obvious reason that if criticism was voiced at all, the available colour palette must have embraced both extremes.

As a starting point, the familiar statement about national vocal characteristics written in English by John Dowland in 1609 in *Andreas Ornithoparcus His Micrologus* gives much useful information:

> Every man lives after his owne humour; neither are all men governed by the same laws, and divers Nations have divers fashions, and differ in habite, diet, studies, speech, and song. Hence is it, that the English doe carroll; the French sing; the Spaniards weepe, the Italians, which dwell about the Coasts of Genoa caper with their Voyces; the others barke; but the Germanes (which I am ashamed to utter) doe howle like Wolves.

Figure 1: William Lawes, "Amarillis tear thy hair"



The specific details and assigned national characteristics vary from writer to writer. About a century later, one Monsieur St. Evremont gives the palm to the French (his own countrymen of course). He is quoted in Gildon's *The Life of Mr Thomas Betterton* (1710) :

> The Spaniard weeps, the Italian grieves, the German hollows, the Flanderkin howls, and only the Frenchman sings.

In the same passage, we find traces of a larger contemporary debate between the supposed merits of Italian and French vocal styles in opera, where the heated exchanges generated real vitriol:

> Upon (Luigi's) return to Italy … it is very certain, he was much disgusted with the Harshness and Rudeness of the greatest Italian Masters of Italy, when he had tasted the Sweetness of the French, the Neatness and Manner of the French. The Italians with their Profoundness in Music, bring their Art to our Ears without any Sweetness.

Thus far we have gathered ten descriptions of vocal colour: "carolling", "weeping", "singing", "capering", "barking", "howling", "hollowing", "harshness", "rudeness", "sweetness": some intended in praise, others in criticism, but all in response to vocal practice of the time of writing. Does this mean that in order to sing music from Genoa around 1600 we must learn to "caper" with the voice, or that to perform Italian music from around 1690 we should endeavour to discover a "harsh and rude" vocal colour? Or that to sing Dowland's lute songs they should all be "carolled", as best as we can understand that term? That would be a simple-minded and rather foolish interpretation of these whimsical fragments.

We now approach the problem from another angle. Let us suppose that we are present at a typical masterclass in the standard summer school anywhere in Europe, or even anywhere in the world, where "early music" is an area of specialisation. A promising young soprano who has diligently listened to all the recordings gets up to perform. It would likely be a standard work, out of twenty or so songs—the list includes, for English repertoire: Dido's lament, "From Rosie Bowers", "The Fairest Isle", "Bess of Bedlam", "I Saw my Lady Weep", "Come Again", etc. How best to describe her vocal colour, or her grasp of a range of vocal colours? For reasons of brevity, she has chosen a song off the beaten track, no more than two minutes long, by William Lawes: "Amarillis, Tear thy Hair":

1

She performs well, with a sharp intellect behind the voice, though she is somewhat nervous, a little trembling and shaking; furthermore, she uses the bland "white voice" universally required, one would think, judging from its widespread use for pre-classical song. How familiar is this experience? How would her vocal colour be described?

I suggest Dowland might have called it "pure carolling"; a modern-day vocal critic of the old school might describe it as a white voice brought up on a diet of plain yoghurt.

The Dowland work I have referred to already is actually only his translation, published in 1609, of a much earlier work written in Latin by a German author, Andreas Ornithoparchus, in 1517. What Dowland was doing publishing such an old-fashioned, conservative work at all is a question which has vexed a number of scholars and is for another occasion. Dowland's translation is often a gloss on the original—that is, Dowland updates Ornithoparchus' ideas, putting them into his own words, using his understanding. In this manner, a hundred years of vocal practice are updated.

John Dowland's treatment of a significant passage on the various Greek modes, which explores their associated passions and colours, contains much that is of interest in this search for authentic awareness of vocal colour. In this passage, the scope of admissible colours is greatly extended:

> Every Man's palate is not delighted with the same meat, but some delight in sharp, some in sweet meates; neither are all men's eares delighted with the same sounds: for some are delighted with the crabbed and courtly wan'dring of the first Tone. Others do affect the hoarse gravitie of the seconde: others take pleasure in the severe, and as it were disdainful stalking of the third; others are drawn with the flattering sound of the fourth; others are moved with the modest wantonnes of the the fift; others are led with lamenting voyce of the sixt: others do willingly heare the warlike leapings of the seventh: others do love the decent, and as it were, matronall carriage of the eight.

These eight varied "passions" relate to the "divers Moodes", as Dowland calls them. Today we call them modes—the basic ancient Greek modes, as understood from the received mediaeval scholastic tradition. That their interpretation should be all of a piece with the fundamental nature of each mode is clear, as Dowland continues:

> Neither is it [to] marvell if the hearing be delighted with the variety of sounds, seeing that the sight is pleased with the variety of colours, the smelling power with the variety of odours, and the taste with diversity of meats. Wherefore let a Musitian diligently observe that he dispose his song in that Tone, wherein he knows his auditors are most delighted.

He argues that if the audience consists of young men, then the manner should be "youthfull and frolic"; if it is made up of old men, then "testy and full of severeness". The presentation must always be appropriate: "a singer if he bring in a dauncing merry moode, when occasion requires sadnes, or a sad one when it requires mirth" is courting disaster and would be "laughed to scorn".

> Every habit of mind is governed by songs, for songs make men sleepy, and wakeful, careful, and merrie, angry, and merciful; songs do heal diseases, and produce divers wonderful effects … moving some to vain mirth, some to a devout and holy joy, yea ofttimes to godly teares. Of al which I had rather be silent, than to determine any thing rashly.

All of this is a fairly close translation of the original, yet it sounds surprisingly modern—it would not be out of step with the ideas expressed in Caccini's *Nuove Musiche*, for example. It might also easily be applied to William Lawes' song of Amaryllis. Most accomplished singers of today would intend to follow the "passion" of the words and apply what is, after all, basic common sense.

This is the sort of performance that might be delivered by our young soprano, approved by the majority of singing teachers in service today. She sings with assuredness ("never let them see your nervousness, my dear"), feet firmly placed, body square on with a slight tilt forward, shoulders down, chin back, neck upright, eyes to the middle distance ("never address them with your eyes, my dear"); from the book, but with commitment, good support, and good tone, if all one colour. The consonants do not intrude on the flow of the line, therefore the diction is blurred; vowels are all adapted for purity of legato, resulting in a version of "singer's English": "mezzoforte-ish" prevails throughout. Nowadays, the seasoned singer fulfils all preconceived notions of what constitutes "good singing", but singers are inherently conservative, cautious and tend towards dullness. There are, of course, notable exceptions, but playing safe is an attitude deeply embedded in most singers' psyches. What constitutes good singing according to Dowland or Ornithoparcus is described under ten headings. Here is a small selection of interesting statements:

> When you desire to sing any thing, above all things marke the Tone
> […]
> Let every Singer conforme his voyce to the words, that as much as he can he makes the Concent sad when the words are sad, and merry, when they are merry.
> […]
> [There is] an impious fashion to be punished with the severest correction. Think you that God is pleased with such howling, such noise, such mumbling, in which is no devotion, no expressing of words, no articulating of syllables. [This in the context of performing offices for the dead!]
> […]
> The changing of Vowels is a signe of an unlearned Singer … though divers people doe diversly offend in this kinde
> […]
> Let a Singer take heed, least he begin too loud braying like an Asse, or when he hath begun with an uneven height, disgrace the Song. For God is not pleased with loude cryes, but with lovely sounds.

> […]
> The uncomely gaping of the mouth, and ungracefull motion of the body, is a signe of a mad Singer.
> […]
> Above all things, let the Singer study to please god, and not Men … There are foolish singers, who contemne the devotion they should seek after, and affect the wantonesse which they should shun: because they intend their singing to men, not to God, seeking for a little worldly fame, that so they may loose the eternall glory.

Here is a veritable feast of information regarding what to do and, equally importantly, what not to do, in the context of devotional singing in regional Saxony, ca. 1517. These indications were however important enough for no less an authority as John Dowland to translate and publish in Jacobean England. Transferring this large amount of information on the voice to a wholly different time and place needs care and caution, yet Dowland's words of 1609 are the closest we have to the date of our William Lawes song, from the late 1630s. We must apply what we can, as appropriate, with due caution.

Take his point: "The uncomely gaping of the mouth, and ungracefull motion of the body, is a signe of a mad Singer". This is a gift beyond all expectations, for Amaryllis is indeed mad—she is driven to madness through the despair she is filled with, at finding her lover's dead body in some shady grove. She is so overcome with grief, she too dies, no doubt with an "ungracefull motion of the body" and tears her hair, sighs, weeps, despairs: she will, no doubt, experience an "uncomely gaping of the mouth". John Dowland's caution becomes a detailed instruction of exactly what is appropriate. What is more, for such a caution to have been written, certain uncouth singers must have explored such forms of delivery even in church, where it is hard to imagine an appropriate situation occurring. But here, in a dramatic context (if not actually for the theatre) where the text creates a scena of powerful atmosphere, there should surely be no holding back.

The point urging every singer to conform his voice to the words also supports a passionate reading, for here is a poem of dramatic sadness, where the singer is exhorted to explore its fullness. Dowland's seventh precept, cautioning on overloud singing suggests a wide dynamic range was not uncommon, though loud dynamics were deemed inappropriate for God's service. When Amaryllis cries "Ay me!" this surely suggests a ripe moment for a heart-rending forte. The final precept, exhorting the singer to sing to please God, not men, is not so appropriate outside of the Church, in a specifically secular genre where the urgency is to be true to the dramatic import and convincing to the auditors. The expressed concern for true vowelling in his point 6, whilst being an essential guide for good expression of the words and the language in general, does not admit to the value of judicious use of exaggerated diphthongs on emotive words (like "sigh", "pain", "shrowd"). The greatest difference comes, of course, in our example with the agitated use of recitative style of rhythms—a technique quite new in Dowland's day, and completely unheard of by the original writer. This agitation is heightened by Lawes, who chooses to set certain words or phrases on unnaturally long notes ("stone" and "shrowd"), which contrast intensely with the ebbing and flowing of passions surging through Amaryllis. If the singer becomes a personification of Amaryllis, rather than just singing about her, addressing herself in the third person at the beginning, she has then to put down the partbook and act the role. Action then becomes of central importance: this is a drama that has a beginning, middle, and an end, despite its brevity. Once this step is taken, there can be no holding back from a full-throated emission of appropriate passions.

Fortunately, John Bulwer is at hand, that generous commentator of gesture who published his *Chirologia: or the Natural Language of the Hand* in 1644. His nicely balanced writing comes as a breath of fresh air, at a time when England was rent with tempestuous passions. It makes clear where certain gestures are more appropriate for the pulpit or for the stage (thus revealing, of course, what every balanced mind knows: that the impulse that takes a man to church is the same as that that takes him to the theatre). Both actor and preacher need oratorical skills and performance awareness to get their message across. Bulwer understands this perfectly. He writes on his title page:

> Composed of the Speaking Motions, and Discoursing Gestures thereof. Wherunto is added CHIRONOMIA: or the Art of Manuall Rhetoricke. Consisting of the Naturall Expressions, digested by Art in the Hand, as the chiefest Instrument of Eloquence, by Historical Manifestos, exemplified Out of the Authentique Registers of Common Life, and Civill Conversation.

In plain English, he is affirming that the natural use of the hand, refined by art, can aid the expression of eloquence; his study outlines those skills. His text is adorned with "chirograms". These have been one of the key reference points for anyone working with "authentic" gesture in recent years. For every passion there is a picture, a pose which paints the point of sanctimonious sermon or dramatic delivery.

Figure 2: Chirograms in John Bulwer's *Chirologia*

2

For application of this discourse it is worthwhile to look at the same song, which suggests passion, picture and pose in performance. It is necessary to extrapolate here, for little information survives on exactly how dramatic songs should be performed, but the very existence of Bulwer's treatise suggests that practice preceded codification and that he was summing up a long tradition, not creating one. Lawes' superbly epigrammatic lament suggests itself, not least because it is condensed and calls on rapidly changing action and emotion for its effect. No context is known for this song, although it would not be out of place in a fully dramatic context. Indeed, so intense is the story that it acts as a miniature opera, encapsulated in two minutes. First, the poem:

Love's Dying Passion

Amarillis, tear thy hair,
Beat thy breast, sigh, weep, despair;
Cry, cry, Aye me! Is Daphnis dead?
I see a paleness on his brow,
And his cheeks are drown'd in snow;
Whither are those roses fled?
Oh my heart! How cold he's grown!
Sure his lips are turn'd to stone.
Thus then I offer up my blood,
And bathe my body in his shrowd.
Since living accents cannot move,
Know Amarillis dy'd for Love.

The poet is unknown, but clearly has a sense of the dramatic, which Lawes responds to in the music with great style: every verbal gesture is matched with a musical gesture, sometimes word by word, as in line two. It is my sense of performance style of the time that the performer needs to match the literal and musical gestures with equivalent and appropriate vocal colours and body gestures. Nothing less than total immersion in the despairing character of Amaryllis as she finds her lover's body would adequately serve this powerful song. Its brevity only intensifies and makes real the despair. But the vocal colours and body gestures need to be in accord with the mannered style of the times, regardless of whether the mannerism arises from nature; Bulwer urges us to observe the naturalness of gesturing. Taking nature into art requires a refinement, yea, a judicious interference with the natural response so that the theatricality is, in some observable measure, writ larger than life, in order to carry its effect adequately.

I atomise the poem, separating out each part that requires a different gestural response and enlarge on what type of movement might be needed. Then, this list will be taken to Mr Bulwer, to search for the nearest movement he gives. With a

sequence of still postures, or pictures, we will then observe how best to turn these into stylised movement, taking Bulwer's indications as the guide, as far as is possible. The minimum interpolation from a modern perspective will be attempted, in order that the stylisation remains of the 1640s, or as near to that decade as possible:

The Scene is a shady grove, perhaps where Amaryllis and her lover, Daphnis, were wont to meet for their lovers' trysts. She enters, spies his slain body and reacts with utter disbelief and horror, then cries out. The tragic silence is palpable, then:

1. "Amarillis"—the singer is Amaryllis, speaking of herself in the third person; this needs to be clear to the audience immediately. Some kind of hand gesture indicating that must be made:

> CANON I: The hand lightly opened, timorously displayed before the breast, and let fall by short turns under the heaving shoulders is an humble and neat action becoming those who, daunted and dismayed, begin to speak as if their tongue were afraid to encounter with the public ear, and such who, shunning a profuse excess of words, would sparingly express their minds, or assuage and mitigate the censorious expectation of their auditors by an ingenious insinuation of a diminutive action.

With a gesture of this mood it is possible for the singer to anticipate the first breath and sound; with such a preparatory gesture the effect will be all the stronger when she utters her name. The smallness and intrinsic weakness of this gesture will be followed by complete contrast with the next, thus pointing up dramatic emphasis.

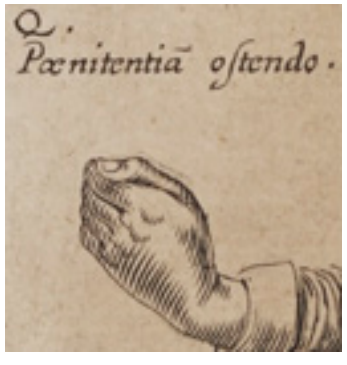
2. "tear thy hair"—a powerful action is indicated here, showing a degree of despair bordering on madness. The extreme nature of this gesture, so highly theatrical, is not to be found in Bulwer. Other sources, such as history painting or later engravings accompanying Henry Purcell's "Bess of Bedlam" show Bess tearing out her hair in lumps! In this case, the extreme gesture of both hands to the hair at each side, by the temples, miming pulling hair out will create a good contrast to the opening timorous movement.

3. "beat thy breast"—this is seemingly self-explanatory, yet it must be stylised:

> GESTUS LIII: To beat and knock the hand upon the breast is a natural expression of the hand used in sorrow, contrition, repentance, shame and in reprehending ourselves, or when anything is irksome unto us because the breast is the cabin of the heart: and this natural procacity of the hand to this gesture doth manifest the heart as the seat of the affections.
>
> CANON XXIX: The breast stricken with the hand is an action of grief, sorrow, repentance, and indignation.

3

Figure 3: Chirogram in Bulwer's *Chirologia* (Gestus LIII)



4. "sigh"—as the singer is singing using a "sighing" colour with the voice, a hand gesture can intensify the sigh. To let the hand naturally gesture a sigh is a downward-flowing movement, fast or slow, depending on the context.

> CANON XXX: The forehead stricken with the hand is an action of dolor, shame.

5. "weep"—again, hand and voice work together:

> GESTUS III C: Ploro, I weep;
>
> GESTUS II: Fleo, I weep—To put finger in the eye is their expression who cry and would, by that endeavor of nature, ease themselves and give vent to their conceived heaviness'.

4

Figure 4: Bulwer Chirogram (Gestus IIIC, "Ploro")

6. "despair"—a strong gestural word, ending this opening list of images, needing a cumulative sense of response:

> GESTUS VIII: Despero, I Despair: To appear with fainting and dejected hands is a posture of fear, abasement of mind, and abject and vanquished courage, and of utter despair.

5

Figure 5: Bulwer Chirogram (Gestus VIII, "Despero")

7. "Cry, cry"—using reiteration as intensification, both in vocal colour and hand gesture:

> GESTUS VI: Indignor, I am indignant: To smite suddenly on the left hand with the right is a declaration of some mistake, dolour, anger, or indignation; for so our learned humanicians understand this gesture

6

Figure 6: Bulwer Chirogram (Gestus VI, "Indignor")

8. "Aye me!"—direct speech, high pitched, strong hand gesture: see gesture for number 7.

9. "Is Daphnis dead?"—questioning, disbelieving; the subject is stated in a hushed voice, hand gestures to match:

> … gestures which fall from the slow hand are most patheticall. […] Shun affectation, for all affectation is odious

10. "I see"—an indication of what is seen and where:

> GESTUS LX: Chare deligo, I dearly cherish. We put forth both our hands to embrace those we love as if we would bring them home into our heart and bosom as some dear and precious thing.

11. "a paleness on his brow"—the quality of "paleness" can be painted with the voice and hand, drawn on the imagined brow:

> GESTUS XL: Flavio, I favour: We use to stroke them gently with our hand whom we make much of, cherish, humor, or affectionately love … performed by drawing our hand with a sweetening motion over the head or face of the party to whom we intend this insinuation.

12. "And his cheeks are drown'd in snow"—an amplification of the previous gesture. The voice can emphasise "drown'd" by an exaggerated diphthong. See gesture for number 11.

13. "Whither are those roses fled?"—a simultaneously fleeting and questioning hand gesture:

> GESTUS LIX: Suspicionem et odium noto, I note suspicion and hate. To draw back the unwilling hand instead of reaching it out to embrace the hand of the other.

7

Figure 7: Bulwer Chirogram (Gestus LIX, "Suspicionem et odium noto")

14. "Oh my Heart!"—the lovers' hearts are exchanged and live in each other, so her gesture both defines her heart and its place, whilst signifying his heart and its place:

> GESTUS XLVII: Impatientiam prodo, I betray impatience. To apply the hand passionately unto the head (and heart) is a sign of anguish, sorrow, grief, impatience, and lamentation.

8

Figure 8: Bulwer Chirogram (Gestus XLVII, "Impatientiam prodo")

15. "How cold he's grown!"—this exclamation suggests she has knelt and touched his body (or face, perhaps?). The touching is mimed of course, as the body is imagined.

16. "Sure his lips are turn'd to stone"—the fingers are drawn slowly across his lips as this is sung, continuing the theatrical mime.

17. "Thus then I offer up my blood": an incantatory voice colour, and a sacramental style gesture. Here, two gestures found in Bulwer can be combined:

> GESTUS XVII: Juro, I swear: To lift up the right hand to heaven is the natural form and ceremony of an oath;
>
> GESTUS XVIII: Asserveratione Deum attestor, With asservation, I call God to witness: To extend and raise up both hands to heaven is an expression of establishment, implying as it were, a double oath.

9

Figure 9: Bulwer Chirogram (Gestus XVII, "Juro" and XVIII, "Asseveratione Deum attestor")

18. "And bathe my body in his shrowd"—a mime is required here of slowly winding his garment hem around, whilst the voice uses enriched diphthong on "shrowd", creating an enwrapping sensation.

19. "Since living accents cannot move"—a signification of resignation.

20. "Know Amarillis"—self-signification, full circle, as at the start.

21. "dy'd for Love"—final gesture, falling on his corpse, lifeless. A theatrical mime is needed to conclude, bold and slow. The deathly silence engulfs all sound and all movement ceases.

Thus, a programme of twenty-one gestures, many with concomitant voice colours or effects, decks out a piece which is little more than two minutes long. Searching through John Bulwer's *Chirologia* reveals those possibilities, finding an appropriate gesture for each number, often with more than one possibility and with the richness of fusion of more than one gesture for fullest expression. This atomised approach to the poem and song with twenty-one possibilities for combined vocal devices, hand gestures and body postures (add to this the particular performer's invention and inspiration of the moment) leads to a performance closer, I believe, to that expected by William Lawes and his contemporaries. Whatever merits or demerits this has in our own time, and however for or against our taste it is, we must better understand their perception. Through knowledge another way might be espoused—but that would be an informed, conscious decision.

In 1644 John Bulwer gave himself a classical Greek name, "Philochirosophus": his "spin-doctors" must have advised simplification for the masses, as this became "Philocophus" in 1648, when he published the first-ever work on sign language for the deaf and dumb, called *The Deafe and Dumbe Mans Friend*. In the next year, 1649, the year in which Charles the I, that magnanimous lover of humanity, was beheaded, John Bulwer published his third work, *PATHOMYOTAMIA, or, a Dissection of the Significative Muscles of the Affections of the Minde*. He states in the title page: "Being an essay to a new method of observing the most important movings of the muscles of the head, as they are neerest and immediate organs of the voluntarie or impetuous motions of the mind; with the proposal of a new nomenclature of the muscles". Here is a man way ahead of his time, researching into the anatomy of the musculature of the face and head, in order to understand the expression of the passions in facial gesturing.

The next chronological step is a large one—to the first years of the 18th century, after the death of Henry Purcell and just after the death of the "Father of English Theatre", Mr Thomas Betterton. The year is 1710 and there was much disillusionment in the London theatre world. With the death of "this eminent Tragedian", it seemed an era had passed for ever and there was much lamenting. In fact, Thomas Betterton's life spanned a huge period. He was just twenty-two when the restoration of King Charles II took place in 1661; the King chose young Betterton to go to Paris to

immerse himself in all the modish developments taking place in the theatre world there. On his return, Betterton was responsible for upgrading the use of scenery, props, and stage action, bringing the London theatre spectacle closer to that enjoyed in Paris. These innovations, however, were applied on a firm base of experience joining the new theatre with the pre-Civil War practises, for the director in charge was the venerable Sir William Davenant. Through him, Restoration theatre could claim a living link back to the great days of Elizabethan and Jacobean theatre, of Marlow, Fletcher and Shakespeare. For fifty years Thomas Betterton acted, directed, managed and wrote plays, steering a masterly path through all the vicissitudes that beset the theatre in that time: he must have been an adroit politician, among his other abilities. It is Betterton who managed and directed the great semi-operas that Henry Purcell contributed to—works like Dioclesian, King Arthur, and The Fairy Queen. In this way Betterton was also familiar with all the musicians and singers of the time and knew how to direct them and get the best out of them. His alleged autobiography, published one year after his death, is a rich mine of profound insight into his deep humanity, his adoration of all things Thespian, his profound understanding of performance and the use of the human voice in speaking and singing. It is a most important source for us on the refined use of the voice and deserves close study.

The title page lays out the breadth of his interests:

> The Life of Thomas Betterton, The Late Eminent Tragedian:
> Wherein The Action and Utterance of the Stage, Bar and Pulpit, are distinctly consider'd.

The writer, or more properly, the collator, is the poet and theatre critic Charles Gildon. He claims to have assembled papers written in the hand of Thomas Betterton, given to him shortly before the great actor's death, which constituted an intended autobiography, never completed. Certain details and insights read exactly like that—they have the authority of long experience behind them. That Betterton is utterly at home with the musical aspects of the theatre and performance is revealed in his constant use of musical metaphor to make his points. A few random examples will suffice to make this clear:

> Nor are Words without their Tune or Notes even in common Talk, which together compose that Tune, which is proper to every Sentence, and may be prick'd down as well as any musical Tune: only in the Tunes of Speech the Notes have much less variety, and have all a short Time. With Respect also to Time and Measure, the Poetic is less various and therefore less powerful, than that of Oratory; the former being like that of a short Country Song repeated to the End of the Poem, but that of Oratory is vary'd all along, like the Divisions, which a skilful Musician runs upon a Lute.
> […]

> Every Passion or Emotion of the mind has from Nature its proper and peculiar Countenance, Sound and gesture; and the whole Body of Man, all his Looks, and every sound of his Voice, like strings on an Instrument, receive their Sounds from the various Impulse of the Passions.
> […]
> Variation is founded in Nature, that you should hear two People, in a Language you do not understand, talking together with heat, the one in Anger, the other in Fear; one in Joy, the other in Sorrow, you might easily distinguish the passions from each other by the different Tone, and cadence of their Voice.
> […]
> There is a certain Latitude for the Variation of the Voice, extending to five or six tones; so that the Speaker has room enough for varying his Voice, without striking on the two Extremes, by forming out of these five or six Notes a just and delightful Harmony.

Thomas Betterton's ease with music is abundantly clear. This familiarity lies behind much of what he has to say about the use of the voice. When he writes about "utterance" it is not always clear as to whether he is referring to speaking, singing, or both; since his ideal presentation for acting tragedy is a kind of cantilena delivery, it would appear that for him the two modes of utterance have a great deal in common. Here are a few comments pertaining to the voice that elaborate this point:

> Few arrive to the true Art of varying the Voice with that Beauty and Harmony, which is in Nature, because they do not study what the Words, Subject and Passion to be express'd properly require. A good Voice, indeed, tho ill manag'd, may fill the Ear agreeably, but it would be infinitely more pleasing, if they knew how to give it the just Turns, Risings, Fallings, and all other Variations suitable to the Subjects and passions.
> […]
> When any Discourse receives Force and life, not only from the Propriety and Graces of Speaking agreeable to the Subject, but from a proper Action and gesture for it, it is truly touching, penetrating, transporting; it has Soul, it has life, it has Vigour and Energy not to be resisted. For then the Player, the Preacher, or Pleader, holds his Audience by the Eyes as well as ears, and engrosses their Attention by a double Force …

Towards the end of Betterton's writing, after treating fully the appropriate "action" and then "utterance" for a noble actor (with asides relevant to the lawyer and the preacher) he lays out a most useful set of observations on "The Natural Defects and Vices of the Voice". These are intended to be applied to speaking or singing alike. Here is my paraphrasing (for brevity's sake) of this thorough list, found in the twenty-sixth chapter of Julius Pollux's *Onomastics*, as rendered by Betterton:

i) BLACK: dull, penetrates the ear with great difficulty, less pleasant, dismal and horrid.

ii) DUSKY OR BROWN: less obscure than the "black", but far from the brightness of pure Tone.

iii) ROUGH OR UNPLEASANT: as a strong voice, seldom mingled with sweetness, solid.

iv) SMALL OR WEAK: seems rather to "pip like a chicken" than to speak like a human.

v) STRAIT OR SLENDER: which is "slenderly melted thro the narrow Channel of the Throat, and fills not the Ears of the Hearers".

vi) DUSUCOUS: not heard without difficulty, troublesome to the ears.

vii) SUBSURD OR DEAFISH: lacking vocal emission, detaining the sound within.

viii) CONFUS'D: not fully articulate sounds.

ix) JARRING: not tuneable, absonous, and unharmonious.

x) UNMELODIOUS: neglected, without grace or beauty.

xi) RUDE: uncouth, intractable, unmanageable, "like unbroken colts".

xii) UNPERSUASIVE: "not adapted to persuasion", monotonous.

xiii) RIGID: admits of no variation.

xiv) HARD OR HARSH: offends the ear, with a sort of "bouncing and cracking noise".

xv) DESULTORY OR BROKEN: the voice leaps or bounds, unequally—a confused mixing of short and long, flat and sharp, high and low (also called "fickle and inconstant").

xvi) AUSTERE, SOUR, OR DISMAL: an unpleasant sound, like that of a creaking wheel.

xvii) INFIRM OR FEEBLE: "the weak and broken breath is dispersed into a hoarse smallness".

xviii) BRAZEN: like a vehement clinking of brass, perpetually assaulting our ears.

xix) SHARP OR ACUTE: striking the ear with a penetrating, shrill sound; too thin, too cutting, too great a clearness.

Being the fair-minded and generous man that he was, Thomas Betterton then supplies a similar list, which he calls "The Contrary Virtues of the Voice":

i) HIGH: sent from good lungs and chest, perfectly fills the ears.

ii) LOFTY: fully heard and, by its own firmness, becomes durable.

iii) CLEAR: sounds sprightly, not blurred by any defects.

iv) SMOOTH, SPREADING, EXPLICIT: no further description!

v) GRAVE, BASS OR FULL: a manly and robust voice mingled with sweetness is the most valuable voice that is. When it lacks sweetness, it tends to scatter and spread into "wild and desolate enormity".

vi) CANDID AND PURE: affects the ears, as white does the eyes; opposite to the voice called "black".

vii) PURE AND SIMPLE: refined from all vices and defects.

viii) SWEET: of a good grace.

ix) ALLURING: abounding in delicate modulations and harmonious warbling.

x) EXQUISITE: polished and rich.

xi) ROUND AND SIMPLE: well adapted to persuasion.

xii) TRACTABLE, OR VOICE AT COMMAND: easily rises from the lowest note to the highest and everywhere divides itself into all the pleasing variety of notes.

xiii) FLEXIBLE: wholly without roughness or stiffness, obeying the modulations.

xiv) VOLUBLE OR SWIFT: in the closest and hottest of the argument.

xv) DELICIOUS: beautiful, in a graceful softness.

xvi) SOUNDING OR CANOROUS: fit to sing with musical instruments.

xvii) SPLENDID AND SHINING: with an agreeable softness.

These are the several sorts, or kinds of Voices, and their Virtues, which proceed merely from Nature, which yet receive from Art their brightness, Improvement, and Perfection.

To these extracts could be added numerous others which have powerful bearing on all aspects of stage presence and performance matters, including much on posture, gesture, action, the passions and appropriate means of expressing them. As I said when introducing Thomas Betterton, here is a rich mine indeed.

His relevance goes further, for he was familiar with the entire acting profession in London at that time. His generosity of spirit allowed him, along with his wife, the actress Mistress Saunderson (whom he married "for the Merits of her Mind, as well as Person, produc[ing] a Happiness in the married state nothing else could ever have given") to adopt a young girl of six years of age and bring her up as their own daughter. On a daily basis, they taught her everything this happy pair knew about stagecraft—including a rare sense of propriety in life, on- and offstage. This was a rare quality in a profession infamous for its loose morals and was to stand the young girl in good stead. Indeed, it became one of her chief claims to fame, along with her flushing cheeks, her penetrating black eyes, her dimples, her white breasts, elegant ankles, charming voice—both in speaking and singing—her general demeanour and generosity of wit. She became "the darling of the stage", "the celebrated Virgin". She was the "bewitching" Mistress Anne Bracegirdle!

That Thomas Betterton and his wife lavished every care and attention on the development of Anne's stage career is without doubt. One of her earliest roles was as the young, blind Emmeline, playing opposite King Arthur (acted by Thomas Betterton himself) in the production for which Henry Purcell contributed some of his finest theatre music. This role, like so many she played in the future, was aimed at the audience's adoration of this frail young thing, whose very innocence was threatened by rude forces. Life on and off the stage for Anne Bracegirdle were fused together by the playwrights and the public alike. With her careful tutoring in the years before she became the leading singing actress of that generation, she became a living embodiment of Betterton's precepts for the ideal stage presentation. Her realisation of the passions became legendary—her still-mimes, known as her "passionate postures", drew gasps of wonder and amazement from the audience—and her singing of mad songs revolutionised expressive singing on stage. The most famous mad song from that era known today—Henry Purcell's "Bess of Bedlam"—might well have been part of her repertoire (though there is no proof of this) for in a later illustrated edition a sequence of four plates shows the "passionate postures" appropriate to Bess's mercurial mood shifts.

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Figure 10: Engravings of "Bess of Bedlam" in George Bickham Junior's *The Musical Entertainer* (1737)

"Bess cloath'd in her Rags and Folly"

"Each day I'll water it with a tear"

"I'll lay me down and die within some hollow Tree"

"Bess in her Straw"

These plates explore the repertoire of postures associated with Anne Bracegirdle. Her stunning stage entrances and even more stunning stage exits left everyone desiring more. Virtually the entirety of her repertoire of songs, specially created for her talents, survives today. Here is the opening of one such song. It revolves around one very simple idea, turning on the word "still" in its many shades of meaning; this explores the notion that not all stage gesture, utterance, posture, colour need be ever-changing, always frantic, never still. Here, less is more, but in order to express that, remember that Anne Bracegirdle had had a lifetime of training to know exactly when to gauge the emotive, dramatic moment—from stillness, to action, to stillness—in the body and in the voice:

Figure 11: Opening of John Eccles' "Still I'm grieving"

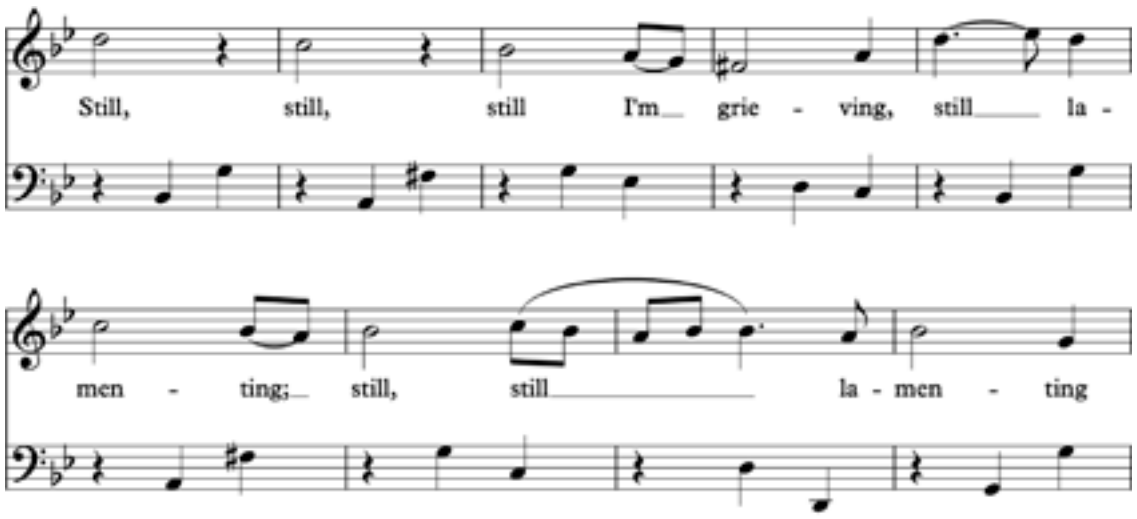

Figure 12: Engravings from James Parsons' *Human Physiognomy Explain'd* (London, 1747)

11

Thomas Betterton's legacy lived on in people like Richard Leveridge, a bass singer and memorable stage personality. As a young man he had been directed by Betterton in, for example, *The Indian Queen*, Henry Purcell's last work before he died. Leveridge played the famous role of the magician Ismeron and sang the great aria "Ye Twice Ten Hundred Deities". He was still using it as one of his party-pieces in the year he retired from the stage, 1751. It can thus be claimed that the tradition represented by Thomas Betterton, which itself had a pedigree stretching back to pre-Civil War times, had a vigorous and popular proponent with Leveridge, who took that tradition into the 1750s. By this time, the theatre enjoyed the appearance of a new rising star, one whose name has never been forgotten in theatre circles to this day: David Garrick. A latter-day Betterton, he is so much more famous than his model for the simple reason that the English press by the mid-18th century covered all aspects of the theatre world at great length and generated thereby considerable polemic, debate, and an endless stream of "experts" ready to have their say. The essence of Garrick's style is in fact closely modelled on the precepts that Betterton espoused, but expressed in a more modern language.

The analytical mind encouraged by the Age of Enlightenment led to scientific study in all areas of human endeavour, presented in pamphlets, learned articles, journals, lectures and encyclopaedic tomes. In 1747, one James Parsons presented two lectures to the Royal Society, on the nature of the passions expressed in the human physiognomy, giving names to the variety of muscles, and tracing the sequence of actions of those muscles in order to express particular emotions. He had a sequence of charmingly naïve but very touching engravings made to illustrate his lecture. Beginning with a face at rest, untroubled by any extreme emotion, the engravings show it undergo expressions of ecstasy, terror and grief.

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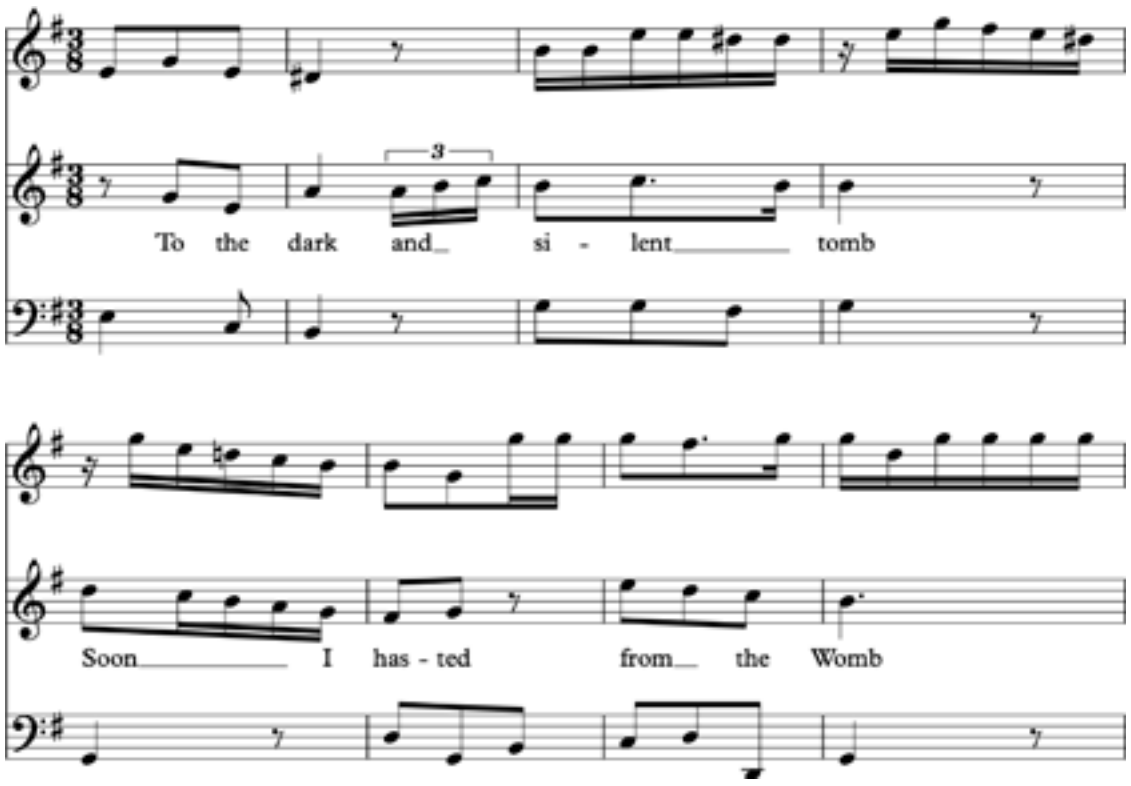
Ultimately this line of enquiry was reabsorbed into the realm of art and artistic engraving and had by the end of the century informed such fine sequences of the passions as these, from a set of twelve called *Gems of Beauty* by E.T. Parris, printed in 1838.

Figure 13: Three extracts from E.T. Parris' *Gems of Beauty*

Figure 14: Jones, John, "To the Dark and Silent Tomb", London ca. 1750 (opening):



13

These beautiful plates adapt posture, gesture and physiognomy to express profound human experience in a form of mannerism which begins the 19th-century taste for melodrama, the natural fruit of the theatrical search for expression of the passions. If Garrick refined that expression in action and utterance and artists refined it in the graphic arts, then surely in singing this tendency would also have continued. In a piece such as John Jones' tellingly simple elegy on the death of a young infant, printed around 1800, the sensitive singer would draw on vocal colour to heighten the pathetic human tragedy that is so epigrammatically portrayed in words and music. The performance must be encouraged to enhance the tragedy barely expressible. Here, histrionics of any degree would be abhorrent—a case of "even less is even more".

14

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Appendix

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William Lawes: Setts for Violins and Division Viols
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Recorded in Decca Studio 3, London, 1978
Decca, L'Oiseau-Lyre, 'Florilegium', DSLO 560 (1980)

William Lawes: Royall Consorts, Sett for Three Lyra Viols
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded in Decca Studio 3, London, 1978
Decca, L'Oiseau-Lyre, 'Florilegium', DSLO 573 (1980)

Le Chansonnier Cordiforme (15th-Century Chansons)
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded at Decca Studio London, 1979
Decca L'Oiseau-Lyre, 'Florilegium', D186D4 (1980) <4 Vinyl>

Bartolomeo Tromboncino: Frottole
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded at Decca Studio 3, London, 1981
Decca, L'Oiseau-Lyre, 'Florilegium', DSLO 593 (1981)

John Danyel: Songs, 1606
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded in Decca Studio 3, London, 1980
Decca, L'Oiseau-Lyre, 'Florilegium', DSLO 568 (1981)

John Ward: Madrigals 1613
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded in Decca Studio 3, London, 1980
Decca, L'Oiseau-Lyre, 'Florilegium', D238D2 (1981)

Duetti da camera
Emma Kirkby, Judith Nelson (sopranos), Anthony Rooley (lute)
Recorded in Decca Studio 3, London, 1979
Decca, L'Oiseau-Lyre, 'Florilegium', DSLO 588 (1981)

Madrigals and Wedding Songs for Diana
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded at St Jude on The Hill, Golders Green, London, 1981
Hyperion, A66019 (1981)

John Jenkins: Consort Music
The Consort of Musicke (directed by Trevor Jones)
Recorded in Decca Studio 3, London, 1980
Decca, L'Oiseau-Lyre, 'Florilegium', DSLO 600 (1982)

William Byrd: Psalmes, Sonets and Songs, 1588
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded in Decca Studio, London, 1981
Decca, L'Oiseau-Lyre, 'Florilegium', DSLO 596 (1982)

Claudio Monteverdi: Madrigali erotici
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded at St Barnabas Church, Finchley, 1982
Decca, L'Oiseau-Lyre, 'Florilegium', CD 421480-2 (1982)

Henry Purcell: Songs and Dialogues
Emma Kirkby (soprano), David Thomas (bass), Anthony Rooley (lute)
Recorded in 1982
Hyperion, A66056 (1982)

Orlando Lassus: Lagrime di San Pietro
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded in St Barnabas Church, Finchley, 1982
Decca, L'Oiseau-Lyre, 'Florilegium', DSDL 706 (1982)

John Wilbye: Madrigals
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded in Decca Studio 3, London, 1981
Decca, L'Oiseau-Lyre, 'Florilegium', DSLO 597 (1982)

William Byrd: Consort Music
The Consort of Musicke (directed by Trevor Jones)
Recorded in Decca Studio, London, 1982
Decca, L'Oiseau-Lyre, 'Florilegium', DSLO599 (1983)

Claudio Monteverdi: Quarto libro dei madrigali, 1603
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded at St Barnabas Church, Finchley, 1983
Decca, L'Oiseau-Lyre, 'Florilegium', 414 148-2 (1983)

Thomas Morley: Ayres and Madrigals
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded at St Barnabas church, Finchley, 1982
Decca, L'Oiseau-Lyre, 'Florilegium', 436 862-2 (1983)

Sigismondo D'India: Ottavo libro dei madrigali, 1624
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded at St Barnabas Church, Finchley, 1982
Decca, L'Oiseau-Lyre, 'Florilegium', DSDL 707 (1983)

Henry Purcell: Songs and Airs
Emma Kirkby (soprano), Anthony Rooley (lute), Christopher Hogwood (harpsichord)
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset, 1982
Decca, L'Oiseau-Lyre, 'Florilegium', 417 123-2 (1983)

King of the Low Seas: Arias by Caccini and Puliaschi
David Thomas (bass) and Anthony Rooley (chitarrone)
Recorded in 1982
Hyperion, A66079 (1984)

Olympia's Lament: Claudio Monteverdi, Sigismondo D'India
Emma Kirkby (soprano), Anthony Rooley (chitarrone)
Recorded at St Michael's Church, Highgate, London, 1983
Hyperion, A66106 (1984)

Renaissance Fantasias
Anthony Rooley (lute, gittern, and vihuela)
Recorded in The Art Workers Guild, London, 1982
Hyperion, CD A66089 (1984)

Claudio Monteverdi: Quinto libro dei madrigali, 1605
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded at Henry Wood Hall, London, 1983
Decca, L'Oiseau-Lyre, 'Florilegium', 410 291-2 (1984)

Carlo Gesualdo: Quinto libro dei madrigali, 1611
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded at Henry Wood Hall, London, 1983
Decca, L'Oiseau-Lyre 410 128-1 (1984)

Lamento d'Arianna: Claudio Monteverdi, Severo Bonini, Claudio Pari, Francesco Costa, Antonio Il Verso, Francesco Maria Rascarini
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded in Schloss Kirchheim, 1983 and Forde Abbey, Dorset, 1984
Deutsche Harmonia Mundi, 165 16 9504 3 (1984)

Heinrich Schutz: ll primo libro de madrigali, 1611
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded in Schloss Kirchheim by WDR, 1984
Deutsche Harmonia Mundi, GD77118 (1985)

Angelo Notari: Love & Languishment
The Consort of Musicke,
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset, 1984
Hyperion, A66140 (1985)

Johann Grabbe: Il primo libro de madrigali, 1609
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded in Detmold-Heiligenkirchen, 1985
Dabringhaus & Grimm, MD+6 L3220 (1986)

Time Stands Still
Emma Kirkby (soprano), Anthony Rooley (lute)
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset, 1985
Hyperion, 466089 (1986)

John Blow: Welcome Every Guest – Songs from Amphion Anglicus
Emma Kirkby (soprano), David Thomas (bass) with The Consort of Musicke
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset, 1986
Electra Nonsuch, 7 9156-2 (1987)

Claudio Monteverdi: Duets and Solos
Emma Kirkby, Evelyn Tubb (sopranos) and the Consort of Musicke
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset, 1986
IMP Classics, PCD 881 (1987)

All' Illustrissimi Signori Fuccari: Musik aus der Zeit von 1573–1603, dem Hause Fugger gewidmet
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded in St Barnabas, Finchley and St Judes, Golders Green, by WDR, 1985
Deutsche Harmonia Mundi, 7 49234 (1987)

Sigismondo D'India: Terzo libro de madrigali, 1615
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded in Forde Abbey, Dorset, by WDR, 1986
Deutsche Harmonia Mundi, RD 77119 (1987)

Alessandro Scarlatti, Antonio Lotti: Madrigali
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded in Schloss Kirchheim and Forde Abbey, Dorset, by WDR, 1987
Deutsche Harmonia Mundi, 7 49135-2 (1987)

John Ward: Sweet Philomel (Madrigals)
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset, 1986
Hyperion, A66256 (1987)

John Blow: Venus and Adonis / Christopher Gibbons & Matthew Locke: Cupid and Death
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset, by WDR, 1984
Deutsche Harmonia Mundi, GD77117 (1988)

Concerto delle Donne: Madrigali
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded in Forde Abbey, Dorset, by WDR, 1986
Deutsche Harmonia Mundi, LC 0761 (1988)

Music from the Time of Christian IV: Madrigals from the South to the North
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded at Danish Radio Station, Copenhagen, 1985
BIS, CD-392 (1988)

Henry Lawes: Sitting by the Streams – Palms, Ayres and Dialogues
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded in Forde Abbey, Dorset, 1984
Hyperion, CDA66I 35 (1988)

John Dowland: The English Orpheus – Songs for Voice and Lute
Emma Kirkby (soprano), Anthony Rooley (lute & orpharion)
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset, by WDR, 1988
Virgin Classics, LC 7873 (1989)

Giaches de Wert: Il settimo libro de madrigali
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset, 1989
Virgin Veritas, VC 7 90763-2 (1989)

Claudio Monteverdi: Il sesto libro de madrigali, 1614
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset (Anthony Rooley, producer), 1989
Virgin Veritas, VC 7 91154-2 (1990)

Jacques Arcadelt: Madrigali
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset, by WDR, 1987
Deutsche Harmonia Mundi, RD77162 (1991)

Robert Jones: The Muses Gardin – Songs for Voice and Lute
Emma Kirkby (soprano), Anthony Rooley (lute)
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset (Anthony Rooley, producer), 1989
Virgin Veritas, VC 7 91212-2 (1991)

Claudio Monteverdi: L'ottavo libro de madrigali 1638: Madrigali amorosi
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset (Anthony Rooley, producer), 1989 and 1990
Virgin Veritas, VC 7 91157-2 (1991)

Claudio Monteverdi: L'ottavo libro de madrigali 1638: Madrigali guerrieri
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset (Anthony Rooley, producer), 1991
Virgin Veritas, VC 7 91156-2 (1991)

Claudio Monteverdi: L'ottavo libro de madrigali 1638: Balli
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset (Anthony Rooley, producer), 1989
Virgin Veritas, VC 7 91158-2 (1991)

Thomas Ravenscroft: There Were Three Ravens
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset (Anthony Rooley, producer), 1989
Virgin Veritas, 7 590352 (1991)

Arie Antiche
Emma Kirkby (soprano), Anthony Rooley (lute)
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset, 1992
Musica Oscura, 'The Opheus Circle', 070988 (1993)

Cipriano de Rore: ll quinto libro de madrigali, 1568
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset, by WDR, 1991
Musica Oscura, 'The Monteverdi Circle', 070991 (1993)

Cor mio, deh non languire – 21 Settings of Guarini
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset, by WDR, 1984-1991
Musica Oscura, 'The Monteverdi Circle', 07 0989 (1993)

Gerusalemme liberata – Settings from Tasso
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset, by WDR, 1985
Musica Oscura, 'The Monteverdi Circle', 07 0990 (1993)

Shakespeare's Lutenist – Theatre Music by Robert Johnson
Emma Kirkby (soprano), David Thomas (bass), Anthony Rooley (lute)
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset, 1991
Virgin Veritas, VC7 59321-2 (1993)

The Mad Lover
Evelyn Tubb (soprano), Francis Kelly (triple harp)
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset (Anthony Rooley, producer), 1992
Musica Oscura, 'The Orpheus Circle', 07 0987 (1993)

Luca Marenzio: Baci soavi e cari
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset, by WDR, 1988
Musica Oscura, 'The Monteverdi Circle', 07 0992 (1993)

Biagio Marini: Concerto Terzo delle Musiche da Camera, 1649
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset, by WDR, 1990
Musica Oscura, 'The Monteverdi Circle', 07 0994 (1993)

The Mistress – Poems by Abraham Cowley, Set by Blow, Purcell and Others
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset (Anthony Rooley, producer), 1993
Musica Oscura, 'The Purcell Circle', 07 0986 (1993)

Claudio Monteverdi: Banquet of the Senses – Madrigali Erotici e Spirituali
(Video/DVD)
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded and filmed in the Palazzo Te, Mantova (Anthony Rooley, writer and producer), 1992
Columns Classics, 99784 (1993)

Claudio Monteverdi: ll secondo libro de madrigali, 1590
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset (Anthony Rooley, producer), 1990 and 1991
Virgin Veritas, VC 7 59282-2 (1993)

Claudio Monteverdi: ll terzo libro de madrigali, 1592
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset (Anthony Rooley, producer), 1990 and 1991
Virgin Veritas, VC 7 59283-2 (1993)

Claudio Monteverdi: Madrigali erotici e spirituali
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded in the Palazzo Te, Mantova, and Forde Abbey, Dorset (Anthony Rooley, producer), 1992 and 1993
Musica Oscura, 'The Monteverdi Circle', 070995 (1993)

Walter Porter: Madrigals and Ayres, 1632
The Consort of Musicke,
Recorded in Forde Abbey, Dorset, by WDR, 1983
Musica Oscura, 'The Monteverdi Circle', 07 0993 (1993)

Sigismondo D'India: ll primo libro de madrigali, 1607
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset, by WDR, 1994
Musica Oscura, 'The Monteverdi Circle', 07 0985 (1994)

Angelo Notari: Prime musiche nuove, 1613
The Consort of Musicke,
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset, 1984
Musica Oscura, 'The Monteverdi Circle', 070983 (1994)

Alessandro Stradella: L'anime del Purgatorio
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset, by WDR, 1984
Musica Oscura, 'Favola in Musica', 070984 (1994)

John Ward: Madrigals and Fantasias
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset, by WDR, 1984
Musica Oscura, 'The Fanshawe Circle', 070981 (1994)

John Ward: Psalms and Anthems
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset, by WDR, 1988
Musica Oscura, 'The Fanshawe Circle', 070982 (1994)

The Dark is My Delight
Evelyn Tubb (soprano), Michael Fields (lute)
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset (Anthony Rooley, producer), 1993
Musica Oscura, 'Women in Song', 070980 (1995)

Maurice Greene: Songs and Keyboard Works
Emma Kirkby (soprano) and Lars Ulrich Mortensen (harpsichord)
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset (Anthony Rooley, research and producer), 1994
Musica Oscura, 'The Handel Circle', 070978 (1995)

Don Quixote: The Musical (Purcell, Eccles, Courtville and others)
The Consort of Musicke and other ensembles (Anthony Rooley, director)
Recorded at Maida Vale studios, London, by BBC, 1995
Musica Oscura, 'The Purcell Circle', 070973 (1995) <2 CDs>

William Lawes: ln Loving Memory – Psalms, Songs and Elegies
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset, by WDR, 1995
Musica Oscura, 'The English Explorers', 07 0972 (1995)

The Mantle of Orpheus (Henry Purcell's last songs, and the songs of his fellow composers who survived him)
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset (Anthony Rooley, producer), 1994
Musica Oscura, The 'Purcell Circle', 070977 (1995)

Benedetto Pallavicino: Il sesto libro dei madrigali a cinque voci, 1600
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset, by WDR, 1994
Musica Oscura, 'The Monteverdi Circle', 07 097 6 (1995)

The Scyence of Lutynge: Lost Lute Works and Transcriptions
Anthony Rooley
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset, 1990
Musica Oscura, 'The Orpheus Circle', 07 0971 (1995)

Sound the Trumpets from Shore to Shore
Emma Kirkby, Evelyn Tubb and the English Trumpet Virtuosi
Recorded at Churchill College Chapel, Cambridge, 1994
Musica Oscura, 'The Purcell Circle', 070979 (1995)

Orazio Vecchi: Selva di varie ricreatione
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded at live performances in Ascona, 1982 and 1984
Ermitage 169 -2 (1996)

Claudio Monteverdi: Il primo libro de madrigali, 1587 (including "Tempro la cetra" and "Tirsi e Clori" from *Il settimo libro de madrigali*, 1619)
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset (Anthony Rooley, producer), 1990 and 1991
Virgin Veritas, 7243 5 45143 2 6 (1996)

Charming Strephon – A Celebration of the Life and Times of John Wilmor, 2nd Earl of Rochester (1647-1680)
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded in St Mary's Church, Adderbury, Oxfordshire, 1997
Etcetera, KTC .121 1 (1997)

Bewitching Bracegirdle: "The Darling of the stage! … The Celebrated Virdin!" (Act I)
Evelyn Tubb (soprano), Anthony Rooley (theorbo-lute)
Recorded at Clumber Church (Anthony Rooley and Chris Thorpe, producers), 1998
.CTE 001 (1998)

Bewitching Bracegirdle: "Performed to a Miracle! … An Amorous Rapture!" (Act II)
Evelyn Tubb (soprano), Anthony Rooley (theorbo-lute)
Recorded at Clumber Church (Anthony Rooley and Chris Thorpe, producers), 1999
.CTE 003 (1999)

Elegies: Seven Sighs or Passionate Plaint for Sorrowfull Souls
Evelyn Tubb (voice), Anthony Rooley (lute)
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset (Anthony Rooley and Chris Thorpe, producers), 1998
Cantus Records, .CTE 002 (1998)

Joan Brudieu: Madrigals (Barcelona 1585)
The Consort of Musicke and La Quarta Sciencia
Recorded at the Iglesia de Sant Felip Neri, Palma (Anthony Rooley, producer), 1997
Ona Studio, OD CD100 (1999) <2 CDs>

Water, Earth, Ayre & Fire: A new Look at John Dowland and Friends
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset (Anthony Rooley, producer), 1998
Gaudeamus, GAU 187 (1999)

Thomas Weelkes: Madrigals and Anthems
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset, by WDR, 1994
Gaudeamus, GAU 195 (1999)

A Many Coloured Coat: Songs of Love and Devotion
Evelyn Tubb (soprano), Anthony Rooley (lute)
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset (Anthony Rooley and Chris Thorpe, producers), 2000
.CTE 004 (2000)

Daniel Purcell Brotherly Love
Evelyn Tubb (soprano) with Sprezzatura
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset (Anthony Rooley, research and producer), 1999
Etcetera, KTC 1232 (2000)

Orazio Vecchi: L'humore musicale; La caccia d'Amore
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset, by WDR, 1989
Gaudeamus, GAU 202 (2000)

Jan Baptist Verrijt: Flammae Divinae, Opus 5: Motets
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded in the Jurriaanse Zaal, de Doelen, Rotterdam, 2000
NM Classics, 92076 (2000)

Canzon del Principe: London British Library MS Add. 30491
Evelyn Tubb (soprano), Paolo Pandolfo (bass viol), Andrea Marcon (organ and harpsichord), The Earle His Viols
Recorded in the Grosser Saal, Musik-Akademie Basel (Anthony Rooley, producer and director), by WDR, 2000
Divox Antiqua, CDX-799O7 (2001)

Of Harlots, Penitents, Ghosts and Kings: Biblical Narrative in Music from 17th-Century England
The Consort of Musicke
Recorded live in Katholische Stadtkirche, Dillenburg, 2000
25BWDill (2001)

Classical Kirkby: Orpheus and Corinna – 17th-Century English Songs on Classical Themes
Emma Kirkby (soprano), Anthony Rooley (theorbo-lute)
Recorded at the Early Music Centre, York (St Margaret's Church), 2001
BIS, 1435 (2002)

Robert Lucas Pearsall: Lay a Garland – Doppelchörige Madrigale
The Pre-Raphaelite Singers (being a fusion of the Consort of Musicke and I Fagiolini)
Recorded in the Katholische Kirche, Binningen (Anthony Rooley, producer), by DRS2, 2003
Musique Suisse, MGB CD 6206 (2003)

John Eccles: Semele
Florida State University Opera, directed by Anthony Rooley
Recorded at the Opperman Music Hall, 2003
Forum FRC 9203 (2004) <2 CDs>

William Hayes: The Passions – An ode for Music (Oxford, 1750)
Evelyn Tubb, Ulrike Hofbauer, Sumihito Uesugi, David Munderloh, Lisandro Abadie, Chor der Schola Cantorum Basiliensis, La Cetra Barockorchester Basel, Anthony Rooley
Recorded in the Volkshaus Basel, production of the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis, 2008
Glossa GCD 922501 (2010)

William Hayes: Six Cantatas (1748); Orpheus & Euridice (1735)
Evelyn Tubb, Mirjam Berli, Ulrike Hofbauer (sopranos), Daniel Cabena (alto), David Munderloh, Paul Bentley (tenors), The SCB Hayes Players, directed by Anthony Rooley
Recorded at Landgasthof Riehen, 2012
Glossa, GCD 922510 (2013) <2 CDs>

Antony Rooley: Orphan Wailings
Evelyn Tubb (soprano), Anthony Rooley (lute)
Recorded at Forde Abbey, Dorset and Sastamala (Anthony Rooley and Chris Thorpe, producers), 2002 and 2012
Lute Society LS001 (2014)

Musica Transalpina: Musical Migration from ltaly to England (1500-1800)
Evelyn Tubb (voice), Anthony Rooley (lute)
Recorded at Forde Abbey (Anthony Rooley and Chris Thorpe, producers), 2002
Cantus Records, CANTUS9606 (2018)