

The music

King Henry VIII	<i>Pastime with good company</i> <i>Helas Madame</i> <i>And I were a mayden</i> * <i>Pavane & Galliard</i>
Guillaume Morlaye Guillaume de Machaut	<i>Douce dame jolie</i> <i>Amours me fait desirer</i> <i>Rose, liz, printemps</i> * <i>Philip's Dump</i> <i>Adieu mes amours</i> <i>Le souvenir de vous me tue</i> * <i>Fantasia</i> <i>Bonny sweet Boy</i> <i>Ah, Robin</i> <i>A dew, a dew</i> <i>Blow thy horn, hunter</i>
Philip van Wilder Jean Mouton	
Albert de Rippe Anon William Cornysh	

Henry VIII	<i>The time of Youth</i> <i>Greensleeves</i> * <i>Greensleeves</i>
Francis Cutting Henry VIII Heinrich Isaac de Rippe Claudin de Sermisy	<i>Green groweth the holly</i> <i>Amy, souffrez</i> * <i>Fantasia</i> <i>Tant que vivray</i> <i>Joyssance vous donneray</i> <i>Whereto should I expresse?</i> <i>Where be ye, my love?</i> * <i>Pavan & Galliard 'Delight'</i> <i>Au joly boys</i> <i>O Welt, ich muss dich lassen</i> <i>Calata</i> <i>Hey nonny nonny</i>
Henry VIII Anon John Johnson de Sermisy Isaac Joanambrosio Dalza Anon	

(pieces marked * are for solo lute)

The Field of the Cloth of Gold is shorthand for the 18 days of festivities held on ground near Calais in June 1520. Its primary aim was the restoration of friendship between England and France under their two young and ambitious monarchs, Henry VIII and Francis I. But it was also part of a wider attempt by Cardinal Wolsey to achieve 'Universal Peace' among European powers.

A small but vital part of the 5,000-strong English contingent was the full complement of the Chapel Royal's singers – around 40 men, with the boys under the direction of their Children's Master, William Cornysh. On the French side, Jean Mouton led an equally distinguished group of singers and musicians from Francis's court.

The only music specifically cited by chroniclers at the time was the High Mass performed by the Cardinal the day before the celebrations came to an end, at which English and French choirs (and organists) performed alternate sections.

But we know that the almost-nightly banqueting and feasting took place to musical accompaniment, with dancing and masquing afterwards (also under Cornysh's direction and with his men and boys as actors). Although we can never be sure, it's highly likely that a number of the pieces on this afternoon's programme would have featured.

Music played an important part in **Henry VIII's** life (1491-1547) from childhood on. He was a multi-instrumentalist on the lute, harp, keyboard and recorder. He sang and also composed songs and instrumental pieces (plus, impressively, some now-lost Masses). In short, he took music seriously, both as performer and promoter.

His songs are preserved in a manuscript now held at the British Library (*Henry VIII's songbook*. BL Add.31922). It was compiled in the early 1520s possibly by Henry Guildford, friend of the King and sometime Master of the Revels – or even perhaps by Cornysh whose number of vocal entries (9) comes second only to the King's (15). Two of the three pieces by **Anon** in this programme (*Where be ye, my love?* and *Hey nonny nonny*) also appear in the manuscript.

The lutenist **Guillaume Morlaye** (c1510-58) was, additionally, a composer, publisher and pupil of Albert de Rippe. Towards the end of his life he received a publishing licence from the French king and in the space of a few years produced no less than ten lute collections, three books of his own guitar compositions, and also lute arrangements of de Sermisy.

Guillaume de Machaut (1300-77) was the foremost poet-composer of his century. On the one hand he marks the end of the monophonic song tradition of the trouvères, found here in the virelai *Douce dame jolie* ('Sweet and pretty lady'). On the other, he brought to a full flowering the emerging polyphonic song forms of the ballade (*Amours me fait desirer*: 'Love makes me desire') and rondeau (*Rose, liz, printemps*: 'Rose, lily, springtime'). These were to become the dominant fixed forms for succeeding generations.

Courtly love was Machaut's theme, and the pains and anguish suffered in the service of the seemingly unattainable female ideal. But his songs aren't painful – they're an idiomatic and natural combination of words with music, compelling in their lyrical grace and rhythmic sophistication.

The piece wonderfully titled *Philip's Dump* was attributed to **Philip van Wilder** (1500-54), almost certainly wrongly. It was

understandable though, as he'd spent most of his working life in England and taught the lute to both Princess (later Queen) Mary and Prince Edward (later Edward VI). But the question of attribution isn't important when we're listening to such an intricate and sprightly work, containing just the right degree of Tudor melancholy.

By 1520, **Jean Mouton** (1459-1522) had been the principal composer at Francis I's court for some time, writing both secular and sacred work as the court required. Better known perhaps for his 15 masses and religious motets, all his music is highly melodic, emphasizing a continuous flow of the vocal line from beginning to end. Among Mouton's 25 surviving chansons are *Adieu mes amours* ('Farewell my love') – a song originally popularized by Josquin in around 1480 – and *Le souvenir de vous me tue* ('Your memory is fatal to me'). Both are on familiar courtly love themes.

What made **Albert de Rippe's** (1500-51) lute music unusual for its time was that it stood by itself, independent from accompanied vocal music (even though some of it was based on chansons). He composed 26 fantasias for the six-course lute. Now considered his most important works, their dense polyphony and complex architecture (some evolving for several hundred bars), together with the skill required to play them, make the fantasias some of the most important works in the lute repertoire. Two will be played in this programme.

Although **William Cornysh** (1465-1523) is also better known generally for his settings of religious texts, a number of his songs appear in the Henry VIII manuscript, including the beautifully sweet and simple *Ah, Robin* and *A dew, a dew* – a lover's sad goodbye to the beloved. *Blow thy horn, hunter* is vigorous, and its text need not be read literally.

Some popular songs of the time with unknown authorship were sometimes – flatteringly – given regal attribution. That of *Greensleeves* to **Henry VIII** is perhaps the most egregious example of this tendency.

The version of the same tune for solo lute by **Francis Cutting** (c1550-95/96) gives us a completely different perspective. Cutting was musician for the Howard family and one of the first English lutenists whose name we know.

Born in Flanders, **Heinrich Isaac** (1450-1517) was one of the period's most prolific and versatile composers. Although he travelled widely, he appears never to have visited England. But his music was well-known and influential here. Three of his pieces, including *Amy, souffrez* ('Beloved, permit me to love you') are in the Henry VIII manuscript, while his chorale *Welt, ich muss dich lassen* ('O world, I must leave you') – a tune later made very

familiar by Bach – shows us a completely different aspect of his work.

Claudin de Sermisy (1490-1562) was among the singers from the Chapelle Royale at the Cloth of Gold festivities and is said to have composed chansons for the event. Typically, these are chordal and syllabic, shunning the more ostentatious polyphony of composers from the Netherlands and striving for lightness and grace instead. *Tant que vivray* ('As long as I live'), *Joyssance vous donneray* ('I will give you joy') and *Au joly boys* ('To the pretty wood') are fine examples of his style.

John Johnson (1545-94) can reasonably be regarded as the founder of the English School of lute music, joined later by his perhaps more famous son Robert, and culminating with Dowland. He was Elizabeth I's favourite lutenist. The *Pavan & Galliard 'Delight'* is found in over 30 manuscripts and was clearly one of the most popular pieces of its time.

Very little is known about **Joanambrosio Dalza**. He probably came from Milan and left behind over 50 original pieces for lute published in Venice in 1508. The *calata* is a lively Italian dance.

Notes by Dick Ware

The artists

Miriam Allan *soprano* **Elizabeth Kenny** *lute*

The "sublime singing" (*Gramophone*) of **Miriam Allan** has been enjoyed across the world, from her native Australia, through Japan and Singapore, as well as at festivals throughout Europe and North America. This year she was one of the four choristers to sing at Prince Philip's funeral.

On the opera stage she is a regular company soloist with Pinchgut Opera, for whom she has sung Isifile (*Giasone*, Cavalli) and Costanza (*Griselda*, Vivaldi). For the Innsbruck Festival she has sung Galatea (*Acis & Galatea*, Handel), whilst she has taken various roles in Purcell's *The Fairy Queen* for Glyndebourne Festival Opera, Opera Comique, Paris, and Brooklyn Academy of Music, New York. Other roles include Queen of the Night (*Magic Flute*, Mozart), Musica and Proserpina (*Orfeo*, Monteverdi) and various roles in Rameau's *Dardanus*.

She has appeared alongside Sir John Eliot Gardiner and the English Baroque Soloists, Masaaki Suzuki's Bach Collegium Japan, Nicholas Collon and the Aurora Orchestra and Lars Ulrik Mortensen and Concerto Copenhagen as well as with conductors

Festival Patron: David Matthews

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The 2022 Little Missenden Festival will run from Friday 7th to Sunday 16th October.

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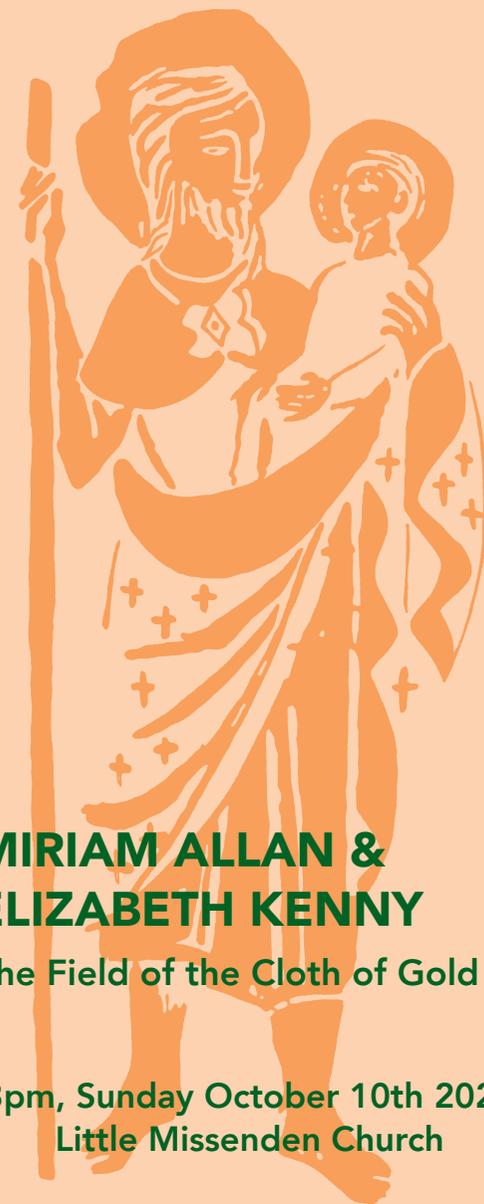
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61st Little Missenden Festival



**MIRIAM ALLAN &
ELIZABETH KENNY**

The Field of the Cloth of Gold

**3pm, Sunday October 10th 2021
Little Missenden Church**

Programme Notes

William Christie, Stephen Layton and Laurence Cummings. Her discography includes the *Gramophone Award*-winning series of Monteverdi Madrigals with Les Arts Florissants and Paul Agnew, with whom she can also be seen in the DVD release of *Orfeo* as Proserpina, as well as the *Mozart Requiem* with Leipzig Kammerorchester, a recital of Handel and Purcell on *ABC Classics* and Pinchgut Opera's series of live recordings.

Voix des Arts comments that "the timbre is one of polished gold from the top to the bottom."

Elizabeth Kenny is one of Europe's leading lute players. Her playing has been described as "incandescent" (*Music and Vision*), "radical" (*The Independent on Sunday*) and "indecently beautiful" (*Toronto Post*). In many years of touring she has played with most of the world's best period instrument groups and experienced many different approaches to music making. She played with Les Arts Florissants 1992-2007 and with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment 1997-2015 and still returns to initiate 17th-century projects such as *The Hypochondriack* and *A Restoration Tempest*.

Her research interests have led to critically acclaimed recordings of Lawes, Purcell and Dowland, and to the formation of her ensemble 'Theatre of the Ayre'. As well as regular collaborations with singers such as Robin Blaze, Ian Bostridge and Nicholas Mulroy in recital, she has a great fondness for the viol consort repertoire and has recorded William Lawes' *Royal Consorts* with Phantasm, as well as Dowland's *Lachrimae* (2016). Elizabeth also appears alongside Ian Bostridge on *Warner Classic's* 'Shakespeare Songs', which won a 2017 Grammy Award for 'Best Classical Solo Vocal Album'.

As a soloist she is committed to a diverse range of repertoire, from the ML Lutebook (a much-praised CD released on *Hyperion* records) to new music for lute and theorbo: she has premiered works by James MacMillan, Heiner Goebbels and Benjamin Oliver.

Liz Kenny is Director of Performance at the University of Oxford, and Professor of Lute at the Royal Academy of Music. She was Professor of Musical Performance and Head of Early Music at Southampton University 2009-18. She was also an artistic advisor to the York Early Music Festival from 2011-2014.