Welcome to the world of four women, all of whom have been betrayed by love and its deceitful charms.

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‘OUTSTANDING’

Elin Manahan Thomas soprano
David Miller lute & theorbo

Devotional Songs
Dowland, Campian, Humfrey & Purcell
Devotional Songs to the Lute and Theorbo by Campian, Dowland, Humfrey & Purcell

Lute music by Dowland, Lawrence and Wilson

Elin Manahan Thomas soprano
David Miller lute & theorbo

1 Henry Purcell (1659-1695) A Morning Hymn (Thou wak'full Shepherd) 3:20
2 Henry Purcell How Long Great God (The Aspiration) 4:08
3 John Dowland (1563-1626) Preludium 1:03
4 Thomas Campian (1567-1619/20) Never weather-beaten Saile 2:12
5 Thomas Campian Author of Light 2:35
6 John Wilson (1595-1674) Prelude 18 2:08
7 Pelham Humfrey (1647/8-1674) Sleep downy sleep, come close mine eyes 3:22
8 Pelham Humfrey A Hymne to God the Father (Wilt thou forgive that sinne) 2:46
9 John Lawrence (?-1635) Lute Suite: Pavane 4:34
10 Corant I 1:14
11 Corant II 1:36
12 Sarabande 1:11
13 Henry Purcell The Blessed Virgin's Expostulation 7:05
14 John Dowland Thou mightie God. 1. part 3:09
15 John Dowland When Davids life by Saul. 2. part 1:30
16 John Dowland When the poore Criple. 3. part 2:16
17 John Dowland Galliard to Lachrimae 2:56
18 John Dowland Where Sinne sore wounding 1:55
19 Henry Purcell A Divine Hymn (Lord, what is Man) 5:56
20 Anon. Miserere, my Maker 4:45
21 John Dowland In this trembling shadow 2:51
22 John Dowland If that a Sinners sighes be Angels foode 2:23
23 Henry Purcell Sleep, Adam, Sleep, and take thy rest 1:42
24 Henry Purcell An Evening Hymn (Now that the Sun hath veil'd his Light) 4:04
25 Total running time 70:41
In seventeenth-century England the lute and theorbo had been the principal instruments for accompanying songs until the 1690’s. Lutenists played from tablature in the lute song books but from around the 1620’s mastered a new style of accompanying from bass lines. The title page of Henry Playford’s first volume of *Harmonia Sacra* (1688) lists the suitable instruments of continuo - 'Divine Hymns and Dialogues with a Thorow-Bass for the Theorbo-Lute, Bass-Viol, Harpsichord, or Organ. Composed by the Best Masters of the Last and Present Age...'. Thomas Mace in *Musick’s Monument* (1676) wrote that at music meetings "we did Conclude All, with some Vocal Musick, to the Organ, or (for want of That) to the Theorboe". Mace added "The Best which we did ever Esteem, were Those Things which were most Solemn and Divine ... now lately Collected, and Printed, by Mr Playford ...".

John Dowland’s first three books of songs scarcely touch on any religious subject matter, whilst his fourth book, *A Pilgrimes Solace* (1612), contains a number of sublime polyphonic settings of sacred lines. These devotional songs are typically laid out for solo performance or in four voices, '... to be sung and plaid with the Lute and Viols'.

Thomas Campian devoted his *First Booke of Ayres* (ca 1613) entirely to religious songs and was unique as a lute song composer in setting all his own poetry.

Pelham Humfrey left only a few solo devotional songs, but his Church Anthems with strings set the standard for young Henry Purcell. In 1672 Humfrey became 'Master of the Children of the Chapel Royal', teaching the boys violin, lute and composition, with Purcell top of the class!

Purcell’s genius for word-painting is fully evident in his devotional songs. His masterly use of harmony in highly expressive recitatives, an unequalled melodic gift and his trade mark treatment of ground basses established him as the greatest composer to set the English language.

**LUTE MUSIC**

Dowland’s *Preludium* is a miniature gem found in Margaret Board’s lute book. *Galliard to Lachrimae* (appearing as a bonus lute solo at the end of *A Pilgrimes Solace*), is an ingenious transformation of his exquisite Lachrimae Pavan. The relentless, syncopated part writing reveals Dowland’s mastery as both composer and performer.

John Lawrence was a musician ‘for the lutes and voices’ at the court of Charles I, employed from 1626 until his death in 1635, then succeeded by William Lawes. He composed in his own ‘Lawrence tuning’, also called ‘flat way’ and his handful of known works appeared in the Jane Pickeringe and Margaret Board lute books.

John Wilson joined the 'King's Musick' as a lutenist and singer in 1635 and was described by a contemporary, Anthony Wood, as "the best at the lute in all England". Wilson became a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal in 1662 (succeeding Henry Lawes on his death) and probably worked alongside the young chorister Henry Purcell. His extraordinary lute Preludes in all the keys, thought to have been composed in the 1640’s, were only intended to be seen after his death. Henry Lawes in a commendatory poem for Wilson included the lines ‘... thou hast gone, in Musick, unknown ways, Hast cut a path where there was none before ...”.

David Miller © 2010

**DEVOTIONAL SONGS**

Seductive and sensual at heart, both musically and in their expressive, poetic language, these domestic, devotional pieces tend to confuse the modern mind, disturbing our habitual preference to
differentiate categorically between the sacred and the secular. Citizens of a post religious state, we have lost the blueprint for how to live and breathe in an omnipresent religious aura.

This is not to say that each author or composer was truly devout. Some may have been faithless. We cannot know. But the living of their lives pre-supposed a familiarity with, and a broad acceptance of, the doctrines of the Church and the authority of the Bible. And even perhaps, in some cases, an instinctive ability to feign spiritual enthusiasm.

Playford’s frontispiece to Harmonia Sacra or Divine Hymns and Dialogues, his collection which includes our pieces by Henry Purcell and one of those by Pelham Humfrey, suggests the tone he was inclined to take:

“Where Musick and Devotion joyn,
The way to Canaan pleasant is; We travel on with Songs Divine, Ravish’d with Sacred Extasies.”

The philosopher, John Norris, whose poem, The Aspiration, Purcell set and we have selected, wrote in his essay, An Idea of Happiness, “I am firmly persuaded that our love of God may be not only passionate, but even wonderfully so, and exceeding the love of women.” And in his poem, On a Musician, supposed to be mad with Musick, he justifies the musician’s ardour in response to the Divine and by extension, he upholds the ecstatic style of performance of religious songs. In a similar spirit, John Donne had written love poems of burning intensity, a fusion of the earthly and the philosophical, and then went on to write religious poetry of an equal passion, conversing with God most intimately, as if with a lover.

These seventeenth century devotional songs were written against a backdrop of furious historical dramas and lurching tides of fortune, as Stuart kings were raised up or beheaded, civil war divided the people, republicanism triumphed and then failed, the monarchy was restored, plague decimated the land and London burned. The uncertainties and dangers of the country’s fluctuating religious allegiances were not finally resolved until the flight to France of the Catholic, James II and the installation of the Protestants, William and Mary, to the continued defence of the Established Church of England.

As the post reformation period developed and constructs of the mediaeval mind gave way to modern systems of thought, a new religious consciousness emerged. Translations of the Bible into English and most definitively, the Authorised King James Version of 1611, with its pure, poetic imagery and conscientious strivings for textual accuracy, made available a wealth of source material for songwriters. The Protestant imperative, that individuals should interpret the Bible for themselves, gave an impetus to the increasingly free composition of lyrics. Dialogues were framed between the soul and God. Distinctions were blurred between doctrinal objectivity and emotional subjectivity. Believers strained to defend the integrity of religious faith in the face of the Enlightenment’s advances in scientific and philosophical exploration.

The songs we have chosen reflect these assorted times and contexts, and are accordingly diverse. They range from the doctrinally eloquent to the theologically unsteady, from the spare and the restrained to the opulent and the overblown, from Dowland’s small cluster of late devotional songs, dressed in the same stylistic clothing as his far more numerous secular outpourings, to Purcell’s flowery and luscious devotional settings, which stand apart from the relative formality of his compositions for the Chapel Royal but are not yet so unfettered as his most racy tavern songs.

Moira Allum © 2010
Thou wakefull Shepherd, that does Israel keep,  
Raised by thy Goodness from the Bed of Sleep;  
To thee I offer up this Hymn, as my best Morning Sacrifice,  
May it be gracious in thine Eyes,  
To raise me from the Bed of Sin:  
And do I live to see another day,  
I vow, my God, I vow henceforth to walk thy ways,  
And sing thy Praise, all those few days thou shalt allow.  
Could I redeem the Time I have misspent, in sinfull Merriment;

Henry Purcell
A Morning Hymn (Thou wakefull Shepherd)
Words by William Fuller (1608-1675)

Could I untread those Paths I led,  
I would so expiate each past Offence, that ev'n from thence,  
The Innocent should wish themselves like me,  
When with such Crimes they such Repentance see;  
With Joy I'd sing away my Breath,  
Yet who can dye, so to receive his Death?

Henry Purcell
How Long Great God (The Aspiration)
Words by John Norris (1657-1711)

What on earth to make nowadays of a Platonic rhapsody, harbouring a metaphysical conceit,  
(the extended metaphor of the compass needle), from the pen of a God-intoxicated poet?  
But there is some transparency. The title ‘The Aspiration’ (the strong desire for something /  
the object of that desire / the exhalation of breath) unfolds in layers of meaning to a single  
thought: death. This poet, secure in his faith, is merely impatient and desirous, not troubled.  
He looks for release from the world of matter and longs to be pure soul, united with God.  
Norris is outside Christian orthodoxy, which expressly preaches a bodily resurrection.  
(Luke 24:39) The triggers for his state of mind may have been as much personal as philosophical;  
he wrote of his niece, “She for whose sake I once thought life, as now I think death, a blessing,  
she is dead … and has left a strange emptiness in my soul (so large was the room she took up  
there) which nothing of the world's good can ever fill.”
How long, great God, how long must I,
Immur'd in this dark Prison lye?
Where at the Grates, and Avenues of Sense,
My Soul must watch to have Intelligence;
Where but faint Gleams of thee salute my Sight,
Like doubtful Moonshine in a cloudy Night.
When shall I leave this Magick Sphere,
And be all Mind, all Eye, all Ear?

How cold this Cline! and yet my Sense
Perceives ev'n here thy Influence;
Ev'n here thy strong Magnetick Charms I feel
And pant, and tremble, like the amorous Steel:
To lower good, and Beauties not Divine,
Sometimes my erroneous Needle does decline;
But yet so strong the Sympathy,
It turns, and points again to thee.

I long to see this Excellence,
Which at such distance strikes my Sense:
My impatient Soul struggles to disengage
Her wings, from the confinement of her Cage.
Would'st thou, great Love, this Pris'ner once set free,
She'd for no Angels Conduct stay,
But fly, and love, on all the way.

### Thomas Campian

**Never weather-beaten Saile**

Words by Thomas Campian

Thought and expression, text and setting were blessed by an exceptional, interdependent creation in Campian's songs. He wrote, "In these English Ayres I have chiefly aimed to couple my Words and Notes lovingly together, which will be much for him to do that hath not power over both." Campian impresses as a composer whose lightness of touch reveals and lays bare. Admiration for him as a poet began to resurface in the late 1800s and T.S.Eliot pronounced him, "except for Shakespeare ... the most accomplished master of rhymed lyric of his time." In this short song there is nothing superfluous. Simple imagery paints pictures. We might see a prefiguring of the voyage of the Mayflower of 1620, as the exhausted pilgrim bravely endures the perilous high seas in pursuit of God's radiant paradise. And shockingly, we overhear the Puritan's urgent moans of desire to be taken by his sweet Lord.

Never weather-beaten Saile more willing bent to shore,
Never tyred Pilgrims limbs affected slumber more;
Then my weary spright now longs to flye out of my troubled brest.
O come quickly sweetest Lord, and take my soule to rest.

Ever-blooming are the joyes of Heav'n's high paradice,
Cold age deafes not there our eares, nor vapour dims our eyes;
Glory there the Sun out-shines, whose beames the blessed onely see.
O come quickly glorious Lord, and raise my spright to thee.
Here the poet discloses his dark night of the soul, an anguished spiritual desolation which God alone can relieve. The phrase “Author of Light” is found in Plato’s famous allegory of the cave but Campian easily fastens a Christian meaning to it. God created the light and it is a symbol of God himself and of heaven. Light is also truth and understanding. Jesus’ saving act as “the light of the world” was to descend into human darkness and transform it. Campian is painfully conscious that this life is deficient or as Saint Paul wrote, “For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face:” (1 Corinthians 13:12) The phrase, “God his owne will guard”, signals the Protestant cultivation of the tricky concept of the elect, that God chooses and protects some but not others.

The unknown writer luxuriates in the wonderfully enticing sensuality of sleep. He also characterizes it as a rehearsal for death. Shakespeare named sleep “the death of each day’s life” and conversely, Raymond Chandler called death “The Big Sleep”. Our poet is alert to the night’s terrors and asks God and his good angels to defend him from the ensnaring spirits. The final line, “Like incense or the morning sacrifice”, invokes the aura of a Catholic Mass in its form of worship and its designation of the celebration of the Eucharist as a sacrifice, (the sacrifice of Christ on the cross). It is a reminder that the English Church broadly shaped what became known as the ‘via media’, a compromise through the extremes, and was at times tolerant of practices and beliefs which would not have been acceptable to European Protestantism.

Author of light revive my dying spright, 
Redeeme it from the snares of all-confounding night. 
Lord, light me to thy blessed way: 
For blinde with worldly vaine desires I wander as a stray. 
Sonne and Moone, Starres and underlights I see, 
But all their glorious beames are mists and darknes being compar’d to thee. 

Fountaine of health my soules deepe wounds recure, 
Sweet showers of pitty raine, wash my uncleannesse pure. 
One drop of thy desired grace 
The faint and fading hart can raise, and in joyes bosome place. 
Sinne and Death, Hell and tempting Fiends may rage, 
But God his owne will guard, and their sharp paines and griefe in time asswage.

Sleep downy sleep, come close mine eyes, 
Tired with beholding vanities; 
Welcome sweet sleep that drives away 
The toils and follies of the day; 
On thy soft bosom will I lie, 
Forget the world and learn to die; 
O Israel’s watchful shepherd spread 
Teams of angels round my bed. 
Let not the spirits of the air 
Whilst I slumber me ensnare. 
But guard thy suppliant free from harms, 
Clasped in thy everlasting arms. 
Clouds and thick darkness is thy throne, 
Thy wonderful pavilion.
O dart from thence a shining ray,
And then my midnight shall be day.
Thus when the morn in crimson dressed
Breaks through the windows of the east,
My hymns of thankful praises shall arise,
Like incense or the morning sacrifice.

Wilt thou forgive that sinne where I begunne,
Which is my sin, though it were done before?
Wilt thou forgive those sinnes, through which I runne,
And do run still: though still I do deplore?
When thou hast done, thou hast not done,
For, I have more.

Wilt thou forgive that sinne by which I have wonne
Others to sinne? and, made my sinne their doore?
Wilt thou forgive that sinne which I did shunne
A yeare, or two: but wallowed in, a score?
When thou hast done, thou hast not done,
For I have more.

I have a sin of feare, that when I have spunne
My last thred, I shall perish on the shore;
But sweare by thy selfe, that at my death, thy sonne
Shall shine as he shines now, and heretofore,
And having done that, Thou hast done,
I feare no more.

Pelham Humfrey

A Hymne to God the Father (Wilt thou forgive that sinne)
Words by John Donne (1572-1631)

The received view is that Donne’s poetry mirrors his life’s turnabout from playboy to priest. But there would have been a more subtle integration, as one and the same man directed the force of his passions to women and to God. And his preoccupation was to analyse himself, his own complex state of consciousness, rather than to fathom the object of his love. He was born into the most Catholic of families but relinquished this allegiance in favour of Anglicanism, whether at the insistence of his conscience or because many doors to public life would otherwise have been closed to him. With the unyielding zeal of a convert, he sermonized against the Church of Rome as the devil’s instrument! He wrote this hymn during his serious illness in the winter of 1623 and perhaps nothing redirects the mind as decisively as the potential imminence of one’s own death. “Death is something ancient but it comes fresh to the each of us.” (Turgenev: Fathers and Sons) The verses amount to far more than a superficial assemblage of clever puns. Interestingly, Donne seems to falter at the Protestant inclination to regard salvation as a ‘done deal’ secured once and for all by God’s gift of grace. We glimpse a vulnerability, as Donne looks uncertainly and with half Catholic eyes, at how God might finally judge him.
**Henry Purcell**

The Blessed Virgin’s Expostulation

When our Saviour (at Twelve Years of Age) had withdrawn himself, &c. (Luke 2. v. 42)

Words by Nahum Tate (1652-1715)

Luke, alone of the Gospel writers, recounts that the boy Jesus could not be found by his parents for three days in Jerusalem at the Feast of the Passover, later to be discovered “in my Father’s house”, (the temple). This little story is thick with significance, affirming Jesus as the Son of God and anticipating his death and then resurrection after three days. Tate’s sentimentalised sketch of Mary’s reaction to the loss of her child is a meandering stream of consciousness, intersecting her rapidly escalating fears with Biblical allusions to events surrounding Christ’s miraculous birth. His depiction of Mary as a panicky, histrionic mother flies in the face of an accumulation of evidence found in the Gospels for her calm disposition and unwavering trust in God. From somewhere in his imagination, Tate even produces “Tygers” to threaten the safety of Mary’s child! But perhaps we should expect no less from an author who saw fit to revise Shakespeare’s King Lear and Romeo and Juliet, providing them with happy endings! The last line of the song is beautifully constructed and thought provoking: “I trust the God, but Oh! I fear the Child:”

**John Dowland**

Thou mightie God. 1. part

When Davids life by Saul. 2. part

When the poore Criple. 3. part

This is a setting of a sonnet by Nicholas Breton but beginning with two lines extracted from another poem and substituting “Thou mightie God” for “Great kinge of Bees”! In a sequence of trite platitudes meant to bolster the morale of the faithful, the largely unsuitable figures of Job, David and the cripple are lifted up as blameless specimens. It is hard to see how these cardboard cut out illustrations could have satisfied the souls of any but the most complacent of Christians. The lesson hatched is: suffer terribly, don’t protest, be patient and eventually, God will make everything fair. And yet the book of Job, for example, is actually a deeply complex,
sophisticated and unresolved wringing out of the problem of maintaining a belief in a good
God in the face of undeserved suffering. Written some two and a half thousand years ago, it
presents as modern, challenging, rebellious and unfettered, something akin to a Beckett play,
as the tormented Job puts God on trial. It is obvious too, in the long and thrilling narratives of
the Books of Samuel, that David was not a plaster saint. He is roundly painted there as heroic
but flawed, calculating, lustful, even murderous. Yet Dowland may have genuinely identified
with “the poore Criple” of John 5, as he reviewed his own life’s trials and disappointments.

**John Dowland**

Where Sinne sore wounding

These exquisite lines declare that the heavy burden of sin is entirely and repeatedly relieved by
God’s abundant gift of grace. Such innocent clarity papers over the venomous and destructive
cerebral disputes about the nature of grace, freewill and salvation that had contributed to the
Protestant/Catholic division of Christianity. If Dowland, a Catholic convert, was aware of
these complications, he nevertheless sets words which comfortably blur the divide.

Where Sinne sore wounding, daily doth oppresse me,
There Grace abounding freely doth redresse mee:
So that resounding still I shall confess thee,
Father of mercy.

**Henry Purcell**

A Divine Hymn (*Lord, what is Man*)

Words by William Fuller

Traversing a vast biblical and theological landscape, Fuller takes for granted that his audience
would know what we now generally don’t! He begins by approximately quoting Psalm 8:4
which expresses amazement that God confers such a special dignity on man as to place him
even above the spectacular wonders of the night sky. In Job 7:17 similar words give another
version of the same recognition of God’s peculiar interest in man; it is viewed resentfully
because God, in his might, watches sadistically but does nothing to relieve frail mankind in
Lord, what is Man, lost Man, 
That thou should'st be so mindful of him! 
That the Son of God forsook his Glory, his Abode, 
To become a poor tormented Man! 
The Deity was shrunk into a Span, 
And that for me, O wond'rous Love! for me. 
Reveal, ye Glorious Spirits, when ye knew, 
The way the Son of God took to renew lost Man, 
Your vacant Places to supply; 
Blest Spirits tell, which did Excel, 
Which was more prevalent, 
Your Joy, or your Astonishment; 
That Man shou' d be assum' d into the Deity, 
That for a Worm a God shou' d die. 
Oh! for a Quill drawn from your Wing, 
To write the Praises of th'Eternal Love; 
Oh! for a Voice like yours, 
To sing that Anthem here, 
Which once you sung above. 
Hallelujah.

Miserere, my Maker: O have mercy on me, wretch, 
Strangely distressed, Cast down with Sin oppressed. 
Mightily vexed to the soul's bitter anguish, 
E'en to the death I languish. 
Yet let it please Thee to hear my ceaseless crying: 
Miserere, I am dying. 
Miserere my Saviour: I, alas am from my sins 
Fearfully grieved, And cannot be relieved. 
But by Thy death which Thou didst suffer for me; 
Wherefore I adore Thee. 
And do beseech Thee to hear my ceaseless crying: 
Miserere, I am dying.
**Holy Spirit Miserere:**
Comfort my distressed soul,
Grieved for youth's folly; Purge, cleanse and make it holy.
With Thy sweet due of grace and peace, inspire me;
Holy I desire Thee;
And strengthen me now in this my ceaseless crying;
*Miserere, I am dying.*

**John Dowland**

**In this trembling shadow**

Vaguely pantheistic, this verse just about scrapes under the devotional bar. The texts for Dowland's lute songs are largely unattributed but whether or not he penned them himself, he made them his own. Here, words and music fuse in a timorous and melancholic petition.

*In this trembling shadow,*
cast from those boughs which thy wings shake,
*Farre from humane troubles plac'd:*
*Songs to the Lord would I make,*
*Darknesse from my minde then take,*
*For thy rites none may begin,*
*Till they feele thy light within.*

**John Dowland**

**If that a Sinners sighes be Angels foode**

This little gem is sufficient despite its economy, less laboured than the full five verses set before by William Byrd. It begins fancifully, as if angels require sighs and tears of repentance to gorge upon, almost sharing the mindset of Peter Pan, that fairies will fall to their deaths if children stop believing in them! But the poet's sincerity shines through. He compares himself unfavourably with the apostle Peter, whose great betrayal was to deny repeatedly his association with the newly captured Jesus of Galilee. As the chief priests moved swiftly to put Jesus to death, Peter wept remorsefully. (Matthew 26:75)

*If that a sinners sighes be Angels foode,*
*Or that repentant teares be Angels wine,*
*Accept O Lord in this most pensive moode,*
*These hearty sighes and dolefull plaints of mine,*
*That went with Peter forth most sinfully:*
*But not as Peter did, wepe bitterly.*

**Henry Purcell**

**Sleep, Adam, Sleep, and take thy rest**

The Book of Genesis is a compilation, finally completed around the fifth century BC but incorporating written material from as early as the eleventh century BC. Diverse literary strands with distinct terminology, even using separate Hebrew names for God for example,
are combined in a sometimes contradictory narrative to produce a single ‘Heilsgeschichte’, (salvation history). Genesis begins with the familiar account of God’s work of creation, in which he overcomes the watery chaos and loftily orders everything into being. On the sixth day he makes man, male and female. But in Genesis 2:4 the story starts again from scratch and proceeds from a more intimate and from an unashamedly male perspective. Firstly, God sculpts man, (the Hebrew “ADAM” means both ‘man’ and the name, ‘Adam’), shaping him from the dust of the ground (“ADAMAH”) and breathing into his nostrils the breath of life. Then God fulfils the man’s every need, planting a verdant garden for him and forming living creatures for him to name. But lonely Adam is incomplete. So, a nameless woman is made from the rib of the sleeping man, not for her own sake but for his pleasure. Is the intention to indicate equality between them, “bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh”, or the subordination of women? Our anonymous poet betrays the bias, as the woman will be blamed by the man for leading him astray.

### Henry Purcell

An Evening Hymn *(Now that the Sun hath veil’d his Light)*

Words by William Fuller

The New Testament required, and even assumed, that Christians would pray without ceasing. The seventeenth century poet consummates his day by sinking into the deep safety of God’s arms and with an almost inebriated outpouring of Hallelujahs! “Hallelujah” and its Greek equivalent “Alleluia” are transliterations of a two word Hebrew phrase from the Psalms. The first word gives the command to praise joyfully, even madly! The second is an abbreviation of the name of God (YHWH), rendered in English as Yahweh or Jehovah.

*Now that the Sun hath veil’d his Light,*  
*And bid the World good night;*  
*To the soft Bed my Body I dispose,*  
*But where shall my Soul repose?*  
*Dear God, even in thy Arms,*  
*And can there be any so sweet Security!*  
*Then to thy Rest, O my Soul!*  
*And singing, praise*  
*The Mercy that prolongs thy Days.*  
*Hallelujah.*
Elin Manahan Thomas soprano

Born and bred in Swansea, Elin graduated from Clare College Cambridge in Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic. Her début album with Universal Classics and Jazz, _Eternal Light_, conducted by Harry Christophers, entered the classical charts in 2007 at number two, and her Signum release in 2009, Patrick Hawes's _Song of Songs_ was CD of the week on Classic FM. Elin is the first singer ever to record Bach’s _Alles mit Gott_, a birthday ode written in 1713 and discovered in 2005. She first received great acclaim for her _Pie Jesu_ on Naxos’ award-winning recording of John Rutter’s _Requiem_, and was praised as soloist in Bach’s _St Matthew Passion_ at the Thomaskirche in Leipzig. Elin performed the World Première of Sir John Tavener’s _Requiem_ in Liverpool Cathedral (also recorded for EMI) and in 2009 she made her début at the Wigmore Hall with the Academy of Ancient Music, was invited to perform in the Vatican on Easter Sunday, and appeared at the Edinburgh International Festival with the Royal Flanders Ballet (no, not dancing!).

Known as a ‘baroque soprano’, Elin’s repertoire in fact extends from the Renaissance to world premieres, and she has appeared in concert under many outstanding conductors, among them Harry Christophers, Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Stephen Layton, Sir Roger Norrington, Richard Hickox and Thierry Fischer. On television, Elin has sung in BBC 2’s _Birth of British Music_, and in BBC 4’s popular series _Sacred Music_; as well as achieving popularity as a presenter, both on radio (Radio 3, Radio Cymru) and television (BBC 4, BBC 2 Wales, S4C).

David Miller lute & theorbo

David Miller has a flourishing career that encompasses both the early music world and the modern musical scene, performing as soloist, accompanist and continuo player. He has performed at numerous prestigious music festivals, and among the many engagements that have taken him overseas, he has given solo recitals in Bohemia, Denmark and Morocco.

David maintains a busy recital schedule and enjoys successful collaborations with other solo artists, including Robin Blaze, Catherine Bott, Michael Chance, Elin Manahan Thomas, Elizabeth Wallfisch, and Lebanese singer and oud player Abdul Salam Kheir.

Among his numerous recordings are CDs of English songs and lute music, including John Dowland discs with James Bowman and with Charles Daniels, and the complete works of John Danyel with Nigel Short. He performs and records with all the principal English period instrument orchestras and many of the finest ensembles. As a member of I Fagiolini, he can be heard playing solo lute music by Holborne and Byrd on their acclaimed _Triumphs of Oriana_ disc, and he appears on Concordia’s Titian CD playing lute music by Francesco da Milano.

David is professor of lute at London’s Guildhall School of Music & Drama and Trinity Laban, and tutor for the European Union Baroque Orchestra, the Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama, and Dartington International Summer School.