

A virtual recital by Musicke in the Ayre @The Foundling Museum
streamed on YouTube, premiered on 29th November 2020 at 1500

<https://youtu.be/QG0BoX2saWM>



The Italian Connection

- Sweet, stay a while** John Dowland (1563 – 1626)
Lydia White & Din Ghani (lute)
- Woods, rocks and mountains** Robert Johnson (1583 – 1633)
Jeni Melia & Din Ghani (lute)
- Se di farmi morire** Domenico Maria Melli (fl. early C17)
Helen Atkinson, Esha Neogy & Din Ghani (archlute)
- Al fonte al prato** Giulio Caccini (1551 – 1618)
Sophia Brumfitt & Din Ghani (archlute)
- Se l'aura spira** Girolamo Frescobaldi (1583 – 1643)
Jane Hunt & Din Ghani (archlute)
- Begli occhi non provo** Girolamo Frescobaldi
Helen Atkinson, Jeni Melia, Esha Neogy & Din Ghani (archlute)
- Bella mia questo mio core** Giovanni Stefani (fl. 1618 – 1626)
Jane Hunt & Din Ghani (baroque guitar)
- Oblivion soave** Claudio Monteverdi (1567 – 1643)
Sophia Brumfitt & Din Ghani (archlute)
- No more shall meads** Nicholas Lanier (1588 – 1666)
Helen Atkinson, Esha Neogy & Din Ghani (lute)
- If music be the food of love** Henry Purcell (1659 – 1695)
Jeni Melia, Esha Neogy & Din Ghani (archlute)
- We the spirits of the air** Henry Purcell
Helen Atkinson, Jeni Melia, Esha Neogy & Din Ghani (archlute)
- O Sleep** George Frideric Handel (1685 – 1759)
Lydia White & Din Ghani (lute)

The performances were filmed live at the following Sunday afternoon concerts in the Picture Gallery:

Musical Migrations: from Peri to Purcell, 15th September 2013

Helen Atkinson & Jeni Melia (sopranos), Esha Neogy (bass viol) & Din Ghani (lute, archlute)

Songs from the Phoenix's nest, 1st March 2015

Lydia White (soprano) & Din Ghani (lute, archlute)

Grounds for delight, 21st February 2016

Jane Hunt (soprano) & Din Ghani (lute, archlute, baroque guitar)

Monteverdi & his milieu, 5th March 2017

Sophia Brumfitt (mezzosoprano) & Din Ghani (archlute, baroque guitar)

The programme

At the beginning of the 17th century, the lute ayre, rooted in the renaissance, was highly popular in England, as exemplified by the songs of Dowland and his contemporaries. Within the first quarter of the century, this popularity had waned in the face of changing tastes, influenced in particular by developments in Italy that had begun around the turn of the century. Caccini claimed in his books to be one of the innovators; Monteverdi was certainly one of the greats of this early Baroque. Around the time of his death (on 29th November 1643), England had entered a tumultuous period; on emerging into the Restoration, music here had clearly evolved: towards the end of the century, Purcell showed his genius in melding these foreign influences into an English baroque style, which eventually peaked with the work of Handel. The pieces in the programme can give but a flavour of this evolution.

The performers

Din Ghani began playing lute 45 years ago, but began performing seriously in the last 8 years, specialising in lute song with his “umbrella” group Musicke in the Ayre. In this period he has clocked up over 135 performances: the latest being part of this year’s Brighton Early Music Festival. He makes most of his own instruments including two of the ones seen in this film.

Helen Atkinson began her singing career as a baroque soloist in the Oxford area, but since moving to York in 2007 has expanded into accompanying herself (on lute, vihuela and harp) in medieval and renaissance repertoire. (www.facebook.com/Lutesinger).

Soprano **Jeni Melia** has several CDs of lute songs to her name (www.magnatune.com). She is a practising music therapist, and director of a specialist charity working with dementia; she also conducts two chamber ensembles.

Esha Neogy studied viol at Trinity Laban and plays it with a number of other early music ensembles; she helped found the prize-winning Ensemble Tramontana.

(Esha, Jeni and Helen have all performed with Musicke in the Ayre since 2012, and formed the ensemble for the 2013 concert; each of the other 3 concerts involved one of the following:)

A choral scholarship at St Martin in the Fields set **Lydia White** on the road towards becoming a soloist, until she was headhunted to teach English at a United World College in Freiburg. As a poet, her work has been set by modern composers and performed in Wigmore Hall, among other places.

Jane Hunt studied music in Bath; after gaining a performer’s diploma in singing, she has established a profile in the area as a soloist, with particular interests in early music and English song.

The versatile **Sophia Brumfitt** has worked across the entire spectrum of early music from medieval to baroque, and also with contemporary composers. Working with several ensembles include two she co-founded, her performing career has spanned the globe and even the airwaves, with appearances on TV and radio. (www.sophiabrumfitt.co.uk).

The instruments

8-course renaissance lute after Frei by S Barber & S Harris, 2007

14-course archlute after Teiffenbrucker by D Ghani, 2009

5-course baroque guitar after Voboam by D Ghani, 2015

6-string bass viol after Barbey by K Sato, 2007

For more:

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