

# Lammermuir Festival

## Autumn Special

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Online from 17 September 2020, 8:00pm | Holy Trinity Church, Haddington

### Dunedin Consort

Mhairi Lawson soprano

Hilary Michael violin • Jonathan Manson bass viol

Alex McCartney theorbo

John Butt director & harpsichord

### Purcell *Songes & Ayres*



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# Programme

**Henry Purcell** Prelude from Suite No. 2 in G Minor, Z. 661

**Henry Purcell** 'Twas within a furlong of Edinburgh town, Z. 605/2

**James Oswald/Charles McLean** Variations and jig on

*'Twas within a furlong of Edinburgh town*

**Henry Purcell** *If music be the food of love*, Z. 379c

**Henry Purcell** *A New Irish Tune*, Z. 646

**The Beggar's Opera** *The modes of the court*

**James Oswald** *Divisions on Lilli Burlare*

**Henry Purcell** Jigg from *The Gordian Knot Unty'd*, Z. 597

**Henry Purcell** Ground, Z. 221

**Henry Purcell** *From silent shades (Bess of Bedlam)*, Z. 370

**Henry Purcell** *O solitude*, Z. 406

**James Oswald/Henry Purcell** *By moonlight on the green/Scotch tune from Amphitryon*

**Christopher Simpson** Ground in D Major from *The Division Viol*

**Henry Purcell** Suite in D Major, Z.

1. Prelude • 2. Almand • 3. Hornpipe

**Giovanni Draghi** *An Italian Ground*

**Henry Purcell** *Sweeter than roses*

**Thomas Baltzar** *Divisions on John, come kiss me now* from John Playford's *Dancing Master*

**Robert de Visée** Selections from Suite in A Minor

Prelude • Allemande • Chaconne

**Songs from *The Scots Musical Museum***

*Ye banks and braes* • *Afton Water*

**Henry Purcell** *Fairest isle*

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Given the stylistic range and quality of the music of **Henry Purcell**, a concert of his most celebrated 'songs and ayres' is no doubt to be an audience pleaser. Nevertheless, this programme goes beyond Purcell's greatest hits in presenting the composer's work alongside music by his contemporaries, and showcasing Purcell's use of traditional music from the British Isles. Another exciting element is the presentation of later settings of Purcell's melodies, which had a perhaps unexpectedly large influence on eighteenth-century Scottish fiddle music. The work of Scottish composer and cellist **James Oswald** (1710–1769) is particularly important in this context. Born in Crail in Fife, Oswald and Purcell's careers had many parallels. Both were celebrated for their theatrical works, songs, and chamber music, both enjoyed royal patronage, and they each explored a cosmopolitan range of musical styles, including Scottish and Irish traditional material. Oswald's *The Caledonian Pocket Companion* (c. 1746–1760) was an encyclopaedic 12-volume compendium of Scottish tunes, yet it also contains pieces by Purcell. Most often these are presented within Oswald's own sets of divisions — a style of variation where a popular melody or bass was varied by being 'divided' into progressively shorter note values.

The opening set of pieces is based around the Scotch song '**Tw'as within a furlong of Edinburgh town**' from the play *The Mock Marriage* (1695) with music by Henry Purcell and words by the London writer of popular verse Thomas D'Urfey. 'Scotch' music had become fashionable in London, used for broadside ballads, country dances, and as entr'acte music in plays. Most often both music and words were pseudo-Scottish inventions by Londoners, but this song became as popular in Scotland as many more genuinely Scottish traditional songs. Today's set of pieces repurposes a harpsichord prelude as an introduction to Purcell's original setting of the song. This is followed by a short set of divisions on the tune by Oswald, and finally the jig from another set of variations by Scottish violinist **Charles McLean** (c. 1712–1772), recorded in the McFarlane Manuscript (1740), compiled by David Young, writing master and teacher right here in Haddington.

*If music be the food of love* was written by the English poet Henry Heveningham (1651–1700), its opening line quoting Orsino's speech from Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*. Purcell's lesser known third setting features a declamatory style in semi-recitative with long melismatic figures evoking feelings of joy and pleasure. A contrasting triple-time aria is used to set the second strain, incorporating an ecstatic mood and athletic vocal writing representing overwhelming feelings of pleasures which 'invade the eye and ear'.

The Irish anti-Jacobite song *Lillibulero* became popular after the Glorious Revolution of 1688. Purcell used the tune in two pieces of music, which bookend today's set of pieces: a short version for harpsichord taken from *The Second Part to Musick's Handmaid* (1689); and a 'jigg' from the incidental music to *The Gordian Knot Unty'd*, featuring *Lillibulero* in the bass part. The two central settings are a short song from John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* set to the same tune, before another set of divisions by Oswald.

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The next set of pieces is bookended by material based on ground basses. The **Ground in C Minor** for harpsichord is built around eleven iterations of a ground bass, above which are developed two distinct ideas: a broken chord figure, always followed by a more lyrical section. This regularity in structure is contrasted with Purcell's mad song **Bess of Bedlam**. After an opening recitative bemoaning 'lovesick melancholy' we are led on a series of episodes, each with a mercurial change of metre and mood, from a dance at the Kingdom of Faeries to a fiery depiction of Charon and the Furies. Finally, Bess shifts from suicidal thoughts of returning 'to the place whence she came', to eating ambrosia and singing her sorrow away. **O solitude** is a setting of Katherine Philips's translation of 'La Solitude' by Antoine Girard de Saint-Amant (1594–1661). Purcell's setting incorporates stanzas from the opening and close of the poem, at first celebrating solitude as a space to appreciate the natural world, and later warning of the dangers of isolation. The piece is built around 28 iterations of a simple yet hypnotic four-bar ground bass, with this regularity broken by a meandering vocal part featuring irregular phrase lengths and changes of harmony.

A set of solo spots feature pieces by Purcell alongside music by seventeenth-century instrumentalists. It is not clear whether the **'Scotch Tune' from Amphitryon** was Purcell's own composition, or an arrangement of an already popular tune: the melody was later published by Oswald under the evocative title 'By Moonlight on the Green'. Purcell's attempt to fit the tune around functional harmony contrasts with Oswald's solo set of variations in traditional fiddle style.

**Christopher Simpson** (1602–1669) was an English composer and viol player perhaps best remembered for *The Division Viol* (1659), a treatise outlining the methods of improvising above a ground bass. The **Ground in D Major** is a written-out example of an extemporised set of divisions, featuring methods such as descant (invented melody over a bass), and 'breaking' the bass into smaller notes.

**Purcell's Suite in D Major** is one of a set of eight suites published posthumously in *A Choice Collection of Lessons for the Harpsichord* (1696). This suite features two French movements – a Prelude showing influence from the *prélude non mesuré* and an Almand featuring broken chords akin to the *style brisé* – closing with a quintessentially English hornpipe.

**Giovanni Battista Draghi** (c. 1640–1708) was an Italian composer and keyboard player who settled in London in the 1660s. The **Italian Ground** was another popular set of divisions, printed variously in editions of John Playford's *The Delightful Companion* (1686) and John Walsh's *The Division Flute* (1708).

**Sweeter than roses** remains one of Purcell's best-known solo songs. It was originally written as part of the incidental music for Richard Norton's play *Pausanias, the Betrayer of His Country*, probably Purcell's final piece of theatre music. The song features some of the composer's richest word painting, from the pulsating melisma on 'trembling', to the martial-

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like setting of the words 'shot like fire', and the richly melismatic representation of 'victorious love'.

*John, come kiss me now* was a popular ballad tune and a descant on the bass pattern *Passamezzo moderno*, to which numerous sets of divisions were written and improvised. Peter Holman has suggested that the two settings in Playford's *The Division Violin* (1684) formed a musical duel between the English court violinist Davis Mell (1604–1662) and his younger German rival Thomas Baltzar (1631–1663). The latter's setting, heard here, goes far beyond Mell's more traditional division style, with a dazzling virtuosic showpiece.

**Robert de Visée** (c. 1655-1732) was a lutenist and viol player at the courts of Louis XIV and Louis XV of France, yet his music was known further afield, and was recorded in several English sources. A selection of movements from his **Suite in A minor** includes a Prelude and a duple-time Allemande, closing with a Chaconne, a triple-time dance based on a ground bass.

The final selection of pieces opens with material somewhat closer to home, with two of Robert Burns's most famous songs, *Ye banks and braes* and *Afton Water*. Both settings performed here are based on those in the *Scots Musical Museum* (1787–1803), an important six-volume collection of Scots songs made in collaboration between Burns and the publisher James Johnson.

Purcell's song *Fairest isle* provides a particularly suitable conclusion to this programme. Originally part of Purcell's semi-opera *King Arthur*, this number has become a national song in its own right. Whilst the overall work has similarities with Thomas Arne's masque *Alfred* (famous for *Rule, Britannia!*), *Fairest isle* is far gentler in its patriotism, with its lilting dance-like character, classical references, and joyful celebration of nature.

Aaron McGregor

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**Dunedin Consort** is one of the world's leading Baroque ensembles, recognised for its vivid and insightful performances and recordings. Formed in 1995 and named after Din Eidyn, the ancient Celtic name for Edinburgh Castle, Dunedin Consort's ambition is to make early music relevant to the present day. Under the direction of John Butt, the ensemble has earned two coveted Gramophone Awards – for the 2007 recording of Handel's *Messiah* and the 2014 recording of Mozart's Requiem – and a Grammy nomination. In 2018, it was shortlisted for a Royal Philharmonic Society Ensemble award.

Dunedin Consort performs regularly at major festivals and venues across the UK, giving its BBC Proms debut in 2017 with a performance of Bach's John Passion. In the same year, Dunedin Consort announced its first residency at London's Wigmore Hall, complementing its regular series of events at home in Scotland, as well as throughout Europe and beyond. It enjoys close associations with the Edinburgh International Festival and Lammermuir Festival, and broadcasts frequently on BBC Radio 3, Classic FM and BBC Scotland. The group's growing discography on Linn Records includes Handel's *Acis and Galatea* and Bach's Brandenburg Concertos, both nominated for Gramophone Awards. Other Bach recordings include Mass in B Minor, Violin Concertos, Magnificat, Christmas Oratorio, Matthew Passion and John Passion, the latter of which was nominated for a Recording of the Year award in both *Gramophone* and *BBC Music Magazine*.

Dunedin Consort's most recent recording project was Handel's *Samson*, which presents two versions of the work – one with small forces, the other with large chorus and trebles. Released in October 2019, it has already received wide critical acclaim, including receiving *Editor's Choice* accolades in both *Gramophone* and *BBC Music Magazine*.

While Dunedin Consort is committed to performing repertoire from the Baroque and early Classical periods, and to researching specific historical performance projects, it remains an enthusiastic champion of contemporary music. The ensemble has commissioned and premiered new music by William Sweeney, Errollyn Wallen, Peter Nelson and Sally Beamish, and in 2019 premiered four new co-commissions with the BBC Proms by Nico Muhly, Stevie Wishart, Stuart MacRae and Ailie Robertson

For more information, please visit [dunedin-consort.org.uk](http://dunedin-consort.org.uk).

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**Mhairi Lawson** won the International Early Music Network Young Artists Prize with the fortepianist Olga Tverskaya while still a student at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. This success led to her first CD recording of Haydn's English and Scottish Songs.

Mhairi has performed in opera houses and concert halls worldwide with such companies as English National Opera, Les Arts Florissants, Gabrieli Consort & Players, Academy of Ancient Music, The Early Opera Company and Scottish Chamber Orchestra, and with many leading conductors such as William Christie, Sir Charles Mackerras, Paul McCreesh, Jane Glover and Sir John Eliot Gardiner, in repertoire ranging from traditional folksong to opera.

With Les Arts Florissants, Mhairi has performed dramatic music by Purcell, Charpentier, Landi and Monteverdi at the Cité de la Musique, Paris, and throughout Europe, including London's Barbican Centre and Birmingham's Symphony Hall. At the Wigmore Hall, she has performed operas by Purcell, Handel and Hasse with the Early Opera Company. She has performed Handel's Messiah in Amsterdam, Utrecht, Paris and Barcelona with the Netherlands Bach Society and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra. Mhairi has enjoyed working with the Gabrieli Consort and Players for many years and projects with them include Bach's St John Passion and St Matthew Passion, the Mass in B minor and wedding cantata, as well as Handel's *La resurrezione*, and Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*, *King Arthur* and *The Fairy Queen*.

Mhairi has sung Bach's St John Passion in New York's Lincoln Centre, and in Weimar, Germany, and the St Matthew Passion throughout Spain. At English National Opera she sang Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* and *King Arthur* in productions with the Mark Morris Dance Group. Consequently Mhairi travelled to California for further performances of *King Arthur* with the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, San Francisco. Work with European symphony orchestras includes Handel's *Athalia* in Madrid, Bach's Christmas Oratorio in Zurich and Vivaldi's Gloria and Mozart concert and operatic arias in Nantes, France. Recital engagements include songs from the British folksong tradition and Lieder by Haydn, Mozart, Schubert, Schumann, Strauss and Wolf with appearances in the Edinburgh Festival, Newcastle and York Universities, and recordings for BBC Radio 3.

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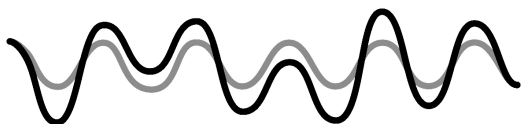
**John Butt** is Gardiner Professor of Music at the University of Glasgow and Musical Director of Edinburgh's Dunedin Consort.

As an undergraduate at Cambridge University, he held the office of organ scholar at King's College. Continuing as a graduate student working on the music of Bach, he received his PhD in 1987. He was subsequently a lecturer at the University of Aberdeen and a Fellow of Magdalene College Cambridge, joining the faculty at UC Berkeley in 1989 as University Organist and Professor of Music. In autumn 1997 he returned to Cambridge as a University Lecturer and Fellow of King's College, and in October 2001 he took up his current post at Glasgow. His books have been published by Cambridge University Press: these include *Bach Interpretation* (1990), a handbook on Bach's Mass in B Minor (1991), *Music Education and the Art of Performance in the German Baroque* (1994). *Playing with History* (2002) marked a new tack, examining the broad culture of historically informed performance and attempting to explain and justify it as a contemporary phenomenon. He is also editor or joint editor of both the Cambridge and Oxford Companions to Bach and of the *Cambridge History of Seventeenth-Century Music* (2005). His book on Bach's Passions, *Bach's Dialogue with Modernity*, was published in 2010, and explores the ways in which Bach's Passion settings relate to some of the broader concepts of modernity, such as subjectivity and time consciousness. His current work continues his enquiries into modernity and music, embodiment and music and film.

John Butt's conducting engagements with the Dunedin Consort (2003–) have included major Baroque and Classical repertory and several new commissions. He is a Principal Artist with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and has been guest conductor with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Halle Orchestra, City of London Sinfonia, Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, Stavanger Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century, Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Aurora, The English Concert, The Irish Baroque Orchestra, Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra, the Royal Academy of Music Bach series, Portland Baroque Orchestra and the Oregon Bach Festival. He also continues to be active as a solo organist and harpsichordist. Eleven recordings on organ, harpsichord and clavichord have been released by Harmonia Mundi.

In 2003 John Butt was elected to Fellowship of the Royal Society of Edinburgh and received the Dent Medal of the Royal Musical Association. That year his book, *Playing with History*, was shortlisted for the British Academy's annual Book Prize. In 2006 he was elected Fellow of the British Academy and began a two-year Leverhulme Major Research Fellowship for his research on Bach's Passions. He has recently served on the Council of the Arts and Humanities Research Council. In January 2011 he became the fifth recipient of the Royal Academy of Music/Kohn Foundation's Bach Prize, for his work in the performance and scholarship of Bach. In 2013 he was awarded the medal of the Royal College of Organists and the OBE for his services to music in Scotland.





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