

Eastern Early Music Forum

'Roses, pinks and violets' - Madrigalists of Eastern England



Oriel window at Hengrave Hall

Saturday 15 June 2024

Venue: St John the
Evangelist church,
Hills Road, Cambridge

Join David Allinson for an intriguing day of lesser-known Jacobean music with a distinctly East Anglian flavour. One of the purposes of the day is to show the richness of musical inspiration which bloomed in the English madrigal, a genre that has lost prestige in recent decades. Here we will find pained desires, anguished laments and witty paeans to nature's pleasures.

Star name of the day is **John Wilbye**, greatest composer of the 'English madrigal school' which flourished in the decades around 1600. Born 450 years ago in Diss, Wilbye's settings of texts evoking the pleasures and pains of love are the most impassioned, lyrical and poetic of their kind. The son of a tanner, Wilbye spent his adult life in the service of the Kytson family – about 30 years at Hengrave Hall near Bury St Edmunds, and a final decade in Colchester. Enjoying such generous patronage he never had to take up a church post and little sacred music survives.

Just down the road from Hengrave Hall, another fine composer was employed – **George Kirbye**. Generally forgotten today, Kirbye (d. 1634) was a direct contemporary of Wilbye, and the two men will have known each other. Employed as the domestic musician to the Jermyn family at Rushbrooke Hall near Bury St Edmunds, Kirbye's madrigals and anthems are impeccably crafted. We will sing at least one of his madrigals, and his extraordinary *Vox in Rama*, a reworking of a motet by Clemens.

To complete the programme, we will sample music by a third musician from the same generation: **John Ward** (c.1589–1638) actually hailed from Canterbury but qualifies (just) for our East Anglian celebration because he owned a country seat in Greater Ilford, Essex. We will include at least one work by Ward: his lament upon the death in 1612 of the much-loved Prince Henry, *Weep forth your tears*.

Although the madrigals by Wilbye are the best known, the quality of the music by Kirbye and Ward may also delight. As ever, the precise repertoire list is dependent upon the forces signing up: tenors and basses are especially encouraged to apply early to ensure the desired music list.

Tutor

Dr David Allinson is a freelance conductor, singer and academic with wide experience as a leader of choral workshops. His special love is Renaissance polyphony, and he has led countless workshops and singing holidays in the UK and Europe, working for every UK Early Music Forum, for organisations such as Lacock and Run by Singers, and for numerous private groups. He is known for his combination of scholarship, technical know-how and humorous positivity.

David has been the musical director of the Renaissance Singers of London since 2010 and has conducted numerous other choirs including his own ensemble, Cantores. He is Honorary Vice-President of the Southern Early Music Forum. [More at www.davidallinson.com] David first discovered the English madrigal while an undergraduate and fell in love with the music of Wilbye, in particular, for its grateful part-writing and ambiguous modal harmonies.

Definite works for inclusion:

J. Wilbye, *Weep, weep mine eyes* a5 SSATB

https://www.cpd.org/wiki/images/2/2d/Weep_weep_mine_eyes_Wilbye.pdf

J. Wilbye, *Sweet honey-sucking bees* a5 SSATB

https://www.cpd.org/wiki/images/9/92/Sweet_honey-sucking_bees.pdf

G. Kirbye, *Vox in Rama* a6 SSATTB

<https://www.cpd.org/wiki/images/f/fa/Kirb-Vox.pdf>

J. Ward, *Weep forth your tears, and do lament* a6 SSATTB

www.cpd.org/wiki/images/0/02/WardJ-Weepe-Forth-Your-Teares-and-Doe-Lament.pdf

We will have time for further works, but the selection of these will depend on the number of lower voices signing up and, to a lesser extent, our abilities and mood on the day. Please note that we definitely will not have time for all of these, but David will select from the following list:

J. Wilbye, *Draw on sweet night* a6 SSAATB

https://www.cpd.org/wiki/images/2/2c/Draw_on_sweet_night_Wilbye.pdf

J. Wilbye, *All pleasure is of this condition* a5 SSATB

https://www.cpd.org/wiki/images/3/33/All_pleasure_is_of_this_conditi.pdf

G. Kirbye, *Why should I love?* a5 SSATB

https://www.cpd.org/wiki/images/d/dc/George_Kirbye-Why_should_I_love.pdf

G. Kirbye, *With angel's face and brightness* a6 SSATTB (or SSAATB) from *The Triumphs of Oriana* [edition not yet available]

J. Ward, *Come, sable night* a6 SSATTB

https://www.cpd.org/wiki/images/9/9c/27-ward--comes_sable_night---0-score.pdf

Music will be provided on the day, and you can listen to it on a specially compiled spotify list:

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/20JF7RyGqFPJ21LNjzTqle?si=2bbea116e0674869>

As ever, performance pitch, ficta, underlay, tempo, etc., may differ for us!

Practical information: The workshop will begin with coffee or tea at 10.00 am, with the music starting at 10.30; we will finish at 5.00pm. Lunch is not provided. There are no restaurants or cafes in the immediate vicinity of the Church, but there are various shops and eateries in the Cambridge Leisure area which, according to google maps, is a nine-minute walk away, between Cambridge railway station and the venue at St John's Church, Hills Road. You can, of course, bring your own lunch and eat in the church.

Transport:

Drivers: there is a limited amount of parking in the car park at the church itself (entrance on Blinco Grove). On-street parking on Blinco Grove should be available.

Public transport: there are frequent buses from Cambridge Bus station and Cambridge Railway station. The following buses stop outside St Johns immediately after Blinco Grove:

Bus no	Frequency	Bus Station	Railway Station
1	Every 12 minutes	Stop E2	Stop 3
7	Every 20 minutes	Stop E1	Stop 3
13	Hourly	Bay 6	-

Ask for Blinco Grove. Timetables at <https://bustimes.org/stops/0500CCITY434>

According to google maps St John's is a 17 minute walk from the railway station, so you may find the bus helpful.

Health precautions:

We remain keen to protect people's health so:

- There will be some ventilation, so please dress accordingly.
- You should not attend if you have symptoms that could indicate Covid, flu, or indeed other illnesses (e.g. fever, coughing, loss or change to your sense of smell, taste or appetite, shortness of breath, feeling tired or exhausted, aching body or headache, sore throat, runny nose, diarrhoea, feeling sick).
- It would be deemed a courtesy if you would take a lateral flow test before attending. This is with a view to avoiding passing on asymptomatic Covid.

If you are unable to attend as a result of ill-health your fees will be refunded to you.

Cost: £18 for members of EEMF or of other Fora, or £20 for non-members.

Please apply by Sunday June 9th to enable the correct number of scores to be printed. To apply please complete and return the attached Word document in any way you prefer (or just put the essential information in an email) and send it to Janet at janetmtanburn@gmail.com or send it by post to Janet Tanburn, 5 Meadow Rise, Bourn, Cambridge, CB23 2TG (tel 01954 718842).

Payment by bank transfer should be made to

A/c name: Eastern Early Music Forum (business account with HSBC bank)

A/c No: 33888401 Sort code: 40-16-08

Reference: Allinson [your name].

Cheques will, of course, continue to be accepted.