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|  | **THREE RIVERS MUSIC SOCIETY 2017-2018**  **Wednesday 11 October 2017**  **Rickmansworth Baptist Church WD3 1EH** |

**SANSARA A CAPPELLA CONSORT**

**“*SONGS OF LOVE & LAMENTATION*”**

**Caroline Halls, Helena Thomson, Elisabeth Paul, Tom Castle, Tom Herring.**

**John Bennet (1575-after 1614) *All creatures now***

**John Wilbye (1574-(1638) *Sweet honey sucking bees***

**Thomas Vautor (fl. 1592-1619) *Mother, I will have a husband***

**arr. Gustav Holst (1874-1934) *I love my love***

**Eric Whitacre (b.1970) *This marriage***

**Malcolm Archer (b.1952) *Cloths of Heaven***

**John Bennet (1575-after 1614) *Weep, O mine eyes***

**Claudio Monteverdi (1567-1643) *Lamento d’Arianna***

**John Wilbye (1574-1638) *Weep, weep, mine eyes***

**Jacques Arcadelt (c.1507-1568) *Il bianco e dolce cigno***

**Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) *Rest***

**John Ireland (1879-1962) *Twilight Night***

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**Notes on the Renaissance Composers**

**John Wilbye** was born the son of a tanner in Brome, Suffolk and became probably the most famous of all the English madrigalists. He received the patronage of the Cornwallis family of Brome Hall and was employed for decades at Hengrave Hall near Bury St. Edmunds, probably at the behest of Elizabeth Cornwallis who was married to Sir Thomas Kitson, Hengrave’s owner. Wilbye was also involved with the music scene in London, where the Kitsons kept a town house, and his first book of "newly composed" madrigals was published in London in 1598.

**John Bennet** was born into a prosperous family, probably in the North-West of England and received musical tuition as a choirboy at Abingdon School. His first collection of madrigals ‘*These First Fruits of My Simple Skill, The Endeavors of a Young Wit*’ was published in 1599. He was well connected: many of his madrigals were written for festive occasions held at Court or in private residences of wealthy patrons in London.

**Thomas Vautor** was a household musician in the family of Mary Beaumont of Glenfield in Leicestershire. On 11 May 1616 Vautor supplicated for the degree of Bachelor of Music at Oxford University which was granted on condition of his composing a choral hymn for six voices; he was admitted on 4 July. At this time the younger George Villiers, son of Vautor's patrons, was rising in the favour of King James I, and in 1619 was created Marquess of Buckingham, Vautor dedicated to the Marquess a collection of 22 madrigals, entitled *The First Set; being Songs of diverse Ayres and Natures for Five and Sixe parts; Apt for Vyols and Voices*.

**Claudio Monteverdi,** the son of a barber-surgeon and chemist in Cremona, became the most important developer of the then new genre of opera. He studied with the director of music at Cremona Cathedral, Marcantonio Ingegneri, and he published several books of religious and secular music in his teens. He left his home town and entered the employ of the Duke of Mantua in about 1590 as a string player. He immediately came into contact with some of the finest musicians, both performers and composers, of the time, particularly the Flemish composer Giaches de Wert, a modernist. In about 1599 he married a singer, Claudia Cattaneo, by whom he had three children, one of whom died in infancy. When the post of *maestro di cappella*, or director of music, to the Duke became vacant on the death of Wert in 1596, Monteverdi was passed over, but finally achieved the position in 1602, at the age of 35. He published two more books of superb madrigals in 1603 and 1605, and his *Vespers of 1610* remain a popular masterpiece.

**Jacques Arcadelt** was born in Belgium, moved to Italy as a young man, worked in Florence in the late 1520s and moved to Rome in about 1538 where he sang with the papal choir at St. Peter’s, then the Julian Choir and then became a member of the Sistine Chapel. From the generation above that of this concert’s other Renaissance composers, he was one of the first composers to exploit the new madrigal form, publishing his first collection within a decade of the earliest madrigals, this volume becoming one of the most widely printed of its era and ensuring the spreading of the form (and his fame) outside Italy. He composed over 200 madrigals before he left Italy in 1551 to return to France, where he spent the rest of his life in Paris serving Henri II and Charles IX as a member of the Royal Chapel, and composing many *chansons* and masses.

**Notes on the Singers**

**Tom Castle** is a music graduate from the University of Bristol and has held positions in the Cathedral choirs of Chichester, Exeter and Bristol. Tom has performed as a soloist with the English Concert, The Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and is in high demand as a soloist for music in the Baroque period. As a choral singer, Tom has performed with The Sixteen, the Gabrieli Consort, Polyphony, Stile Antico and regularly sings with the choirs of St, Paul’s Cathedral, Westminster Cathedral and Westminster Abbey.

**Caroline Halls** is a freelance soprano currently living in London. She read Music and was a choral scholar at The Queen’s, College, Oxford. Now in London she sings regularly for a number of high-calibre professional church choirs, and has worked with a range of ensembles, including The Instruments of Time and Truth, The Erebus Ensemble and The Hanover Band. This year she has been a recipient of the Stile Antico Young Singer Bursary, and in August she took part in the internationally-auditioned JSB Ensemble at the Internationale Bachakademie Stuttgart, directed by Hans-Christoph Rademann. Solo work is also becoming more frequent, and this year’s engagements have included repertoire ranging from Brahms’ *Requiem* to Monteverdi’s *Vespers*. Alongside singing, Caroline is now entering her second and final year of study for an MA in Arts & Cultural Management at King’s College London.

**Tom Herring** is a freelance bass-baritone and conductor living in London. He is a recent graduate of Merton College, Oxford, where he achieved a First Class degree in Music and was a Choral Scholar. Alongside regular appearances with several professional church choirs, Tom has sung with professional ensembles such as Vox Luminis, Contrapunctus, Stile Antico and The Tallis Scholars. He is the bass soloist on the 2015 recording of Oliver Tarney’s *Magnificat* (Convivium Records) and performed at the London première at Cadogan Hall. Tom is the Artistic Director and General Manager of the award-winning choir and consort, Sansara.

**Elisabeth Paul** is a graduate of Royal Holloway, University of London, where she gained an honours degree in Music whilst singing as a Choral Scholar with The Choir of Royal Holloway. Now based in London, Elisabeth enjoys a busy career as a freelance consort singer, soloist, and choir administrator. She sings with a number of ensembles including Tenebrae (Associate Artist for 2017/18), The Tallis Scholars, Polyphony, The Erebus Ensemble, and Sansara, and is a permanent member of the Choir of St. Peter’s Church, Eaton Square. Elisabeth is an alumna of the Genesis Sixteen choral training programme, and held a Choral Scholarship at St Martin-in-the-Fields for the academic year 2013/14. Recent solo engagements include Handel’s *Messiah* with Stafford Choral Society and Vaughan Williams’ *Serenade to Music* with the Academy of St Martin-in-the-Fields.

**Helena Thomson** first began to sing as a treble in her local church choir in Edinburgh. She was a choral scholar throughout her undergraduate degree at St. Andrews. She was a member of the 2013-4 cohort of The Sixteen’s Genesis scheme, at which time she also held choral scholarships at the church of St Martin-in-the-Fields, London, and Merton College, Oxford. Helena is now based in London, where she sings with a number of professional church choirs and other ensembles, including early music specialists Siglo de Oro and Sansara, of which she is also a founding member.