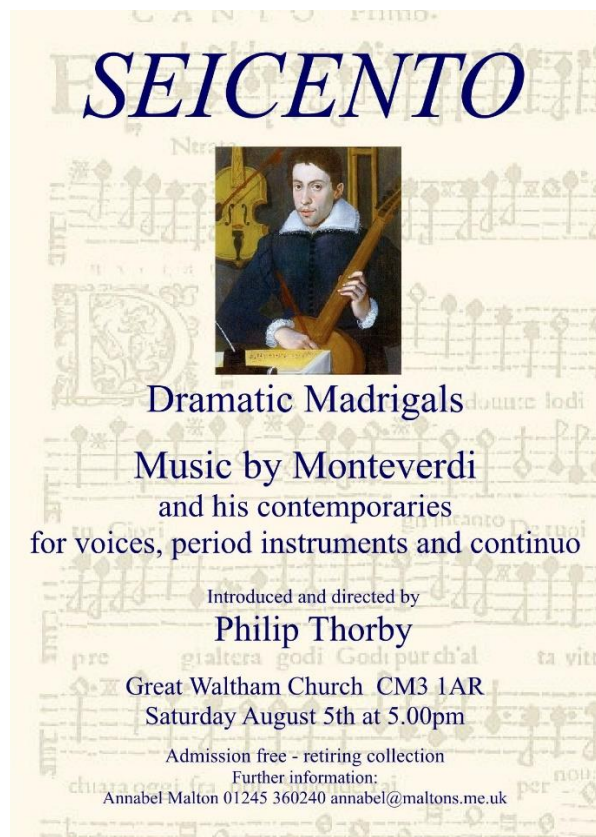



A date for your diary:



SEICENTO



Dramatic Madrigals
Music by Monteverdi
and his contemporaries
for voices, period instruments and continuo

Introduced and directed by
Philip Thorby

Great Waltham Church CM3 1AR
Saturday August 5th at 5.00pm

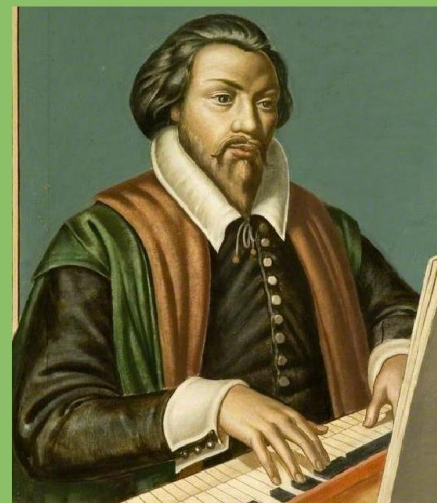
Admission free - retiring collection
Further information:
Annabel Malton 01245 360240 annabel@maltons.me.uk

Seicento is the culmination of four days of intensive study of the historical context and music of Monteverdi and his contemporaries under the incomparable direction of Philip Thorby. This year we explore the larger-scale dramatic madrigals for 6, 7 and 8 voices. The singers, all members of Essex Voices, are joined by leading amateur instrumentalists playing replicas of period instruments. We hope you will join us as we bring to life the sound world of early seventeenth century Italy.

We are very grateful to Lord Petre for allowing this evening's concert to take place and to Christopher Singh for his help with all the arrangements.

Essex Voices and
Chelys Consort of Viols

William Byrd A Portrait



Ingatestone Hall
Saturday 10th June at 7.30pm

Picture credit Essex County Council

Please turn mobile phones to silent
Please, no sound or video recording

WILD ARTS

ESSEX SUMMER OPERA FESTIVAL
Layer Marney Tower
22, 24 & 25 June

Arrive early, enjoy the beautiful grounds and gardens and set up your picnic on the lawn.

The Wild Arts Ensemble bring their effervescent storytelling to **Donizetti's Elixir of Love**, one of the great Italian operas - full of tunes, romance, and mischievous comedy.

Performed in the Opera Barn at Layer Marney Tower, fully staged in costume, sung in English by a stunning cast from major opera houses, directed by Guido Martin-Brandis, and with chamber orchestra conducted by Orlando Jopling.

'Wild Arts' opera evenings are of a breathtakingly high, ROH-level musical standard - gorgeous musicians and mischievously well acted. I'd follow them anywhere.'
Libby Purves
'A fine young cast excel, with engaging energy and superb singing ★★★★★'
The Guardian on our 2022 production.

Book early - last year sold out!

Tickets from £25. Boxes of 8 seats with tables available. Families are especially welcome for the Sunday Matinee, for which tickets are £10 for everyone under the age of 26.

To book: wildarts.org.uk

Layer Marney Tower
Sunday 17 December 4pm

THE MESSIAH

Presented by Wild Arts and Roman River Music in collaboration with Layer Marney Tower. A performance by star singers from the Essex Summer Opera Festival and players from the world's great period instrument orchestras, directed by Orlando Jopling.

The first ever performance of Handel's Messiah at Layer Marney Tower. The show will take place in the Opera Barn, warmed by its underfloor heating and new insulated roof.

Please book early. The audience is limited to 240 maximum and we anticipate a sell-out.

Tickets £65 | £45 | £35 includes mulled wine and mince pies. Free parking.

To book: wildarts.org.uk



**Hilary Punnett
Conductor**

**William Byrd 400th
Anniversary Concert**
Patronage and Persecution



Tuesday, 4th July 2023
8.00 pm (Doors open 7.30 pm)

Church of St Peter and St Paul
Stondon Massey CM15 0LD

Tickets £12
Advance booking strongly recommended.
To reserve your tickets, please leave a message at
01277 886769, or email stondonsingers@gmail.com



Limited tickets may be available at the door.

www.stondonsingers.org.uk [facebook@stondonsingers](https://www.facebook.com/stondonsingers) [twitter@StondonSingers](https://twitter.com/StondonSingers)
CIO 1154435

The Stondon Singers' concert takes place on the date that William Byrd died, and at the church in the parish where he spent his last years and is reportedly buried. Despite being openly Catholic, Byrd was appointed to the Chapel Royal around 1570 and remained in royal employment at a time when practising Catholics were often executed, often composing and performing Catholic masses in secret in rural Essex. We will explore the themes of Patronage and Persecution through the music of not only Byrd and his contemporaries, but music that takes us to Scotland, the Isle of Man, and even to Canada, in an exploration of the Chapels Royal and the music surrounding them.

Angel Early Music

Angel Early Music is delighted to lend support to tonight's concert. We are a charity with the purpose of supporting Early Music education and performance, both professional and amateur, at a high level, particularly in the geographic South-East of England. We do this through grants for projects that would otherwise not get off the ground for lack of funding, through bursaries for students to attend recognised courses, both full-time and part-time, and by promoting our own events championing Early Music. Our income is made up of donations and revenue from our fundraising projects. There is much more information about the charity, the projects we are supporting and how you can get involved, including signing up to our mailing list so that you don't miss any of our events at:

<http://angelearlymusic.org.uk>



Essex Voices

Annabel Malton and Joanne Webber - soprano
Anne-Dore Beaton and Kate Evans - alto
John Campbell and Nick Castell - tenor
Gerald Malton and Nick Webb - bass

Chelys Consort of Viols

Ibi Aziz, Jenny Bullock,
Kate Conway, Alison Kinder, Sam Stadlen

Roots...

Veni Creator Spiritus
Diliges Dominum Deum

William Mundy (c.1529-1591)
William Byrd (1540-1623)

In nomine à5 No 5

William Byrd

Catholic faith...

Ne irascaris
Haec Dies

William Byrd
William Byrd

Ave verum corpus
Agnus Dei from the Mass in 4 parts

William Byrd
William Byrd

Fantasia à6 No 2

William Byrd

Tallis...

O sacrum convivium
If ye love me
Ye Sacred Muses

Thomas Tallis (c1505-1585)
Thomas Tallis
William Byrd

-----Interval-----

Refreshments will be available to purchase in the Summer Parlour

Protestant liturgy...

O Lord, make our servant Elizabeth
Christ Rising
Make ye joy to God

William Byrd
William Byrd
William Byrd

Christmas at Ingatestone 1589...

Hodie Christus natus est
Lulla, Lullaby
A New Year's Carol

William Byrd
William Byrd
William Byrd

Pupils, friends and folk...

Lady, if you so spite me

Alfonso Ferrabosco I (1543-1588)

Lachrimae Verae

John Dowland (1563-1626)

Sing we and chant it
Browning

Thomas Morley (1557-1602)
William Byrd

Essex Voices

Essex Voices draws together some of the most accomplished amateur singers from Essex and the surrounding counties. Its origins go back nearly thirty years to four singers who met periodically on Friday evenings to sing madrigals for their own enjoyment. Over the intervening years the group has grown to number, at full strength, some twenty singers. We still meet, almost always on Friday evening, for our own enjoyment and tackle wide-ranging unaccompanied repertoire from the early Renaissance to the present day, by way of romantic part-songs and lighter jazz arrangements.

Occasionally we give public performances, often with a smaller group drawn from the larger one, singing one-a-part. These have included fund-raising recitals in north Essex and Norfolk churches and for the High Sheriff at Layer Marney Tower, a Christmas concert for the Ongar Music Club, choral evensong at Great Waltham Church and a concert at Christ's College, Cambridge in aid of the local hospice.

All the members of the group are enthusiastic and confident choral singers and come with a diverse range of experience. We welcome good sight-readers with pleasant, blending voices who are confident holding a line singing one-a-part. To find out more, to book the group or to be sent details of forthcoming concerts, please contact Annabel Malton at annabel@maltons.me.uk. Or see our website: <http://www.essexvoices.org>

Chelys Consort of Viols

Described by Gramophone as having released 'unquestionably the most beautiful recording of the *Lachrimae*', Chelys have garnered a reputation for their faithful yet fresh interpretations of the consort repertoire. They take their name from an ancient Greek word

Translations

Veni, Creator Spiritus,
mentes tuorum visita,
imple suprema gratia,
quae tu creasti pectora.

Come, Holy Ghost, Creator, come,
From thy bright heav'nly throne,
Come take possession of our souls,
And make them all thy own.

Diliges Dominum Deum tuum,
Ex toto corde tuo,
Et in tota anima tua,
Et in tota mente tua:
Diliges proximum tuum,
Sicut te ipsum.

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God
with all thy heart
and with all thy soul
and with all thy mind.
Thou shalt love thy neighbour
as thyself.

Ne irascaris Domine satis,
et ne ultra memineris iniquitatis nostrae.
Ecce respice populus tuus omnes nos.

Be not angry, O Lord,
and remember our iniquity no more.
Behold, we are all your people.

Civitas sancti tui facta est deserta.
Sion deserta facta est,
Jerusalem desolata est.

Your holy city has become a wilderness.
Zion has become a wilderness,
Jerusalem has been made desolate.

Haec dies quam fecit Dominus:
exultemus et laetemur in ea,
alleluia.

This is the day which the Lord hath made:
let us be glad and rejoice therein.
Alleluia.

Ave, verum corpus natum
de Maria Virgine:
vere passum, immolatum
in cruce pro homine:
cuius latus perforatum
fluxit aqua et sanguine:
esto nobis praegustatum,
in mortis examine.
O Jesu dulcis, O Jesu pie,
O Jesu Fili Mariae.
Miserere mei. Amen.

Hail the true body, born
of/from the Virgin Mary:
You who truly suffered and were sacrificed
on the cross for the sake of man.
From whose pierced flank
flowed water and blood:
Be a foretaste for us
in the trial of death.
O sweet, O merciful,
O Jesus, Son of Mary.
Have mercy on me. Amen.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona nobis
pacem.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
grant us peace.

O sacrum convivium, in quo Christus sumitur;
recolitur memoria passionis ejus;
mens impletur gratia;
et futurae gloriae nobis pignus datur.

O sacred banquet, wherein Christ is received;
the memorial of his passion is renewed;
the soul is filled with grace;
and a pledge of future glory is given to us.

Hodie Christus natus est:
Hodie Salvator apparuit:
Hodie in terra canunt Angeli,
laetantur Archangeli
Hodie exsultant justi, dicentes:
Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Alleluia.

Today Christ is born:
Today the Saviour appeared:
Today on Earth the Angels sing,
Archangels rejoice:
Today the righteous rejoice, saying:
Glory to God in the highest.
Alleluia.

dedicated to Lord Henry Howard, earl of Northampton”—an unmistakable reference to the first set of *Gradualia*. The man was thrown into Newgate, one of the most notorious prisons in England. Byrd and his family suffered no such treatment, but court records show him involved in endless lawsuits, mostly over his right to own property, and paying heavy fines. The reputation he had built as a young man in London must have helped him through his later years.

Artists often claimed a sort of vocational immunity to the controversies of their age — John Taverner, implicated in the radical Oxford Protestant movement of the late 1520s, escaped a heresy trial with the plea that he was “but a musician” — but the simple act of creating religious art put them in the centre of the fray. Byrd was talented and fortunate enough to continue his work, and to gain the esteem of nearly all his contemporaries. Henry Peacham reflected the public opinion when he wrote, just a few months before the composer's death, in his *Compleat Gentleman*:

For motets and music of piety and devotion, as well for the honour of our nation as the merit of the man, I prefer above all our Phoenix, Master William Byrd.

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Plaque on the wall at Stondon Massey Church

which referred to a bowed lyre, said to have been invented by the god Hermes. The word was borrowed by the English violist Christopher Simpson on the title page of his treatise 'The Division Viol' when he translated the work into Latin. Perhaps this is what inspired their world premiere recording of Simpson's *Airs* for two trebles and two basses, a disc described as ‘wonderfully supple, propulsive and alive’ by the *Guardian*.

The members of Chelys are among the UK's leading exponents of the viol, particularly as a consort instrument, and their consort viols are strung entirely in gut (not strings overwound with metal), which lends them a particularly distinctive sound. They frequently collaborate with other period instrumentalists and singers, especially enjoying repertoire for voices and viols. A recent highlight has been recording songs and consort music by William Byrd with mezzo-soprano Helen Charlston in Byrd's 400th anniversary year. A collaboration with vocal consort Fieri saw Chelys performing and recording the complete 5-part viol fantasias of Michael East alongside some of East's compositions for voices and viols, where the two ensembles also commissioned a piece from composer Jill Jarman. Chelys have continued their association with Jill in an exciting current project, *The Language of Bells*, a major new commission alongside percussionist Dame Evelyn Glennie and four singers.

The consort record for the BIS label, and their version of the complete fantasias and in nomines by Henry Purcell has just received a 5 star review in *BBC Music Magazine*, as well as *The Strad* praising its 'beguiling fidelity' and 'in-depth luxuriousness'.

The members of Chelys can be found in all sorts of other places in the wider Early Music world: playing with ensembles such as the Rose Consort of Viols, Fretwork, *Musica Secreta* and Ensemble Moliere, teaching on courses including the Benslow Trust, NORVIS, Dartington, the Irish Recorder and Viol Summer School, and the Easter Early Music Course, and coaching viol consorts at the Royal College of Music and Oxford University.

William Byrd – the man and his music

William Byrd (1540–1623) was the most famous and best-loved of early English composers. His entire life was marked by contradictions; as a true Renaissance man, he did not fit easily into other people's categories. He was renowned for his light-hearted madrigals and dances, but he also published a vast, rather archaic cycle of Latin music for all the major feasts of the church calendar. He lived well into the seventeenth century without writing songs in the new Baroque fashion, but his keyboard works marked the beginning of the Baroque organ and harpsichord style. Although he was a celebrated Anglican court composer for much of his life, he spent his last years composing for the Roman liturgy and died in relative obscurity. In the anti-Catholic frenzy following the 1605 Gunpowder Plot, some of his music was banned in England under penalty of imprisonment; some of it has been sung in English cathedrals, more or less without interruption, for the past four centuries.

Like most promising young musicians in Renaissance Europe, Byrd began his career at an early age. A recently discovered legal document shows that he was born in 1540, not in 1542/43 as previous biographers had thought. He almost certainly sang in the Chapel Royal during Mary Tudor's reign (1553–1558), “bred up to music under Thomas Tallis.” This

places him in the best choir in England during his impressionable teenage years, alongside the finest musicians of his day, who were brought in from all over the British Isles, from the Netherlands, even from Spain. “Bloody Mary” spent her brief reign overreacting to the excesses of Protestant austerity under her predecessor Edward VI. One of the more pleasant aspects of this was her taste for elaborate Latin church music. Byrd seems to have thrived on the exuberant, creative atmosphere: one manuscript from Queen Mary’s chapel includes a musical setting of a long psalm for Vespers, with eight verses each by two well-known court composers, and four verses by the young Byrd. They must have recognized his talent and invited him to work with them as an equal.

He was eighteen years old when Mary died and the staunchly Protestant Queen Elizabeth succeeded her. The sudden change may well have driven him away from court. He shows up again in his mid-twenties as organist and choirmaster of Lincoln Cathedral, where the clergy apparently had to reprimand him for playing at excessive length during services. After being named a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal in 1572, a well-paying job with considerable privileges attached to it, he moved back to London. He worked there as a singer, composer and organist for more than two decades. Just after his appointment, he and Tallis obtained a joint printing license from Queen Elizabeth. He published three collections of Latin motets or *Cantiones sacrae*, one (in 1575) with the collaboration of his teacher and two (in 1589 and 1591) by himself after the older man had died. Alongside these, he brought out two substantial anthologies of music in *English, Psalmes, Sonets and Songs* in 1588 and *Songs of Sundrie Natures* in 1589. He also wrote a large amount of Anglican church music for the Chapel Royal, including such masterpieces as the ten-voice *Great Service* and well-known anthems such as *Sing joyfully*. In 1593 he moved with his family to the small village of Standon Massey in Essex, and spent the remaining thirty years of his life there, devoting himself more and more to music for the Roman liturgy. He published his three famous settings of the Mass Ordinary between 1592 and 1595, and followed them in 1605 and 1607 with his two books of *Gradualia*, an elaborate year-long musical cycle. He died on July 4, 1623, and is buried in an unmarked grave in the Standon churchyard.

Every stage of Byrd’s musical career was affected by the political and religious controversies of his day. When a law was passed in 1534 establishing Henry VIII as “the only Supreme Head in earth of the Church of England,” liturgy and church music took on new importance. In such volatile times, the outward practices of worship were often the only touchstone for inward loyalty — and in the new English church, disloyalty to the established religion was also disloyalty to the state. This point was not lost on the obsessively political Tudor regime. *Lex orandi, lex credendi* — how people worship reflects, even determines, what they believe — was a theological commonplace of the era, and public prayer was, as it had been for centuries in pre-Reformation England, inextricably linked with music-making. One of the first steps taken by the Reformers was the revision of all books of worship and the establishment of a new, simplified musical style. By the time Byrd joined the Chapel Royal in the 1570s, the rules had relaxed somewhat, and he could produce elaborate works for what was still the best-funded and most famous choir in the country. Even as he won fame for his Anglican music, though, he was writing bitter Latin motets, many of them publicly printed in his books of *Cantiones*, about the plight of the English Catholic community. At some point, he tired of compromise and left the court, keeping his

position at the Chapel in absentia. He never returned to live in London. He continued to write secular songs, madrigals, and keyboard pieces until the end of his life, but his later church music, composed during the years in Essex, is exclusively Latin.

Facsimile of the tenor partbook of the four-part Mass.



The three Masses and the two books of *Gradualia*, published over fifteen years, were Byrd’s major contribution to the Roman rite. This music is quite unlike his earlier *Cantiones sacrae*. It is resilient enough to be sung by a cast of dozens in a vast Gothic cathedral, but it was written for the intimate, even secretive atmosphere of domestic worship, to be performed by a small group of skilled amateurs (which included women, according to contemporary accounts) and heard by a relatively small congregation. Although such worship could be dangerous — even a capital offense in some cases — Byrd went further than merely providing music. There are many records of his participation in illegal services. A Jesuit missionary describes a country house in Berkshire in 1586:

“The gentleman was also a skilled musician, and had an organ and other musical instruments and choristers, male and female, members of his household. During these days it was just as if we were celebrating an uninterrupted Octave of some great feast. Mr. Byrd, the very famous English musician and organist, was among the company....”

In view of such events, it is astonishing that he was allowed to live as a free man, much less keep his office in the Chapel Royal and the benefices associated with it. Shortly after the Gunpowder Plot was uncovered in November 1605, an unfortunate traveller was arrested in a London pub in possession of “certain papistical books written by William Byrd and