

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH
CHAMBER CONCERTS

SEASON 1968-69

Seventh Concert

THE ENGLISH CONSORT
OF VIOLS

REID SCHOOL OF MUSIC

THURSDAY, 6th FEBRUARY, 1969

AT 7.30 P.M.

PROGRAMME TWO SHILLINGS

THE ENGLISH CONSORT OF VIOLS

RICHARD NICHOLSON	...	...	Treble Viol and Harpsichord
RODERICK SKEAPING	...	...	Treble Viol and Violin
KENNETH SKEAPING	...	...	Tenor Viol and Violin
SHEILA MARSHALL	...	...	Tenor Viol
ELIZABETH GOBLE	...	...	Bass Viol
ADAM SKEAPING	...	...	Bass Viol

INTRODUCTION

In the early days everybody played, well as may, or best they could, but with perfection came the day of the masters only, and playing in homes by family became less frequent. Thus Roger North, writing shortly after the death of Purcell, notes the passing of the domestic music of his boyhood, which had been relatively undisturbed by the continental fashion encouraged at the court of Charles II, that was to cause the native amateur to lay aside his viol for ever in the face of the technical superiority of the professional violinist from France or Italy.

In this evening's programme the consorts of Gibbons and Leetherland are worthy representatives of the true domestic music, while Jenkins' fantasias for viols are among the finest works in this rich and peculiarly English form. The consorts of Lawes, who died in the service of the royal army at the Siege of Chester, may have been composed for performance at court.

The trio-sonatas of Purcell and his Italian model, Corelli, belong to the "day of the masters only," when public music-making had become more widespread, the concept of the thorough-bass texture (as opposed to the vocal polyphony of the viols) was established, and the supremacy of the violin was assured.

The stronger-voiced bass viol outlived the smaller viols by many decades, retaining its place in concerted music with the violins, as in Couperin's "La Sultane."

In England in the middle of the 17th century the art of improvising "Divisions" or variations on the viol (usually on a small "Division-bass," halfway in size between the "consort-bass" and the "true tenor") was developed by such masters as Simpson whose instruction book "The Division Violist" (1659) was widely used; and the viol became the vehicle of a virtuosity hitherto reserved for the lute and keyboard. The suites of a later generation of French viol players of whom Marais was one of the most notable, richly complement the "Divisions" of the earlier English school.

C. C.

Programme

1. CONSORTS OF SIX PARTS

Pavan in G minor	...	...	...	Thomas Leetherland
Fantasy in A minor	...	...	...	Orlando Gibbons
Fantasy in G minor	...	...	...	Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625)
 2. SONATAS FOR TWO VIOLINS AND BASSO CONTINUO

SONATA IN E MINOR	...	...	...	Arcangelo Corelli (1653-1713)
Preludio (adagio)				
Allemanda (presto)				
Adagio				
Giga (allegro)				
SONATA IN A	...	...	...	Henry Purcell (1659-1695)
Prelude				
Grave				
Largo				
Presto				
 3. SUITE IN G FOR TWO BASS VIOLS TO THE HARPSICHORD

...	...	...	...	Marin Marais (1656-1728)
Prelude				
Allemanda				
Sarabande				
Gigue				
 4. CONSORTS OF FIVE PARTS

Fantasy, Air, and "On the Plain Chant"				William Lawes (1602-1645)
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- INTERVAL*
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5. "LA SULTANE": SONATA FOR TWO VIOLINS AND TWO BASS VIOLS WITH CONTINUO

...	Francois Couperin (1668--1733)
Gravement—gayment—Air				
Tendrement—gravement—légèrément				
 6. BASS VIOL SOLO

Divisions on a Ground in E minor	...			Christopher Simpson (? -1669)
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 7. CONSORTS OF SIX PARTS

Pavan: "The Bells"				John Jenkins (1592-1678)
Fantasy in A minor				
Fantasy in D minor				

PROGRAMS

James L. ...
John G. ...
Charles G. ...
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