

# PARTHENIA

Rosamund Morley, treble viol  
Lawrence Lipnik, tenor viol  
Beverly Au, bass viol  
Lisa Terry, bass viol

## As It Fell on a Holie Eve: Early English Christmas Music with Julianne Baird, soprano

Prelude and Voluntary	William Byrd (1543-1623)
Remember, O Thou Man	Thomas Ravenscroft (c.1582-1635)
From Virgin's Womb this Day did Spring	Byrd
From <i>Pavans, Galliards, Almains and other short Aeirs</i> (1599)	Anthony Holborne (c.1550-1602)
The Night Watch	
The Cradle	
As it fell on a Holie Eve	
From <i>Gradualia seu cantionum sacrarum</i> (1607)	Byrd
O magnum misterium	
Vidimus stellam	
Puer natus est	
Gentil Madonna	Dublin Virginal Ms. (c.1600)
Sweet was the Song the Virgin Sung	Anonymous (c.1600)
Gagliarda Passamezzo	Peter Phillips (c.1560-1628)
Out of the Orient Crystal Skies	Byrd
Fantasia a 3	Byrd
Fantasia a 4	Byrd
Lully, lulla	Shearmen & Tailors carol (1591)
Fantasia <i>La sampogna</i>	Thomas Morley (1557-1602)
A Mery Conceit	Tobias Hume (c.1569-1645)
Harke, Harke	Hume
Gigge	John Bull (c.1562-1628)
An Elizabethan Dance Suite	Anon. 16 <sup>th</sup> c.
Pavan and Gallyard	
Allemana d'amor	
Divisions on <i>Greensleeves</i>	Anonymous (mid 17 <sup>th</sup> century)
The Old Year Now Away is Fled	Traditional Waits' carol, 1642

## Program Notes

**A**s all watchers of television and film are aware, the life of Queen Elizabeth I of England was a constant juggling act to maintain her power and position, and to keep England peaceful, prosperous and independent. Realizing that marriage to anyone at all would make the crown subject either to a foreign power or to a domestic faction, she skillfully warded off all suits, whether they were tendered as peace offerings or as passionate proposals (in some cases both happened at once). She had to balance, too, the antipathies between Catholics and Protestants in her realm: as the daughter of Henry VIII she was herself a Protestant and recoiled at the idea of recognizing papal authority, but she also knew from experience that the persecution of Catholics could lead to bloody insurgency.

Happily, in the field of music a truce seemed to hold. One of Elizabeth's most respected and beloved "Gentlemen of the Chapel Royal," **William Byrd**, was known to be a devout Catholic, but he composed motets and liturgical music for both Protestant and "Popish" rites, with texts in either English or Latin. It seems that Elizabeth liked to hear the English service in Latin herself!

Byrd was born in 1543, perhaps near Lincoln Cathedral where his first adult employment was as organist and Master of the Choristers. His post required that he teach the choirboys not just singing but how to play the viola da gamba; thus a consort of viols like ours, with a voice or voices, inevitably steers toward the music of William Byrd. In 1570 Byrd came to Elizabeth's court, and over the next decades he apparently maintained close relations with many of the most powerful English lords, despite his Catholicism. In 1575, in partnership with his former teacher Thomas Tallis, a Protestant, Byrd secured a monopoly for the publishing of music, and their first venture was a set of Latin motets dedicated to the Queen. Their biggest financial successes were Byrd's *Psalmes, Sonets and Songs* of 1588

and *Songs of Sundrie Natures* of 1589, from which come the "carowles" on this program.

Although Byrd's influence inevitably extended over all the other composers represented here, much less is known of their personal lives. **Thomas Ravenscroft** was a chorister at St. Paul's Cathedral at a time when the "St. Paul's company of child actors" was famous in London. In adult life he turned to collecting and editing songs. *Remember, O thou man* comes from his 1611 compilation, *Melismata: Musically Phansies fitting the Court, Citie and Countrey Humours*. **Anthony Holborne**, described by the lutenist and composer John Dowland as a "Gentleman Usher to the Queen," in 1599 published about seventy 5-part *Pavans, Galliards, Almains, etc.* – virtually the only music of his that survives – from which we have culled three dances and arranged them for 4 viols.

Second to Byrd, **Peter Phillips** was the most published English composer of the era. He first gained fame at 20 with a keyboard Pavan that found its way into every musical household in every conceivable arrangement. Most of his working life was spent, however, in Brussels, whither he fled at age 22, "pour la foy Catholique." Attached to the courts of noble English Catholic refugees, he traveled in Europe extensively. Phillips's vocal writing remained firmly in the conservative Roman style of Palestrina, although he was careful always to call himself an "Anglo."

A student of Byrd's, **Thomas Morley**, was Gentleman of the Chapel Royal from 1592. He was a prolific composer of secular vocal and instrumental music and, like Byrd, turned out both Latin and English church music as well. The little duet with its Italian title *La sampogna* (the bagpipe), reminds us of the Elizabethan passion for all things Italian – a taste that has hardly waned over the centuries. As a madrigalist, Morley was England's chief exponent of the Italian style. We thought that since bagpipes are associated with shepherds,

the piece would be appropriate for Christmas!

Keyboardist and organ builder **Dr. John Bull**, although officially also a “Gentleman” and accorded great respect by his contemporaries as a musician, seems to have been something of a rogue – good fodder, perhaps now, for a novel. He was forced to flee England in 1613 to escape prosecution for adultery, went to visit Peter Phillips in Brussels, and sought asylum and employment there claiming to be a Catholic refugee. The Archbishop of Canturbury wrote of him, “The man hath more music than honesty and is as famous for marring of virginity as he is for fingering of organs and virginals.”

We know very little of the life of the eccentric **Tobias Hume** other than what he has told us himself in his musical publications. He served as an officer in the Swedish and Russian

armies and took his viol with him on every campaign. Most of his pieces are programmatic vignettes inspired either by his experiences as a soldier abroad or by his erotic fantasies. Hume was convinced that the viol was as rich and versatile an instrument as the preferred lute; in his 1607 preface to *Captaine Humes Poeticall Music* he even challenged John Dowland to a musical duel.

Finally, into this, as into so many Christmas programs, the ever-popular *Greensleeves* finds its way. On a broadside sheet of the early 17th century, a text beginning *The olde year now away is fled* is indicated “to be sung to the tune of *Greensleeves*.” We wind down the program with a set of “divisions,” or variations, written by an anonymous Elizabethan viol player on the same tune.

—Rosamund Morley and Lucy Cross

## Texts and Translations

### Remember, O Thou Man

Thy time is spent:  
Remember, O thou man,  
How thou cam'st to me then,  
And I did what I can,  
Therefore repent.

In Bethlem was he born,  
For mankind dear:  
In Bethlem was he born  
For us that were forlorn,  
And therefore took no scorn,  
Our sins to bear.

The angels all did sing,  
On Sion hill:  
The angels all did sing  
Praises to our heavenly King,  
And peace to man living,  
With right good will.

**From Virgin's womb this day did spring**

The precious seed that saved man,  
This day let man rejoice and sweetly sing  
Since on this day salvation first began,  
This day did Christ man's soul from death remove  
With glorious saints to dwell in heaven above.  
Rejoice, rejoice, with heart and voice,  
In Christ his birth this day rejoice.

This day to man came pledge of perfect peace,  
This day to man came love and unity,  
This day man's grief began for to surcease,  
This day did man receive a remedy  
For each offence and every deadly sin  
With guilty heart that erst he wandered in.

**O magnum mysterium** et admirabile  
sacramentum  
ut animalia viderent Dominum natum  
jacentem in praesepe.  
Beata virgo cujus viscera  
meruent partare Dominum Christum.  
Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum.  
Beata virgo...

O great mystery and wonderful sacrament  
that animals see the Lord born  
lying in a manger.  
Blessed virgin whose womb  
was worthy to bear Lord Christ. Allelujah.  
Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.  
Blessed virgin...

**Puer natus est nobis**  
Et filius datus est nobis  
Cuius imperium super humerum eius  
Et vocabitur nomen eius  
Magni confilii Angelus  
Cantate Domino canticum novum  
Quia mirabilia fecit  
Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto  
Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper,  
in secula seculorum. Amen.

A boy is born to us,  
And a son is given to us,  
upon whose shoulders authority rests,  
and His name will be called  
"The Angel of Great Counsel".  
Sing to the Lord a new song,  
because he has done the miraculous.  
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the  
Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, and is  
now, and always will be, in every human  
generation. Amen.

**Sweet was the Song the Virgin Sung**

When she to Bethlem Judah came,  
And was deliver'd of her Son,  
That blessed Jesus hath to name.  
Lulla, lulla, lullaby, Sweet Babe, quoth she,  
My Son and eke a Saviour born,  
Which hath vouchsafed from on high  
To visit us that were forlorn,  
Lululla, lululla lulullaby, Sweet Babe quoth she,  
And rock'd him featly on her knee.

**Out of the orient crystal skies** a blazing star did shine,  
Showing the place where poorly lies a blessed Babe divine,  
Born of a maid of royal blood who Mary hight by name,  
A Sacred Rose which once did bud by grace of heavenly fame.  
This shining star three kings did guide even from the farthest East,  
To Bethlehem where it betide this blessed Babe did rest.  
Laid in a silly manger poor, betwixt an ox and ass,  
Whom these three kings did all adore as God's high pleasure was.  
And for the joy of his great birth a thousand angels sing:  
Glory and peace unto the earth, where born is this new King.  
The shepherds dwelling there about when they this news did know,  
Came singing all even in a rout, falantidingdido,  
Falantidingdido.

**Lully, lulla, thou little tiny Child,**  
By, by, lully, lullay.  
Thou little tiny Child.  
By, by, lully, lullay.  
O sisters, too, how may we do,  
For to preserve this day;  
This poor Youngling for whom we sing,  
By, by, lully, lullay.  
Herod the King, in his raging,  
Charged he hath this day;  
His men of might, in his own sight,  
All young children to slay.  
Then woe is me, poor Child, for Thee,  
And ever mourn and say;  
For Thy parting, neither say nor sing,  
By, by, lully, lullay.

**The old year now away is fled,**  
The new year it is entered;  
Then let us all our sins down tread,  
And joyfully all appear.  
Let's merry be this day,  
And let us now both sport and play,  
Hang grief, cast care away  
God send you a happy new year!  
And now with New Year's gifts each friend  
Unto each other they do send;  
God grant we may our lives amend,  
And that truth may now appear.  
Now, like the snake, your skin  
Cast off, of evil thoughts and sin,  
And so the year begin:  
God send us a happy new year!

PARTHENIA, hailed by the *New Yorker* as "one of the brightest lights in New York's early-music scene," is a dynamic ensemble exploring the extraordinary repertory for viols from Tudor England to the court of Versailles and beyond. Known for its remarkable sense of ensemble, Parthenia is presented in concerts across America, and produces its own lively and distinguished concert series at Corpus Christi Church in New York City, collaborating regularly with the world's foremost early music specialists and has been featured on radio and television and in prestigious festivals and series as wide-ranging as *Music Before 1800*, *Maverick Concerts* and the Regensburg Tage Alter Musik.

Noteworthy among Parthenia's inventive programs have been presentations of the complete viol fantasies of Henry Purcell at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, the complete instrumental works of Robert Parsons at Columbia's Miller Theatre, as well as the popular touring program "When Music & Sweet Poetry Agree," a celebration of Elizabethan poetry and music with actor Paul Hecht. Parthenia performs often at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, both in Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium and in the Museum's Medieval Sculpture Hall, and appeared in conjunction with the exhibition "Searching for Shakespeare" at the Yale Center for British Art.

Parthenia's enduring interest in the bonds between poetry and music will be heard in a forthcoming release of 16<sup>th</sup>-century settings of the poems of Pierre de Ronsard, *Les Amours de Mai*, with soprano Julianne Baird and Renaissance violinist Robert Mealy. Parthenia has also recorded *Within the Labyrinth*, *Parthenia Sampler*, *A Reliquary for William Blake*, and *Trumpet after Dark*, with jazz trumpeter Randy Sandke.

Parthenia has commissioned, premiered and recorded many new works by composers such as Phil Kline, Brian Fennelly, Will Ayton, Randy Sandke, Frances White, Nicholas Patterson, funded in part through grants from the Fromm Foundation, American Composers Forum, the Camargo Foundation, Roger Williams University, the Viola da Gamba Society of America, and private donors. An ASCAP/CMA Award honored Maverick Concerts' 2002 Season, which included two world premieres of works by Brian Fennelly, commissioned especially for Parthenia by Maverick Concerts. Through a 2006 grant from the Jerome Foundation, Parthenia premiered "Nothing Proved," a song cycle for viol consort, voice and interactive audio processing, set by composer Kristin Norderval to the extraordinary poetry of Queen Elizabeth I. More information about Parthenia's activities can be found at [www.parthenia.org](http://www.parthenia.org).

JULIANNE BAIRD, soprano, has been hailed a "national artistic treasure" (*New York Times*) and as a "well-nigh peerless performer in the repertory of the baroque."  
<http://juliannebaird.camden.rutgers.edu/performances.htm>.

With more than 125 recordings to her credit on Decca, Deutsche Gramophone, Dorian and Newport Classics, Julianne Baird is one of the world's ten most recorded classical artists. She has participated in leading roles in a series of acclaimed recordings of Handel and Gluck operatic premieres. In addition, recent projects include recordings of Handel arias from *Alcina* and *Rinaldo* with the Dryden Ensemble and a newly commissioned opera written for her and based on "The Wife of Bath's Tale" of Chaucer.

Julianne Baird is recognized internationally as one whose "virtuosic vocal style is firmly rooted in scholarship." Her book *Introduction to the Art of Singing*, Cambridge University Press, now in its third printing, is used by singers and professional schools internationally. "The Musical World of Benjamin Franklin" (CD and Song Book) is published by The Colonial Institute. For publication information go to: <http://www.colonialmusic.org/BF.htm>