



Greensleeves

Music for Recorder and Harp

Bill Taylor | Harps • Geert Van Gele | Recorders

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Music for Recorder and Harp, by Geert Van Gele and Bill Taylor

1	Mit ganzem Willen wünsch ich dir	Conrad Paumann (1452)	(2:37)
2	Ellend du hast		(2:33)
3	Wilhelmus Legrant		(1:55)
4	Par le regard de vos beaux yeux	Guillaume Dufay (1397-1474) and Buxheimer Orgelbuch (c.1470)	(3:29)
5	Prodiadiu/Provings:	Robert ap Huw MS (c.1623)	(3:29)
	<i>Profiad cyffredin</i>		
	<i>Pwnc ar ôl pob profiad</i>		
	<i>Y ddigan y droell</i>		
	<i>Cainc Ruffudd ab Adda ap Dafydd</i>		
6	Falla con misuras (La Bassa Castiglia)	Guglielmo Ebreo (1463)	(2:48)
7	Bel fiore dança	Faenza Codex (c.1420)	(1:49)
8	Ave Maris Stella	Francisco Fernández Palero (d.1597)	(3:11)
9	Passamezzo I & II	Intabolutura nova di...balli (1551)	(1:36)
10	Venetiana Gagliarda		(1:39)
11	Defiled is my name	Robert Johnson (c.1500-c.1560)	(3:53)
12	Port	Straloch MS (1627)	(2:34)
13	Ah Robin, gentle Robin	Henry VIII MS (c.1518)	(2:22)
14	Consort II		(0:49)
15	Consort V		(1:09)
16	Consort VIII		(1:33)
17	Puzzle canon V		(1:32)
18	Vestiva i colli	Francesco Rognoni Taeggio (1620)	(4:26)
19	Paul's Steeple	The Division Flute (1706)	(2:38)
20	Greensleeves	The Division Flute	(4:29)

(Total: 50:40)

Notes

Conrad Paumann (c.1410-1473) was a blind organist and composer; whose gravestone declares him “the most ingenious master of all instruments and music” and shows him surrounded by instruments. That the harp and recorder are two of those instruments may indicate that he played them, as well as the organ. He was a keen improviser, and his intabulations are as beautiful as they are virtuosic. *Mit ganzem Willen, Ellend du hast* and *Wilhelmus Legrant* were originally didactic pieces, taken from his composition manual *Fundamentum organisandi*.

Par le regard de vos beaux yeux appears as a composite rondeau, incorporating both the original three-voice chanson by the great Burgundian composer Guillaume Dufay and two different contemporary intabulations found in the *Buxheimer Orgelbuch*.

The manuscript of Robert ap Huw contains music composed by Welsh harp players in the 14th and 15th centuries. The same bray harp favoured by the German and Franco-Flemish composers, with its buzzing strings, was also the high-art instrument of 15th-century Wales. A

suite of *profiadiau* or “provings” presents several miniatures, which may have been used as exam pieces within the Welsh bardic curriculum. *Profiad cyffredin* translates as the “common profiad”; *Pwnc ar ôl pob profiad* as the “Pwnc [to be played] after every profiad”; *Y ddigan y droell* as the “Harmony of the spindle-whorl”; and *Cainc Ruffudd ab Adda ap Dafydd* as the “Cainc (or musical strain) of [the 14th-century poet] Gruffudd ab Adda ap Dafydd”.

Two Italian *bassadanza* tunes follow. *Falla con misuras*, with its cantus firmus of La Spagna, comes from *De pratica seu arte tripudii vulgare opusculum* by Guglielmo Ebreo da Pesaro (c.1420-?after 1484). *Bel fiore dança* is found in the *Faenza Codex*, which, along with the *Buxheimer Orgelbuch*, was one of the most important sources of instrumental music in the 15th century. The *bassadanza* was characterised by elegant steps low to the ground, as opposed to the more vigorous leaping steps employed in the *saltarello*.

Francisco Fernández Palero was for many years an organist at the royal chapel in Granada. The solo tenor recorder first plays the Gregorian

hymn *Ave Maris Stella*, and is joined by the harp in a modal accompaniment. Palero's delicate setting follows. Much of the music in 16th-century Spain was published for *tecla, arpa & vihuela* – for keyboard, harp and vihuela. With a strong tradition of harps playing during the mass in Spanish cathedrals, it is likely that such a duo of harp and recorder might well have played this in Palero's day.

Intabolatura nova di varie sorte de balli was published by Antonio Gardane in 1551 and includes popular dance tunes of the day: passamezzos, galliards, pavans and saltarellos. The passamezzo was a quick dance in duple metre, named *pass'e mezo* in Gardane's index. It may come from *passo e mezzo*, meaning "a step and a half". *Passamezzo I & II* heard here are settings of the "passamezzo moderno", and follow the pattern I-IV-I-V-I-IV-I-V-I. A galliard, such as the *Venetiana Gagliarda*, requires five steps (*cinq pas*) within six beats, and gives rise to the term "syncopation". *Hemiola* rhythms are often used near the cadences.

Defiled is my name is found in a four-voice setting by Robert Johnson, a Scottish priest as well as composer who fled to England in the wake of the Reformation, to the court of Henry VIII. The poem has traditionally been linked to

Anne Boleyn, Henry's second wife, but this has since been discredited. Strong and defiant, the poet yearns for justice.

*Defiled is my name full sore
Through cruel spite and false report,
That I may say for evermore
Farewell my joy, adieu comfort.
Full wrongfully you judge of me
Unto my fame a mortal wound,
Say what you list, it will not be;
You seek for that cannot be found.*

The word *port* is simply Gaelic for "tune". However, the term seems to have originally applied to ancient melodies played on the lute and the *clarsach* – the wire-strung Highland harp. They are curious tunes, sometimes unresolved, sometimes angular, and sometimes comic. The unnamed **Port** comes from the *Straloch* lute manuscript, one of the few collections of Scottish renaissance instrumental music.

There is no question that music was very important in the court of Henry VIII. The king employed almost sixty musicians, whose names and instruments are listed in court records, including players of viols, sackbuts, flutes, recorders, lutes, virginals and rebecs. Certainly, Henry greatly enjoyed music; he sang, danced

and was known to play the organ, the virginals and the lute. The Henry VIII manuscript includes many pieces composed by him, some with and some without texts. The plaintive song **Ah Robin, gentle Robin** is followed by several instrumental consorts, and concludes with a charming canon.

Palestrina's setting of Ippolito Capilupi's poem **Vestiva i colli** was published in 1566. Subsequent reprintings of his books of madrigals and motets helped to spread his fame. Francesco Rognoni Taeggio's 1620 virtuosic setting is an excellent example of his own conviction, as expounded in his treatise, *Selva de varii passaggi*, that beautiful singing should express foremost the text, not excessive ornamentation.

Paul's Steeple is a lively dance tune, which appears in John Playford's first edition of *The Dancing Master* (1651). The tune dates from just before the Great Fire of London in 1666, and its ongoing popularity was no doubt enhanced by Christopher Wren's magnificent restoration of St Paul's. The Cathedral precinct was a gathering place for social as well as religious activity, as we discover in James Strutt's *Sports and Pastimes of the People of England* (1801). He gives an account of rope dancing from the battlements of St Paul's, before the king Edward VI, as he passed in procession through the city

of London, in 1546

Greensleeves is one of the most famous melodies ever composed. It is based on an Italian renaissance ground, the *passamezzo antico* or the virtually identical *romanesca*, having the form III-VII-i-V-III-VII-i-V-I. The tune is likely Elizabethan in origin, and was not written by Henry VIII, as is so often assumed. The text first appears in 1580 as A New Northern Dittye of the Lady Greene Sleeves. The song continued to be extremely popular throughout the 16th and 17th centuries, and is presented as a dance tune in the seventh edition of Playford's *Dancing Master* (1686).

Both versions of Paul's Steeple and Greensleeves performed here come from *The Division Flute*, which provides players and listeners with a delightful set of variations, in the same way that the *Intabolutura nova* and the *Buxheimer Orgelbuch* in earlier times offered examples of how to improvise on a good melody.

Bill Taylor

Instruments

Recorders

Alto in G from a set of six with cylindrical boring, in either Pythagorean or mean-tone tuning, based on late-medieval examples. Builder: Bob Marvin, Maine, USA, 2000 - *Tracks 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7*

Alto in G based on the design as described in *La Fontegara* by Sylvestro Ganassi (1535). Builder: Bob Marvin, Maine, USA, 1991 - *Tracks 10, 15*

Tenor in C based on the design by Wolleck, late 16th century. Builder: Bob Marvin, Maine, USA, 1992 - *Tracks 8, 9, 11, 13, 14, 16, 17*

Alto in G based on the design by Bassano, late 16th century. Builder: bob Marvin, Maine, USA, 1995 - *Tracks 18, 19, 20*

Harps

Gothic harp, 24 gut strings with brays, based on the painting "The Garden of Earthly Delights" by Bosch (c.1505-10). Builder: Rainer Thureau, Wiesbaden, Germany, 1987
- *Tracks 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10*

Wire-strung clarsach, 26 brass strings. Builder: Ardival Harps, Strathpeffer, Scotland, 2005
- *Tracks 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17*

Renaissance bray harp, 29 gut strings. Builder: David Brown, Baltimore, USA, 1992
- *Tracks 18, 19, 20*

Biographies

Geert Van Gele and **Bill Taylor** formed their duo in 1997, having met at the Amherst Early Music Festival in the USA. They have performed programmes of late medieval and renaissance music for harp and recorder in Europe, the UK and the USA. They collaborate as well in the quartet, *Quadrivium*, an ensemble for medieval music. This is their debut recording as a duo.

After finishing his studies at several conservatories in Flanders with honours, **Geert Van Gele** went on to co-found the *Flanders' Recorder Quartet*. For ten years he performed and recorded with the Quartet in Europe and both North- and South America. Along the way he won several important international competitions. He is regularly invited to give masterclasses. As a soloist he is admired as much for his interpretations of Bach and his performances of early Italian baroque music as for his mastery of contemporary recorder literature – all of which repertoires he has recorded on CD.



Bill Taylor is a specialist in the performance of medieval and renaissance European harp music, as well as the ancient harp music of

Ireland, Scotland and Wales. He is one of very few players investigating these repertoires on medieval gut-strung harps, wire-strung *clarsachs* and renaissance harps with buzzing bray pins. He has performed with several ensembles in the US, including the *Folger Consort*, the *Newberry Consort* and *Hesperus*. Now based in Scotland, Mr. Taylor regularly performs and records with the early vocal and instrumental ensembles *Canty* and *Coronach*. He teaches privately, offers classes through *Fèis Rois*, and frequently teaches and performs at festivals in the UK, Europe and the USA.



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Research and notes: *Bill Taylor*

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