

SOMM
RECORDINGS



TIME STANDS STILL

Dowland & Danyel

KIERAN WHITE
tenor

CÉDRIC MEYER
lute





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We are thrilled to present this recording as a celebration of the 400th anniversary of John Dowland and John Danyel:

Time stands still

Indeed, four centuries after the deaths of these two magnificent English composers, their music still speaks to us with such clarity that it seems nothing has changed since the year 1626 – or at least nothing in terms of timeless expression or emotional perception.

This mirror of the human soul – the passions, referred to as *pathos* at the time – would be fundamental to the creation of music during the century that followed and is the core of the programme recorded here. This album shares our reading of the work from renaissance composers Dowland and Danyel: two great examples of composers who were precursors of the developing aesthetic that would triumph in the 17th and 18th centuries in what is known as “Baroque music”.

Proposed is a selection of lute songs, or “ayres”, which combine music and poetry to form songs filled with love, melancholy and despair. Also included are solo instrumental pieces, contributing a taste of the highly refined art of lute playing at the turn of the 16th century.

Accompanying Kieran’s *haute-contre* voice, Cédric performs on a renaissance lute that he personally handcrafted. In their desire to impart new colour to this repertoire, the artists perform it a whole tone higher than the original keys, suiting Kieran’s specific voice type. The lute is therefore tuned up from standard pitch so that it transposes from the original tablatures. The instrument is based on an extant Italian lute from 1592. The vibrating string length is slightly shortened in order to function at the new pitch, and the woods were chosen to match Kieran’s voice quality. This lends a new, personal touch to the sonic relationship between voice and lute.

Having “met” during those most exquisite moments in operas when the tenor and lute are suddenly alone, we have performed together for years since, in concerts and opera productions. It is now with great pleasure that we record, perform and share this intimate music as two dear friends.

Kieran and Cédric

Published in 1610 by Robert Dowland (c.1591–1641), son of the celebrated lutenist-composer John Dowland (1563–1626), the cover of *A Musicall Banquet* boasts that it is “Furnished with varietie of delicious Ayres, Collected out of the best Authors in English, French, Spanish and Italian”. Judgements then as now on who ranked amongst the “best” composers of the day were naturally subjective, and Robert’s selection was no doubt influenced by prevailing Continental tastes in an effort to optimise sales. Nonetheless, it will come as no surprise that he took the opportunity to include three pieces by his father, whose well-established international reputation as one of the finest musicians of his generation has carried his name into today’s musical consciousness as supreme champion of the lute song, allowing us to dismiss any accusations of flagrant nepotism. Dowland’s contemporary John Danyel (1564–1626) on the other hand, though equally talented but considerably less prolific, remains comparatively obscure. This recital celebrates both men as masters of the First Golden Age of English Song, an especially fertile period of high-quality literary and musical creativity, unmatched in England until the late 19th century.

John Danyel

Writing in 1926, the accomplished English composer Peter Warlock (1894–1930), himself a significant contributor to the Second Golden Age of English Song at the turn of the 20th century, complained in his book *The English Ayre* that “John Danyel is at present almost completely unknown; his genius has certainly not received anything like adequate recognition from the historians of music, who for the most part ignore him altogether”.

One hundred years later, appreciation for Danyel’s few exquisite songs is still limited to connoisseurs of Renaissance music, though it is now possible to take a slightly more

balanced view of Warlock's frustration and appease his cries of neglect. Firstly, Warlock was writing several decades ahead of the mid-20th-century early music revival that would provoke significant research into the wealth of sacred, secular, theatrical and instrumental music by Danyel's more productive contemporaries such as Thomas Morley (1557–1602), Thomas Campion (1567–1620), Orlando Gibbons (1583–1625) *et alia, ad infinitum*; secondly, for all their turning over of dusty manuscripts in public and private libraries and even with the advent of digitisation and easily perused online resources, save for a few choice appointments scholars have uncovered comparatively few details of Danyel's life and music than were already available to Warlock. The reason for this may in fact be simple: there aren't any, and the evidence suggests that for both the composer and his elder brother, the celebrated poet Samuel Daniel (1562–1619), artistic privacy was, until pressed by circumstance, a cherished family trait.

Anthony à Wood in his *Athenae Oxonienses* wrote that the Danyels were wealthy, which, if true, suggests that John may have enjoyed a life of privilege, only taking on professional engagements that suited him. This is, of course, conjecture, but the few surviving details of his career certainly intimate a life enriched by familial connections and no fear of the breadline. He was baptised at Wellow (near Bath) on 6 November 1564 and, almost 40 years later at the advanced age of 39, graduated in 1603 from Christ Church, Oxford. Thereafter, he appears to have held a small number of jobs including musician and tutor to the Grene family of Great Milton (near Oxford), manager of the Children of the Queen's Royal Chamber of Bristol and, from 1617, as a Musician to Prince Charles at £40 a year. As one of the "Household of o[u]r now dread Sovereghne Lord King Charles", he attended the funeral of James I in May 1625 and apparently remained at court as one of the "Musicians for the Lute and voices" until his death the following year in 1626.

The sum of Danyel's extant vocal music survives in a single, slender volume of – as a tradition established by Dowland's *First Booke of Songs or Ayres* in 1597 dictated – 21 *Songs for the lute, viol and voice*. Published in 1606, the collection is dedicated “To [his pupil] Miss Anne Grene, the worthy Daughter to Sir William Grene of Milton”, and in a poetic inscription Danyel indicates that, apparently not unlike the rest of his life, he would rather his work had remained a private matter:

That which was onely privately compos'd,
For your delight, Faire Omament of Worth,
Is here, come to bee publikely disclos'd:
And to an universall view put forth.
Which having beene but yours and mine before,
(Or but of few besides) is made hereby
To bee the worlds: and yours and mine no more.

The overriding tone of the dedication, ending with the line “Who mee and all I am, shall still command”, may imply some romantic feelings for Anne who, many years Danyel's junior, is cleverly alluded to throughout several of the songs by references to “Cloris”: a minor goddess of flowers and spring named with the Ancient Greek word for “green”. If any such passion did exist, it was possibly unrequited and never formally acknowledged.

Whilst the character of Danyel's surviving music is not exclusively sorrowful, the songs on this recording reflect the established appreciation of the period for melancholy and introspection, particularly on themes of grief and lost or unrequited love, allowing the composer to deftly exploit opportunities for “word-painting”: that is, to illustrate musically a word's literal meaning to enhance a poem's deeper philosophical message. Of particular interest in Danyel's work is “Mrs M.E. her funeral tears for the death of

her husband" which, consisting of three distinct parts, is either an early song cycle or a song in three movements. In any case, neither Mrs M.E. nor her husband have been identified.

In spite of Danyel's reluctance to publish, we are fortunate that these few pieces have survived, allowing us a glimpse into the uniquely sensitive mind of a skilful composer about whose life or music it is a shame we do not know more. Nonetheless, even in appraising such a limited contribution to the lute-song repertoire, the noted lutenists and early music specialists Robert Spencer and Anthony Rooley both agree that, whilst still an obscure personality, every one of Danyel's extant works is a masterpiece.

John Dowland

Unlike his shadowy contemporary John Danyel, Dowland's reputation is, by comparison, Olympian. His life is widely documented, not least in Diana Poulton's comprehensive biography (1972, rev. 1982), which pulled together myriad streams of existing and new research with expertly informed context and clarity.

A god of the early music enthusiast, Dowland is acknowledged as the premier secular lute song composer of the late 16th and early 17th centuries, with a special affinity for the melancholy, a distinction he supported and leaned on, even punning on his own name in the lute solo *Semper Dowland, semper dolens* (Always Dowland, always doleful). When viewed through the lens of the maxim "publish or perish", Dowland's enduring popularity must surely be due in part to his international career and business sense, including an enthusiasm to preserve his music authentically – that is to say, by publishing it himself in an effort to prevent unscrupulous and greedy printers from disseminating his work in pirated editions without his knowledge or permission.

The songs and lute solos on this recording are drawn from a range of sources: "Can she excuse my wrongs", "Now, oh now I needs must part", "Come again! Sweet love doth now invite" and "Come, heavy sleep" are from the *First Booke of Songs or Ayres*, published in 1597; "Flow, my tears, fall from your springs" from the *Second Booke*, published in 1600; and the extraordinarily beautiful "Time stands still" from the *Third and Last Booke*, published in 1603. Finally, *A Musciall Banquet* includes "In darkness let me dwell" and "Far from triumphing court". The texts are predominantly by anonymous authors, though some writers have occasionally (and speculatively) been identified.

Today, renaissance lute songs might inspire visions of intimate recitals for a highbrow audience by specially trained artists. In Dowland's day, however, widespread availability of his publications from the last years of the 16th century brought his music to the masses. With no definitive mode of performance, Dowland seized on the opportunity to satisfy soloists and their accompanists, as well as the growing enthusiasm for ensemble singing established in 1588 by Nicholas Yonge's collection of madrigals *Musica Transalpina*.

Dowland's *First Booke* in particular set the standard for many years to come and sold exceptionally well, warranting several reprints. Each song is firstly given "in score", with the vocal line above the lute tablature (e.g. "Now, O now I needs must part" opposite, left). In this way, a singer could either accompany himself or perform in a duo; in 1592, for example, Dowland is reported to have accompanied a singer under a tree at Sudeley Castle for Elizabeth I. Thereafter, each song is also laid out in "table format" (opposite, right), with individual parts orientated for four singers sitting around a table, thus opening up opportunities for both formal and recreational performers of varying combinations in a range of settings from the court and private homes to the tavern. This format was carried through each of Dowland's song books, but not consistently for every

song; the first seven songs of the *Second Booke*, for example, are especially interesting, with words attached to both the treble and bass parts, implying a vocal duo.

Unlike his enterprising publication of songs, Dowland never compiled a definitive volume (or volumes) of his lute music. Consequently, apart from the nine pieces included in his *Varietie of Lute-Lessons* (1610), and the four pieces included in his song-books, scholars have relied on manuscript sources. Of the four lute solos recorded here, *Preludium*, P.98 and *Mr Dowland's Midnight*, P.99 can be found in the *Margaret Board Lute Book*, an early 17th-century manuscript belonging to the lady of its title. *A Fancy*, P.5 has no definitive original source but is believed to be by Dowland, while *A Fancy*, P.73, often known as the "Tremolo Fantasie", is slightly more problematic and is attributed to Dowland on stylistic grounds. It is found in the third of Mathew Holmes's lute books (Cambridge University Library, Ms. Dd.9.33), compiled in the first decade of the 17th century.

The two fancies in particular are special. While pavans and galliards were ubiquitous amongst Elizabethan composers of lute music, the fancy was much rarer. In *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke* (1597), Thomas Morley described its form as "The most principal and chiefest kind of music which is made without a ditty [words]..., that is when a musician taketh a point [musical idea] at his pleasure and wresteth and turneth it as he list... In this may more art be shown than in any other music because the composer is tied to nothing." Though Dowland composed only seven, this was still far more than his contemporaries and perhaps his most potent opportunity to showcase his unique talent as one of the finest and most inventive lutenists of the day.





British tenor **Kieran White** is known for the luminous warmth of his voice and his ability to draw listeners into the heart of a song. Established in his early life as a chorister at Wells Cathedral, his singing carries a natural clarity and emotional honesty that have shaped his approach to music ever since.

After studies at the Royal Academy of Music, where he held a Kohn Foundation Scholarship, Kieran has built a career guided by curiosity – for words, for history and for the human stories behind music. That curiosity continues to define his artistry today, whether on international stages or in the intimate space of early song.

Critics have praised his “pure, luminous tenor” (*The Guardian*) and “extraordinary emotional clarity” (*Opera Magazine*), qualities that reflect his instinctive belief that great singing begins with sincere communication.

Kieran has performed with many of the leading orchestras and choirs of Europe and North America, including Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra, Les Talens Lyriques, Orchestre national du Capitole de Toulouse, the New York Philharmonic and the National Symphony Orchestra of Washington. He has worked with some of the world’s leading conductors, among them Ton Koopman, Christophe Rousset, Andrea Marcon and Chiara Cattani, at important venues such as Lincoln Center, L’Opéra Royal du Château de Versailles, Teatro La Fenice and Wiener Konzerthaus and at the Innsbrucker Festwochen der Alten Musik.

kieranwhitetenor.com



A passionate musician with Swiss and French origins, lutenist and guitarist **Cédric Meyer** performs in renowned musical venues in Europe and internationally.

He received his musical education at the Geneva University of Music, HEM and the University of Geneva's musicology department, then at the Haute École de Musique (HEMU) – Valais-Wallis (Sion), and finally at the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis (Basel). He was awarded two Masters of Arts and a postgraduate certificate with a specialisation in early music.

Cédric Meyer gives recitals and concerts in festivals and series across Europe, the UK and South America. He often plays with choirs or in ensembles or orchestras, enjoying collaborating with inspiring and experienced musicians, conductors and soloists of renown. He frequently plays for opera houses and is involved in the artistic teams and in the edition of scores for companies specialising in Baroque operas. *Plays To See* praised his performance in a London Monteverdi production thus: "Cédric Meyer on archlute was superb".

In addition to his performing career, Cédric Meyer is an active researcher, curating programmes and creating new projects: this includes editing Baroque operas and other works, mostly from the 17th century. An accomplished luthier, he is also dedicated to hand-crafting historical plucked instruments for himself and others and has been featured in specialised salons. He has been awarded research and publication grants by public and private institutions in Switzerland and in the UK.

Cédric Meyer currently teaches in Switzerland at the École de Musique de Pully and as a guest lecturer and tutor at HEMU.

① **Time stands still** with gazing on her face,
Stand still and gaze for minutes, hours and years, to her give place:
All other things shall change, but she remains the same,
Till heavens changed have their course and time hath lost his name.
Cupid doth hover up and down blinded with her fair eyes,
And fortune captive at her feet condemned and conquered lies.

When fortune, love, and time attend on
Her with my fortunes, love, and time I honour will alone,
If bloodless envy say, duty hath no desert.
Duty replies that envy knows herself his faithful heart,
My settled vows and spotless faith no fortune can remove,
Courage shall show my inward faith, and faith shall try my love.

③ **Can she excuse my wrongs** with virtue's cloak?

Shall I call her good when she proves unkind?
Are those clear fires which vanish into smoke?
Must I praise the leaves where no fruit I find?
No, no: where shadows do for bodies stand,
Thou may'st be abused if thy sight be dim.

Cold love is like to words written on sand,
Or to bubbles which on the water swim.

Wilt thou be thus abused still,
Seeing that she will right thee never?
If thou canst not o'ercome her will,
Thy love will be thus fruitless ever.

Was I so base, that I might not aspire
Unto those high joys which she holds from me?
As they are high, so high is my desire,
If she this deny, what can granted be?
If she will yield to that which reason is,
It is reason's will that love should be just.

Dear, make me happy still by granting this,
Or cut off delays if that die I must.
Better a thousand times to die,
Than for to live thus still tormented:
Dear, but remember it was I
Who for thy sake did die contented.

[4] Come again! Sweet love doth now invite

Thy graces that refrain
To do me due delight,
To see, to hear, to touch, to kiss, to die,
With thee again in sweetest sympathy.

Come again! That I may cease to mourn
Through thy unkind disdain;
For now left and forlorn,
I sit, I sigh, I weep, I faint, I die,
In deadly pain and endless misery.

All the night my sleeps are full of dreams,
My eyes are full of streams.
My heart takes no delight
To see the fruits and joys that some do find
And mark the storms are me assigned.

Gentle Love, draw forth thy wounding dart,
Thou canst not pierce her heart;
For I, that to approve
By sighs and tears more hot than are my shafts
Did tempt, while she for triumph laughs.

⑤ **Now, oh now I needs must part,**

Parting though I absent mourn.

Absence can no joy impart;

Joy once fled cannot return.

While I live I needs must love,

Love lies not where hope is gone.

Now at last despair doth prove

Love divided loveth none.

Sad despair doth drive me hence;

This despair unkindness sends.

If that parting be offence,

It is she which then offends.

Dear, if I do not return,

Love and I shall die together.

For my absence never mourn

Whom you might have joyed ever.

Sad despair doth drive me hence;

This despair unkindness sends.

If that parting be offence,

It is she which then offends.

⑥ **Come, heavy sleep**, the image of true death,

And close up these my weary weeping eyes,

Whose spring of tears doth stop my vital breath

And tears my heart with sorrow's sigh-swoll'n cries.

Come, and possess my tired through-worn soul,

That living dies, till thou on me be stolē.

O come, sweet sleep, come or I die for ever;

Come ere my last sleep comes, or come thou never.

⑧ **Flow, my tears,** fall from your springs,
Exiled for ever let me mourn:
Where night's black bird her sad infamy sings,
There let me live forlorn.

Down vain lights, shine you no more,
No night is dark enough for those
That in despair their last fortunes deplore,
Light doth but shame disclose.

Never may my woes be relieved,
Since pity is fled;
And tears and sighs and groans my weary days
Of all joys have deprived.

From the highest spire of contentment
My fortune is thrown;
And fear and grief and pain for my deserts
Are my hopes, since hope is gone.

Hark you shadows that in darkness dwell,
Learn to condemn light,
Happy, happy they that in hell
Feel not the world's despite.

⑩ **Far from triumphing court** and wonted glory,
He dwelt in shady unfrequented places,
Time's prisoner now he made his pastime story,
Gladly forgets Court's erst afforded graces,
That Goddess whom he served to heaven is gone,
And he on earth, in darkness left to moan.

But lo a glorious light from his dark rest
Shone from the place where erst this Goddess dwelt
A light whose beams the world with fruit hath blest
Blest was the knight while he that light beheld:
Since then a star fixed on his head hath shined,
And a saint's image in his heart is shrined.

11 **In darkness let me dwell**, the ground shall sorrow be,
The roof despair to bar all cheerful light from me,
The walls of marble black that moistened still shall weep,
My music hellish jarring sounds to banish friendly sleep.
Thus wedded to my woes, and bedded to my tomb,
O let me living die, till death do come.

13 **Time, cruel time**, canst thou subdue that brow,
That conquers all but thee, and thee too stays?
As if she were exempt from scythe or bow,
From love and years, unsubject to decays?
Or art thou grown in league with those fair eyes,
That they might aid thee to consume our days?
Or dost thou love her for her cruelties,
Being merciless, like thee that no man weighs?
Then do so still, although she makes no 'steem
Of days nor years, but lets them run in vain.
Hold still thy swift-winged hours, that wond'ring seem,
To gaze on her even to turn back again.
And do so still, although she nothing cares.
Do as I do, love her although unkind.
Hold stil yet, O, I fear at unawares,
Thou wilt beguile her though thou seem'st so kind.

[14] **Stay, cruel, stay!**

Pity mine anguish
And, if I languish
For that which you do bear away,
Ah, how can you be so unkind,
As not to grieve for that you leave behind,
And if you'll go, yet let your pity stay.
But will you go? and show that you neglect me?
Yet say farewell, and seem but to respect me.

[15] **Why canst thou not, as others do,**

Look on me with unwounding eyes?
And yet look sweet, but yet not so,
Smile, but not in killing wise.
Arm not thy graces to confound;
Only look, but do not wound.

Why should mine eyes see more in you
Than they can see in all the rest?
For I can others' beauties view
And not find my heart oppressed.
O be as others are to me,
Or let me be more to thee.

[16] **Like as the lute delights, or else dislikes,**

As is his art that plays upon the same;
So sounds my muse, according as she strikes
On my heart strings, high-tuned unto her fame.
Her touch doth cause the warble of the sound,
Which here I yield in lamentable wise:
A wailing descant on the sweetest ground,
Whose due reports give honour to her eyes.

If any pleasing relish here I use,
Judge then the world her beauty gives the same,
Else harsh my style, untuneable my Muse,
Hoarse sounds the voice that praiseth not her name.

For no ground else could make the Music such,
Nor other hand could give so sweet a touch.

[17] Let not Cloris think because

She hath envassalled me,
That her beauty can give laws
To others that are free.

I was made to be the prey
And booty of her eyes;
In my bosom she may say
Her greatest kingdom lies.

Though others may her brow adore,
Yet more must I, that therein see far more
Than any others' eyes have power to see.
She is to me more than to any others she can be.

I can discern more secret notes,
That in the margin of her cheeks Love quotes,
Than any else besides have art to read,
No looks proceed from those fair eyes but to me wonder breed.

O then why should she fly,
From him to whom her sight,
Doth add so much above her might:
Why should not she still joy to reign in me?

I.

[18] Grief, keep within

And scorn to show but tears,
Since joy can weep as well as thou.
Disdain to sigh, for so can slender cares,
Which but from idle causes grow.
Do not look forth, unless thou didst know how
To look with thine own face, and as thou art.
And only let my heart,
That knows the reason why,
Pine, fret, consume, swell, burst and die.

II.

[19] Drop not, mine eyes, nor trickle down so fast,
For so you could do oft before
In our sad farewells and sweet meetings past.
And shall his death now have no more?
Can niggard sorrow yield no other store
To show the plenty of affliction's smart?
Then only thou, poor heart,
That know'st more reason why,
Pine, fret, consume, swell, burst and die.

III.

[20] Have all our passions certain proper vents,
And sorrow none that is her own?
But she must borrow others' complements
To make her inward feelings known?
Are joy's delights and death's compassion shown
With one like face and one lamenting part?
Then only thou, poor heart,
That know'st more reason why,
Pine, fret, consume, swell, burst and die.



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TIME STANDS STILL

Dowland & Danyel

KIERAN WHITE · CÉDRIC MEYER

JOHN DOWLAND 1563–1626

**The Third and Last
Booke of Songs or Aires** (1603)

- 1 Time stands still
- 2 Preludium, P.98

The First Booke of Songs or Ayres (1597)

- 3 Can she excuse my wrongs
- 4 Come again! Sweet love doth now invite
- 5 Now, oh now I needs must part
- 6 Come, heavy sleep
- 7 Mr Dowland's Midnight, P.99

The Second Booke of Songs or Ayres (1600)

- 8 Flow, my tears
- 9 A Fancy, P.5

A Musciall Banquet (1610)

- 10 Far from triumphing court
- 11 In darkness let me dwell
- 12 A Fancy, P.73

JOHN DANYEL 1564–1626

Songs for the Lute, Viol and Voice (1606)

13 Time, cruel time	3:53
14 Stay, cruel, stay	2:39
15 Why canst thou not	1:36
16 Like as the lute	4:13
17 Let not Cloris think	2:13
Mrs M.E. her funeral tears for the death of her husband	
18 I. Grief, keep within	2:57
19 II. Drop not, mine eyes	2:55
20 III. Have all our passions	3:17

Total Duration

65:34

Kieran White *tenor*

Cédric Meyer *8-course renaissance lute*
(Cédric Meyer, 2022)

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