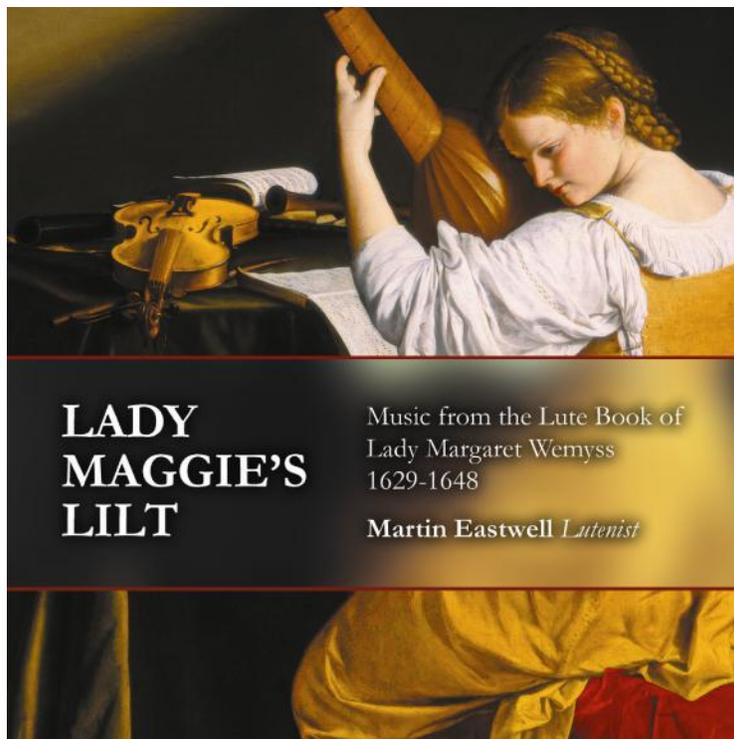


Music & Media

AUDIO CD & DOWNLOAD PRESS RELEASE



Composers(s): Various
Repertoire: Lady Maggie's Lilt –
Music from the Lute Book of Lady Margaret Wemyss 1629-1648
Artists: Martin Eastwell (Lutenist)
Catalogue No.: MMC104
Bar Code: 5065001668043
Release Date: 8th April 2013
Format: CD1/Standard Jewel Case
UK Dealer Price: £8.40
UK Distribution: Discovery

Tracklisting

The day dawes in the morning; Sinkapace; Port Robart; I left my tru love; Corant; Prelude; Almond Goutier; Courant Goutier; Current Goutier; Currant Lysabelle; Sarabande; Mervell's Sarabande; Almond Gautier; Prelude; I wish I wer there; General Lesley's goodnight; Ladie lie near me; Lady Binnis Lilt; Prelude; Almond:dafo; Current:dafo; Gautiers Current; Sarabande de Guteir; Tom of Bedlam; The Spanish Pavin; Ane Curant; Prelude; Almond Goutier; Old gambler's Nightingale; Curent dafo; Sarabande; I never knew I loved thee; Buckingham's Gast; The Corbie and the Pigot; Prelude; Holi and Faire; Sarabande; Ruthven's Lilt; Newburn; Shooting Dance; Prelude; Broom of Cardenowes; Prelude; Fair and Louky; Goodnight; The Flowers of the Forest

Music&Media/MMC Recordings is a division of **Music & Media Consulting Limited**,
3 Cypress Close, Doddington, Cambridgeshire PE15 0LE
Telephone/Fax: 01354-740847 Mobile: 07774-426966
E-Mail: john@musicandmediaconsulting.com Web: www.musicandmediaconsulting.com
Company No. 5372663 VAT Registration Number 858 2824 88
Page 1 of 4

Repertoire Information

The lute held a central position in the musical life of the Scottish court in the 15th and 16th centuries. Frequent payments to lutenists appear in the Royal accounts. Both James IV and James V were accomplished players, and a French courtier, Pierre de Brantôme, describes Mary Queen of Scots as *"blending her voice with the lute which she touched so daintily with a fair white hand"*. Despite this, no significant body of specifically Scottish lute music survives from before 1600, by which time Scotland no longer had a court or a monarch in residence. So the lute manuscripts that survive from Scotland in the first half of the 17th century are largely the work of enthusiastic amateurs, rather than court composers. These sources present an eclectic, but often very charming, mix of courtly French airs and dances and native Scots tunes. The Scots tunes are of particular importance to our understanding of traditional Scottish music, as they are among the earliest notated sources of such music, predating the earliest fiddle manuscripts by many decades.

Lady Margaret Wemyss

Lady Margaret was born in 1629 at Falkland Palace in Fife, the eighth child of David, second Earl of Wemyss, and died in 1648 aged 19. Lady Margaret's family had been prominent in the chaotic political life of Scotland for many generations.

Lady Margaret's Book

Lady Margaret's Lute Book was rediscovered in the early 1980's among the papers of the Sutherland family, deposited on loan to the National Library of Scotland. The second folio of the book carries the inscription *'A booke Containing some pleasant ayres of Two Three or fowre voices Collected out of diverse Authors Begunne june 5 1643 M^{is} Margaret Weemys'*, suggesting that Margaret was 13 years old when she began her book. The book seems to have started life as a collection of songs, containing 17 English lute songs by Campion and Morley

The book then continues with eight poems, and a further nineteen are to be found at the end of the book. A few of the poems are accompanied by references to well known Scots tunes. These seem to imply that Lady Margaret was experimenting with singing some of the poems to well known Scots tunes. While some of the poems are by well-known Scottish or English poets, a number are anonymous, raising the possibility that some of them may be by Lady Margaret herself. In particular, Poem No. 5 (*'Burst out pour soull in main of tears'*), though rather incoherent, seems to be a passionate outburst against fate by someone who is suffering from a terminal disease - the references to shortness of breath rather suggest tuberculosis, a likely disease in a damp 17th Century castle. More surprising, from the daughter of a prominent Scottish Presbyterian Covenanter, is the suggestion that Poem No. 24 should be *'sung to the tune of when the king shall enjoy his own again'*.

The Lute Music

The book contains 91 solo pieces for the lute. A number of recordings in recent years have concentrated on the native Scots tunes in the book. Without minimizing the importance (and beauty) of these, Martin has attempted to redress the balance by including a substantial selection of the high quality music of French origin, which makes up about half of the collection. While some of the lute pieces are notated in a confident, mature hand (a teacher?), the majority of the music seems to have been copied by Lady Margaret herself.

Music & Media

This raises some serious problems for the performer, as much of the notation is very confused and garbled. Some pieces, especially those by French composers, can be corrected by reference to concordant versions in other sources, but many of the Scots tunes (and some of the French pieces), have required serious editorial intervention, to the extent that another editor might well come up with tunes that sound quite different! However, the stark simplicity of the settings of some of the Scots tunes, often simply harmonised with bare octaves, generally enhances their beauty. It could be speculated that some of them are the work of Lady Margaret herself.

The early part of the book is written for a lute using the standard tuning of the late Renaissance lute, but the bulk of the music employs the "new" tunings introduced by French lutenists in the early 17th Century. Many of the French pieces and all of the Scots tunes are anonymous, and a number of Lady Margaret's attributions can be shown to be incorrect. A substantial number are attributed to "Gautier" (probably Jaques Gaultier) or "Dafo" (Dufaut) - French lutenists who are known to have worked in England. From 1617, Gautier was a dominant figure in the musical life of the English court - he taught the lute to Queen Henrietta Maria, wife of King Charles I, and in 1626, was imprisoned in the Tower on suspicion of having an affair with her. It should be mentioned that a number of Lady Margaret's attributions are incorrect, and have been corrected in this recording.

Martin has added "Preludes" of his own to seven of the groups of pieces on this recording. This was a common 17th century practice, and though the Wemyss book contains none, most other lute books of the time do. Perhaps Lady Margaret (or her teacher) expected her to improvise them, as suggested by Thomas Mace in "*Musick's Monument*" (1676). The preludes for the groups of Scots tunes are perhaps a little more controversial, as none exist in original sources. Eastwell has worked on the assumption that players in the 17th century would match their "preluding" style to the music they were about to play. With some works, he has added his own embellishments and variations. The final piece on this recording, "*The Flowers of the Forest*", is a lament for the dead of the Battle of Flodden, which claimed the life of the chief of the Wemyss clan. It is not from the Wemyss book at all, but has been transcribed from another contemporary Scottish source, the Skene Mandora Book, as an elegy for, and a tribute to, Lady Margaret Wemyss.

Performer Information

Martin Eastwell studied the lute at the Royal College of Music with Jakob Lindberg. His first solo recording, *The Royal Lute*, appeared in 1991. In recent years he has performed as a continuo player with many of the country's leading early music groups and orchestras, including The Taverner Players, English Baroque Soloists, Scottish Early Music Consort, and Red Campion. In 2001 he formed his own ensemble, Lyra, which has performed widely throughout the UK, and also performs regularly with the mezzo-soprano Deborah Catterall.

He has taught on the early music course in Durham for almost 20 years, and has also taught on a variety of other courses throughout the UK, including those at Ambleside and Dartington, and on various courses organised by the Lute Society.

Over the years he has built up a fine collection of original 18th and 19th century guitars, which regularly feature in his performances. He has a recording of 17th century English music planned for 2013.

For full details please visit www.martineastwell.com

Music Media

Instruments

- i) Twelve course lute in Sharp and Flat tunings, after Hans Frei, made by Martin Haycock, 1998.
- ii) Ten course lute in "Renaissance" tuning, after Hans Frei, made by Martin Haycock, 2002.

Recorded in St Andrew's Church, Toddington, 15-17th June 2010 by John Taylor.

Live Concerts

May 19th, 4pm	The Moot Hall, Hexham, Northumberland
June 16th, 7pm	Holywell Music Room, Oxford
July 7th, 7pm	Burgh House, Hampstead

Several other dates are not yet confirmed.

Marketing/Press Activity

The CD will receive a full service to press and initial marketing will include Gramophone, Classical Music, IRR and BBC Music. For review copies and any further information, please contact John Cronin at Music & Media/MMC Recordings, which is a division of Music and Media Consulting Limited.

If you would like to attend one of the scheduled concerts, please just let John Cronin know and you will be added to the guest list.

Martin Eastwell is happy to be interviewed if required, and is available for on-air performance.