

Tale of a previous Prince's performance

To give a better idea of the Princes' music, I have decided to recycle a blurb from our previous performance at The Idler Academy:

Michael Tyack – Voice, Cittern, Lute

William Summers – Recorder, Crumhorn, Flute, Rauschpfeife

Antony Elvin – Voice, Percussion

Princes in the Tower will sketch an Arcadian overview of Elizabethan and Jacobean life in England before 'clock time', when ancient rhythms of life and the tallest of tales permeated both court and country.

Starting with a classic 'three-man song' from the early 17th. century ['We Be Three Poor Mariners'], the Princes will then launch into an ergot-inspired fantasy over La Folia – a version of a chord sequence originating in 15th.-century Spain. 'Polly On The Shore' is a well-known English folk song dragged back into Elizabethan company by the Princes, who then raid the lute cupboard for three instrumental tunes.

'Three-man songs' were written by Elizabethan, Jacobean and even Georgian composers, and the august Henry Purcell resorted frequently to bawdy songs when not writing for church, state or music societies. 'Cakes And Ale', 'Yellow Hose' and 'Stingo' are fused by the Princes with Glam Rock beats, and swooning harmonies to form their own genre: 'Acid Tavern'!

Whether working in the fields, surveying the deer herd or scanning the horizon from a tall mast, Love was an ever-present quality which Princes in the Tower will mark with a song from Henry VIII's court [Helas Madame], one from the Elizabethan stage [O Mistress Mine] and their own homage to Medieval courtship Sweet Lady Genevieve.

Ortiz's second ricercar is an improvisatory tour over another of the standard chord progressions dating from Medieval times – analogous to Blues chords. Simpler chord sets were also used by serious composers, and after our reworking of Lady's Carey's Dump – a fit of melancholy – we will play the furious homage to Lady Wingfield.

To finish the set, we will move from lust to maypole via melancholy and sport, paying respect to Dowland and the May spirits of Old Leisure.