

YORK
EARLY MUSIC
CHRISTMAS
FESTIVAL
2025

Lowe Ensemble

Echoes of the Spanish Baroque

National Centre for Early Music
Friday 12 December 12 noon

Lowe Ensemble

Myriam Lowe *soprano*

Joseph Lowe *violin*

Gabriel Lowe *violin*

Santiago Lowe *cello*

Xavier Lowe *viola da gamba*

Daniel Murphy *theorbo, Baroque guitar*

Echoes of the Spanish Baroque

Air des Espagnols & Sé que me muero,
from *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, LWV 43

Jean-Baptiste Lully 1632-87

Sarabande à l'Espagnole, Pièces de viol, Livre II

Marin Marais 1656-1728

Yo soy la locura

Henri de Bailly d. 1637

No se emendará jamás

George Frideric Handel 1685-1759

Folía para nuestra señora

Andrea Falconieri 1585/6-1656

Ojos, pues me desdeñáis

José Marín 1618/9-99

Grabe

Santiago de Murcia 1673-1739

Florida estava la rosa

Mateo Flecha 'El viejo' ?1481-?1553

Fandango

Alessandro Scarlatti 1660-1725

Fandango

Padre Antonio Soler 1729-83

This performance is kindly supported by the Continuo Foundation



The **Lowe Ensemble** presents *Echoes of the Spanish Baroque*, a journey through Spanish music of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and its influence across Europe. Beginning in the glittering court of Louis XIV in France, moving through Italy and finally returning to the Iberian Peninsula, this programme explores how Spanish style and sensibility resonated throughout Europe. The programme brings together a wide palette of vocal and instrumental works – some newly adapted for the ensemble – that illustrate the dialogue between national styles, from courtly refinement to earthy dances and sacred reflection.

France and the Court of Louis XIV

The reign of Louis XIV, the ‘Sun King’, was marked by extraordinary artistic patronage. Music was omnipresent in his court: ballets, operas and chamber ensembles flourished, shaping the very sound of the French Baroque. Among the central figures of this period was **Jean-Baptiste Lully**, who worked closely with Molière to create *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, a *comédie-ballet* that humorously parodies fashionable foreign styles. The *Air des Espagnols* and *Sé que me muero* embody the ‘Spanish flavour’ that so intrigued French audiences, blending liveliness and wit.

Marin Marais, a virtuoso viol player and student of Lully, brought the *musique de chambre* of the French Baroque to its highest refinement. His *Sarabande à l’Espagnole*, from the second book of *Pièces de viol* (1701), shows the fascination with ‘foreign airs’ within the elegant restraint of courtly taste. The piece’s slow, ornamented lines evoke the noble poise of Louis XIV’s Versailles.

The French composer **Henri de Bailly**, who worked in southern France and Navarre, left us only three surviving soprano arias. One of these, *Yo soy la locura* (‘I am Madness’), is performed today and here in an arrangement for voice and plucked strings – a gem of early seventeenth-century expressivity that blends French finesse with the Iberian poetic spirit.

Italy and the Emergence of the Cello

The Italian cellist and composer **Giovanni Battista Paganelli** travelled to Madrid in 1752, where he remained until his death. His Sonata in A minor represents the growing prominence of the cello as a solo instrument, replacing the viola da gamba and moving beyond its traditional continuo role. Santiago Lowe, cellist of the ensemble, made his own edition from the only existing facsimile in the archive of the library of the Royal Conservatory of Madrid (RCSMM).

Spanish influence also reaches **George Frideric Handel**, whose cantata *No se emendará jamás* (‘She will never change’) was composed in Italy on a Spanish text.

The young Handel's fascination with the exoticism of the Iberian world yields music that sounds fresh and unexpected to ears more familiar with his later English works.

The Spanish Baroque and Beyond

The programme ends with a series of works by Spanish composers spanning the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, offering a vibrant contrast of sacred and secular, refined and folkloric. From **José Marín's** poignant *Ojos, pues me desdeñáis* ('Eyes that despise me') to **Santiago de Murcia's** elegant *Grabe* and **Mateo Flecha's** Renaissance villancico *Florida estava la rosa* ('The rose was in full bloom'), the spirit of Spain is evoked in all its variety. Finally, the *Fandangos* of **Alessandro Scarlatti** and **Padre Antonio Soler** celebrate the dance rhythms and earthy vitality that continued to define Spanish music well into the Classical era.

Lowe Ensemble

We are Lowe Ensemble – a Baroque music group of five siblings with British and Spanish roots, joined by Danny Murphy as guest artist. Having graduated from leading institutions such as Royal College of Music, Royal Academy of Music and Cambridge University, we bring the music of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to life for today's stage and audiences.

Sé que me muero

me muero de amor

y solicito el dolor.

Sé que me muero

me muero de amor

y solicito el dolor.

Aún muriendo de querer de tan buen

aire adolezco, que es más de lo que

padezco

lo que quiero padecer.

Y no pudiendo exceder a mi deseo el rigor.

Sé que me muero

me muero de amor

y solicito el dolor.

I know I die

I die of love

and I request the pain.

Even while dying of love I suffer of

such great appearance that is more

than I suffer what I want to suffer

And its rigour is unable to exceed my

desire.

And its harshness is unable to exceed

my desire.

I know I die

I die of love

and I request the pain.

Praise my luck

with such advised piety, that assures

me life

Lisonjéame la suerte con piedad tan
advertida, que me asegura la vida en el
riesgo de la muerte.

Vivir de su golpe fuerte es de mi salud
primor.

Sé que me muero
me muero de amor
y solicito el dolor.

Molière

Yo soy la locura

la que sola infundo
placer, placer y dulzura y contento al
mundo.

Sirven a mi nombre, todos mucho o
poco

y no, no, no hay un hombre que piense
ser loco.

Yo soy la locura

la que sola infundo
placer, placer y dulzura y contento al
mundo.

Anonymous

No se emendará jamás de

amaros mi corazón, que
culpas de la razón cada
día crecen más.

Crece cada
momento el quereros y
enojaros, que este delito de
amaros todo es bello
entendimiento.

Anonymous

Ojos, pues me desdeñáis,

No, me miréis, pues no quiero que
logréis,
el ver como me matáis.

in the risk of death.

To live off its powerful blow is my
health's artfulness.

To live off its powerful blow is my
health's artfulness.

I know I'm dying

I'm dying of love

and I request the pain.

I am madness

the one who alone infuses

pleasure, pleasure and sweetness and
content into the world.

Everyone serves my name, a lot or a
little

and no, there is no man who believes
himself to be crazy.

I am madness

the one who alone infuses

pleasure, pleasure and sweetness and
content into the world.

It will never cease

my heart, to love you still;

for faults of reason's will

each day grow and increase.

With every moment, too,

shall grow my loving you and my
displeasure;

for this sweet crime, this loving you,
is all most noble understanding

Eyes that despise me,

Do not look at me,

For I do not want you

To see how you kill me.

Çese el çeño y el rigor,
ojos, mirad que es locura
arriesgar buestra hermosura
por hazerme un disfavor,
si no os corrige el temor
de la gala que os quitaís,
No me miréis
pues no quiero que logréís,
el ver como me matáis.
Y si el mostraros severos,
es no más que por matarme
podéis la pena escusarme,
pues moriré de no veros;
pero si no é de veros
que de mí os compadezcáis.
No me miréis
pues no quiero que logréís,
el ver como me matáis.
Ojos, pues me desdeñáis.

José Marín

Florida estaba la rosa, y el jazmín
más encendido;
y en su pompa competía el mayo con
el estío.
Mas mi dicha desdichada en su verdor
se ha perdido,
pues murió la rosa hermosa,
y el jazmín se ha deslucido.

Anonymous

Let the frowns and severity end;
Eyes, look what folly it is
To risk your beauty
To displease me;
If fear does not keep you
From losing your loveliness,
Do not look at me,
For I do not want you
To see how you kill me.
And if your show of severity
Is just to kill me,
You can spare yourself the trouble,
For I shall die of not seeing you;
But if I may not see you,
Have pity on me.
Do not look at me,
For I do not want you
To see how you kill me.
Eyes that despise me.

Translation by Nicholas Mulroy

The rose was in full bloom, and the
jasmine brightly shining;
in their splendour there contended
May and the height of summer.
But my unhappy fortune has withered
in their green
for the lovely rose has perished,
and the jasmine lost its sheen

YORK EARLY MUSIC CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL is directed by
Delma Tomlin MBE and administered by the National Centre for Early
Music through the York Early Music Foundation (registered charity
number 1068331)

National Centre for Early Music
St Margaret's Church
Walmgate
York YO1 9TL

ncem.co.uk/yemcf

