

SHAKESPEARE IN MUSIC FESTIVAL
Stratford-upon-Avon
2 May to 5 May 2025



‘Come, some music! Come, the recorders...’

**Music Shakespeare might have heard,
played by the Royal College of Music Recorder Consort**

Larli Davies • Luca J. Imperiale • Joseph Page • Anna Walker

In Act III, Scene II of *Hamlet*, the Prince of Denmark hands a recorder to Guildenstern and asks him to play, remarking that the instrument, if well played, ‘will discourse most eloquent music’ and that ‘there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ’.

Although Hamlet turns out to use the recorder as a metaphor of manipulation, he is strikingly positive about its musical qualities. This may not be surprising since Shakespeare may well have heard the professional recorder consort active at the English court between 1540 and 1630.

In this concert, the RCM Recorder Consort presents a selection of vocal and instrumental music by contemporaries of Shakespeare - John Coprario (sometimes known as Giovanni Coperario), John Dowland, Alfonso Ferrabosco II, James Harding, Thomas Morley and others.

Alfonso Ferrabosco II (1575–1628)	Fantasia [IX]
Robert Parsons (ca. 1535–1572)	Ut re mi fa sol [Ia]
Thomas Morley (1559–1602)	Il Lamento & La Girandola [a2]
John Dowland (1563–1626)	Go, crystal tears
Giovanni Coperario (ca. 1570–1626)	Fantasia [I] a 4
John Black (fl 1546–87)	Report upon <i>When shall my sorrowful sighing slack?</i>
James Harding (ca. 1550–1626)	A Fancy [I]
Hugh Ashton (ca. 1485–1558)	Hugh Ashton’s maske
William Cornysh (+1523)	Fa la sol
William Byrd (ca. 1540–1623)	In Nomine [I]
Thomas Tomkins (1572–1656)	In Nomine a 3
William Byrd (ca. 1540–1623)	In Nomine [II]
Anonymous (‘Lumley Books’)	Pav[ana] Marquese - Gallyard - Seconda Disperata -
Allemana d’amor	

The Royal College of Music Recorder Consort

In the current quartet setting, the RCM Recorder Consort made their debut in November 2024 at the King's Gallery in Buckingham Palace performing music by Gabrieli and Merula. For the rest of this season, they will be focusing on English consort music, particularly from the Jacobean and Elizabethan eras - repertoire full of beauty, fantasy and artistry which is very well-suited to the recorders.

Past highlights include participation in a project with repertoire from the Anne Boleyn Music Book at the RCM in March 2019 and a live performance for the Early Music Show on BBC Radio 3 in 2020. In Spring 2024, Larli Davies, Luca Imperiale and Anna Walker were involved in the RCM's 3D Printed Musical Instruments project, performing on copies of two alto recorders by Jacob Denner and Paul Villars. Besides their activities in the field of historical performance, the consort also plays contemporary ensemble music under the guidance of RCM professor Sarah Jeffery.

The RCM Recorder Consort is coached by specialist professor María Martínez Ayerza and serves as a platform where students explore a wealth of repertoire spanning the mid-fifteenth to the mid-seventeenth centuries. The group plays on different sets of Renaissance recorders by Adriana Breukink and Monika Musch, showcasing a whole spectrum of registers and musical characters.

Current members of the RCM Recorder Consort

Larli Davies is an Australian recorder player currently in her fourth year as David Laing Scholar and ABRSM award recipient at the RCM. She enjoys exploring repertoire from a wide range of sources and time periods, including new works, and regularly performs both as a soloist and ensemble player.

Sussex-born **Luca J. Imperiale** is a current third-year undergraduate at the RCM, studying recorder as a Victor and Lilian Hochhauser Scholar. Under professor Ashley Solomon, Luca won both the Historical Performance Competition (2024) and was a runner-up in the RCM Concerto Competition (winter 2024). In March Luca will be premiering a new recorder concerto with the Horsham Symphony Orchestra, dedicated to him by Thomas Shorthouse.

Joseph Page was a Wells Cathedral School Specialist and is currently in his first year as a recorder student at RCM. Joseph played twice in Promenade Concerts in Wells Cathedral and recently played recorder for Telemann's E-minor Concerto for recorder and traverso in Tereglio, Italy.

Recorder and flute player **Anna Walker** is a third year BMus student at the RCM as an Ian Evans Lombe scholar. She studied at Wells Cathedral School and has played in masterclasses with world-renowned recorder players, such as Bolette Roed, Anna Stegmann, Han Tol and Ian Wilson. As a flautist she has performed Stamitz's flute concerto with the Causeway Chamber Orchestra.