

✧ *ensemble* **HESPERI**

Mary-Jannet Leith – Recorders
Magdalena Loth-Hill – Baroque Violin
Florence Petit – Baroque Cello
Thomas Allery – Harpsichord



"Ensemble Hesperii's dazzling and stylish performance of these attractive works captivated our audience, and their presentation of these remarkable Scottish folk settings gave a real insight into this hitherto neglected repertoire."

Christopher Lovell, Three Towers Festival

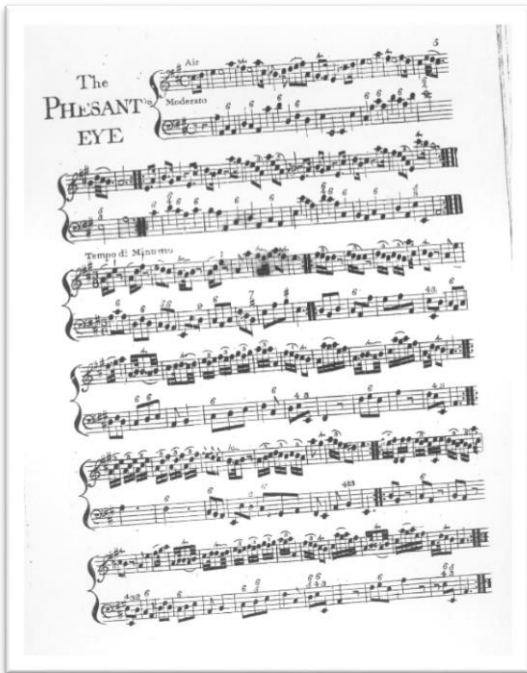
"The rapport between these players was obvious, as was their infectious enjoyment in the music."

Andrew Connal, The Latest, Brighton

Ensemble Hesperii is a dynamic and innovative Early Music ensemble, formed at the Royal College of Music in London. They are dedicated to showcasing the infectious charm and dazzling virtuosity of eighteenth century Scottish music, through imaginative programming and collaboration with other art forms. In 2019, the ensemble embarked on a unique collaborative project, [‘The Pheasant’s Eye’](#), featuring Highland dancer [Kathleen Gilbert](#), which was supported by a Lottery grant from Arts Council England. In February 2019, the ensemble was featured by Classical Music Magazine and by [Classic FM](#), and were selected as Britten Pears Young Artists for 2020 on the [‘Chamber Music in Residence’](#) programme. Ensemble Hesperii performs regularly for those who have no opportunity to hear live classical music through the prestigious outreach scheme ‘Live Music Now’. The ensemble has also developed a strong relationship with Chelsea and Westminster Hospital’s charity, CW+: they were honoured to be invited to present two Handel Concerti Grossi at the celebration service for the Tercentenary of the hospital in May 2019 at Westminster Abbey.

Programmes

The Pheasant's Eye: Dancing the Scottish Baroque



'The Pheasant's Eye' is a **unique artistic project**, featuring period performances of classical Scottish Baroque music, distinctive for its folk influences and catchy Celtic rhythms. For this programme, Ensemble Hesperis is joined by Scottish dancer Kathleen Gilbert, who has brought the dance movements in the programme to life through **new choreography**. Audiences cannot fail to be delighted by the **direct emotional appeal of this music, its energy, colour** and the fascinating lives of the composers behind it. Dance is an inherent part of all eighteenth century music, and we believe that both new and regular concert-goers will be inspired by this repertoire **steeped in the iconic heritage of Scotland**. Featuring music by leading Scottish composer James Oswald, "Baroque" Scots Tunes by William McGibbon, and virtuosic trio sonatas by the many Italians who were popular in eighteenth century Scotland, including Sammartini, Barsanti, and Corelli.

This programme can be **presented in any setting** – a church, a concert hall or a small theatre, with space for a small instrumental ensemble and dancer. This is an excellent opportunity for classical music organisations to reach audiences who might not usually attend classical music concerts but who are interested in **dance and folk music**.

"The Temple of Apollo": Jacobite Secrets of London

Ensemble Hesperis presents an **instrumental programme of Scottish Baroque music**, exploring the colourful lives of composers who migrated to London during the eighteenth century. Many Scottish composers such as **James Oswald, John Reid, and the eccentric Earl of Kellie, 'Fiddler Tam'**, moved to London **to seek their musical fortunes** in the capital. But this was a dangerous time for Scots to be in London: during the Jacobite Rebellions, they were often insulted in the streets and theatres, and Scottish musicians, led by Oswald, stuck close together, forming a mysterious society called **'The Temple of Apollo'**.

Though much of this repertoire is 'Baroque' in form, this style represents a unique 'fusion' of **Italian virtuosity, catchy dance rhythms and soaring melodies from traditional Scottish folk music**. Many Italian composers such as Barsanti and Geminiani were captivated by Scots tunes, and adapted them for London audiences, who lapped up the 'exotic' harmonies and rhythms – such as the 'Scotch Snap'. A highlight of this programme is James Oswald's 96 'Airs for the Seasons': these charming character pieces are each named after plants and flowers, transporting the listener to the soundscape of the Scottish Highlands.

To find out more about Scottish Baroque music, head to our website:

www.ensemblehesperi.com/scottishbaroque

Education and Workshops



Ensemble Hesperis enjoys bringing our music to new audiences through fun and lively educational workshops in schools and local communities. As **experienced teachers and educators**, we can design bespoke workshop sessions for different age-groups, abilities and group sizes. Our instruments provide a great way to delve into the sounds and history of the eighteenth century, and we love to demonstrate how our instruments make different sounds.

Kathleen Gilbert, our Highland dancer, is also a qualified teacher and workshop leader, and has presented **several successful Highland dance workshops** for our audiences at leading UK festivals during 2019.

Kathleen leads participants through a selection of simple Scottish dances tailored to the number in the group, prior experience of dance, and the nature of the space.

Workshops will be accompanied by Ensemble Hesperis **on historical instruments**. The number of spaces available on the workshop will depend on the size of the space for the performance, but we can generally offer sessions for **up to 25 participants**.

Booking and Contact

Please contact us to discuss further details of performances, programmes, and workshops. We are always happy to work with promoters to create new programmes which suit existing themes of festivals or concert series.

For all performances within the UK, **we can provide our own excellent harpsichord**, a copy of a 1667 anonymous French instrument, built by leading British harpsichord maker Alan Gotto (2016).



Fees: Our performance fees include harpsichord provision and tuning, but vary depending on the type of concert, location, and length of programme.

As a guide, an instrumental performance with 4 musicians **would usually cost £600** (plus travel and accommodation if necessary); **£750** for a programme with 4 musicians plus our Highland dancer.

www.ensemblehesperi.com

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