

A man with dark hair and a slight beard, wearing a black t-shirt, is seated in a dark wood chair. He is holding a stringed instrument, possibly a mandolin or a similar lute-family instrument, with a light-colored body and a dark fretboard. The instrument has a circular sound hole with a decorative pattern. The background is dark and textured.

The English Orpheus

YAVOR GENOV

plays

JOHN DOWLAND

HR
RECORDINGS
E357HR

JOHN DOWLAND, (1563-1626)

1. <i>Lord Strang's March</i> , P. 65.....	1:39
2. <i>Round Battle Galliard</i> , P. 39.....	1:14
3. <i>Mrs. White's Nothing</i> , P. 56.....	0:56
4. <i>Sir Henry Umpton's Funeral</i>	5:04
5. <i>Sir John Souchs Galliard</i> , P. 26.....	1:35
6. <i>A Fancy</i> , P. 6.....	2:55
7. <i>What if a day</i> , P. 79.....	1:33
8. <i>My Lord Willoughby's Welcome Home</i> , P. 66a.....	1:23
9. <i>Tarleton's Riserrectione</i> , P. 59.....	2:44
10. <i>A piece without title</i> , P. 78.....	2:06
11. <i>Mrs. Vaux Galliard</i> , P. 32.....	2:08
12. <i>Mrs. Vaux Jig</i> , P. 57.....	1:10
13. <i>A Fancy</i> , P. 7.....	4:43
14. <i>Go from my window</i> , P. 64.....	3:51
15. <i>Dr. Case's Pavan</i> , P.12.....	4:03
16. <i>Mrs. White's Choice</i> , P. 50.....	1:18
17. <i>Fortune</i> , P.62.....	1:58
18. <i>Mr. Dowland's Midnight</i> , P.99.....	1:05

MAURITIUS LANDGRAVIUS HESSIA, (1572-1632)

19. <i>Pavin in honorem Ioanni Doulandi</i>	4:59
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JOHN DOWLAND, (1563-1626)

20. <i>Earl of Derby's Galliard</i> , P. 44a.....	2:25
21. <i>Farewell (like In nomine)</i> , P. 4.....	4:00
22. <i>Dowland's Adieu to Master Oliver Cromwell, Resolution</i> , P. 13.....	4:30
23. <i>John Dowland's Galliard</i> , P. 21.....	0:59



Yavor Genov, (*renaissance lute*)

The English Renaissance culture had a great flourish during the last decades of the 16th and the beginning of 17th centuries, when a pleiad of musicians, poets and scholars made their contribution during the period to be called a “golden age”. The lute, already a symbol of the Renaissance culture on the continent, had already made its own development and specific path in Britain. It was the most preferable instrument to accompany the human voice while singing poetry and an invariable member of the instrumental consort, there was also an outstanding solo repertory already written for it.

John Dowland, unquestionably an Englishman whose bright individual signature was given to the cultural life of his country. His name, life and activity are among the most explored and known of Early music lovers and scholars from the vast number of evidence and testimony left by Dowland as well as his contemporaries. I will not repeat here the well known facts about his turbulent life and adventurous journeys on the continent. It is needed, however, to underline his multilayered activity not only as a brilliant lutenist, but also as a very well trained composer in the general rules of polyphony, counterpoint and mensural notation witnessed in a number of his song books, consort compositions and the translation of Andreas Ornithoparchus' musical treatise from Latin to English.

His lute music remains among his most appreciated legacy. It includes all of the instrumental genres of the time, combining abstract fantasias (or fancies), typical dance movements like pavans, galliards and almaines. Many of them are named after real people within the circles surrounding the composer himself, including his own name as a signature , thus “painting” a musical gallery of portraits from his own age.

This specific program aims to shed light on part of the lute music of Dowland, which doesn't take a central place in modern players' repertoire. It includes pieces belonging to different periods of the composer's career, some of them probably written while still a young player (they are meant for only six course), while others are published in his later publications, requiring a larger range of the instrument. Among the included Fancies is the longest of Dowland's fantasias (Fancy, P. 7), based on a contrapuntal development over a given “cantus” part, weaving among the voices. Based on a preexisting melody as a cantus firmus is the fantasia “Farewell”, P. 4, following the specific English genre “In nomine”, coming from the melody “Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini” from John Taverner's Mass “Gloria tibi Trinitas”. The chosen Pavans belong equally to the consort and to the lute repertory. “Sir Henry Umpton's Funeral” is originally a part of the consort volume “Lachrimae or Seven Teares” but his lute part, by doubling the dense polyphonic texture, makes it also an independent piece. The other Pavan in the present program exists in a version for lute and bass viol, published at the end of the Second book of songs under the title “Dowland's Adieu to Master

Oliver Cromwell”, while the more ornamented version for lute solo survived under the title “Resolution”.

The Pavan, written by Mauritius, a Landgrave of Hessen and dedicated to Dowland is said to be original a consort piece, which the lutenist himself may have arranged for his instrument adding highly ornamented repeats to each strain. This specific piece is published in the well known volume "Varietie of Lute Lessons" under the following dedication "Mauritius Landgravius Hessia fecit in honorem Johanni Dowlandi Anglorum Orphei".

Association with the mythical Thracian Orpheus during the 16th and 17th century was the highest compliment of musicianship, able to move human souls, and even Nature itself. Unquestionably that 'sobriquet' has not been given to Dowland exclusively, but also belongs to other musicians, highly regarded during their age. This fact itself inspires the title of this present recording.

Performing a famous composer with well known music is always a challenge for the musician. What will be new and interesting in another recording of such repertory? The music of my program, as mentioned above, presents this composer in a different, lesser known light. The recording is made on a copy of eight course renaissance lute after Hans Frei C. 34 now in Vienna, by Marcus Wesche strung with gut strings.. This type of gut stringing considerably affects the overall sound of the lute, its resonance and sonority. They bring my lute closer to what I imagine to be an "original" lute sound from the time of Dowland.



Recorded by **Sean Murray**,
11th and 12th, September 2025.
Soundfield microphones

Lute by **Marcus Wesche**, 2022
Gut strings by **Kuerschner**