
The Cardinal's Musick



“ The Cardinal's, in any case, could make music out of a John Prescott speech. Clear tones; perfect intonation; an ideal balance between individual colour and an ensemble blend; emotional directness: Monday night found them on triumphant form”
The Times

Cardinal's Musick is one of the jewels in the crown of the UK music scene. Concentrating on the music of the 16th and 17th centuries, they have, through their concerts and recordings, established an enviable reputation. A group of deeply committed performers, they are recognised as one of the most expressive, entertaining and professional ensembles in the world, with the ability to make the sounds of the past live in the present.

Since its foundation in 1989, The Cardinal's Musick has been a highly successful and innovative ensemble. Taking its name from the 16th century English cardinal, Thomas Wolsey, the group's reputation grew through its extensive study of music from the English Renaissance. Originally an a capella vocal group, The Cardinal's Musick now has its own period instrumental ensemble and embraces a wide range of styles and periods: from a complete reconstruction of a Tudor mass in Hampton Court to the world premieres of commissions from composers Michael Finnissy and Simon Whalley. Their repertoire has grown to include music from many different countries and they are well known for their thoughtful, themed programmes designed to stimulate and enlighten, to broaden horizons but also to look at standard repertoire with a fresh eye.

One of the strengths of the group lies in the combination of solid academic research with the ability of its singers to perform as soloists who are also part of a vocal team, “preserving their vocal personalities rather than striving for a mellifluous blend ... resulting in a vibrant texture of timbres” (*The Daily Telegraph*). Coupled with this goes a sincere love of the music and the desire to give deeply committed live performances: “the voices of Andrew Carwood and his eight cohorts could probably start a blaze in the Antarctic!” (*The Times*). The group has performed at the most prestigious

festivals in the UK, including Spitalfields, Bath, Chester, Aldeburgh, the South Bank and the Proms and throughout Europe. Their 2003 celebration of the life of Queen Elizabeth I has been singled out for particular praise.

Its prize-winning discography includes music by Nicholas Ludford, William Cornysh, Robert Fayrfax, Lassus, Palestrina and Victoria. They have won the Gramophone Award for Early Music no fewer than four times: in 1995, 2006, 2007 and 2010 for recordings of Fayrfax, Tallis and (twice) Byrd. The final volume of the group's complete Latin works of William Byrd, *Infelix ego*, was named Recording of the Year at the 2010 Gramophone awards, only the second time an early music recording has won this prestigious prize. The Cardinal's Musick has also received a French Diapason d'Or, a German Schallplatten Kritik Preis and a Schallplatten Echo Award. 

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