

# Elizabeth Kenny

Lutenist



“Kenny is an exquisite musician.”

**The Guardian**

**Elizabeth Kenny** is one of Europe's leading lute players. Her playing has been described as “incandescent” (*Music and Vision*), “radical” (*The Independent*) and “indecently beautiful” (*Toronto Post*). She has played with many of the world's best period instrument groups and experienced many different approaches to music making. She has an extensive discography of collaborations with ensembles across Europe and the USA, and her own repertoire interests have led to critically acclaimed recordings of solo music from the ML Lute Book, and songs by Lawes, Purcell and Dowland.

In 2007 Elizabeth founded her group Theatre of the Ayre, its focus on 17th Century vocal music with an improvisational character. She devised and directed *Le Malade Imaginaire* and *A Restoration Tempest* for the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment at the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse. The group's CD release, *The Masque of Moments* - their debut recording for Linn - was named 'Disc of the Week' on BBC Radio 3's Record Review.

Elizabeth continues her collaboration with countertenor Robin Blaze having given acclaimed performances together at the Jacqueline du Pré Music Building, Carnegie Hall, and at the Mayfield, Ryedale and Canterbury Festivals.

She has given premiere performances of solo and chamber pieces by James MacMillan, Benjamin Oliver, Heiner Goebbels and Rachel Stott. In June 2019 she premiered Nico Muhly's *Berceuse* for solo theorbo, which was written for her in 2018, and features on her CD *Ars longa: Old and new music for theorbo* for Linn records which was nominated in


the 2020 BBC Music Magazine Awards in the Instrumental category.

Elizabeth also appears alongside Ian Bostridge on Warner Classic's *Shakespeare Songs*, which won a 2017 Grammy Award for 'Best Classical Solo Vocal Album'.

In recent seasons, Elizabeth has performed a series of concerts with the Benedetti Baroque Orchestra, coinciding with a Decca Classics album release, and also played at Chiltern Arts, the Winchester Chamber Music and Salisbury International Arts Festivals, Tetbury Music Festival, Spitalfields Music Festival, London International Festival of Early Music, the Trigonale Festival der Alten Musik in Austria, Britten Pears Arts, the Ludlow English Song Weekend, the Newbury Spring Festival, and a recital programme 'Cubaroque' with Nicholas Mulroy and Toby Carr at the Lammermuir Festival.

She continues her collaboration with Isabelle Faust, Kristian Bezuidenhout and Kristin von der Goltz in a programme of Bach, Biber and Westhoff across Europe.

This season she performs with the BBC Proms in Scotland, Oxford International Song Festival, Bath BachFest, Shakespeare in Music Festival, and Petworth Festival, to name a few.

Elizabeth taught for two years at the Hochschule der Künste, Berlin, and was Professor of Musical Performance and Head of Early Music at Southampton University, before becoming Director of Performance at Oxford University. She is currently Professor of Lute and Theorbo at the Royal Academy of Music. 

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