



Book of Flames and Shadows

words and music for 6 voices, violinist and conductor
on early 16thC Italian sources

Continuing programme, 2023-

Introduction

Book of Flames and Shadows is a continuous sequence of music lasting about an hour, incorporating two pieces by James Weeks (*1978) and madrigals by Jacques Arcadelt (1507-68). Its theme is the discovering, or awakening, of the sensual and erotic power of the spoken word, and its transformation into song, through the love poetry of Petrarch (1304-74) and his later imitators, including Pietro Bembo (1470-1547). A music of beginnings, of brief glances and tentative flowerings, planted in Italian Renaissance soil: looking back to the reticent, emerging expressivity of the earliest madrigals, to the attuning of lyric poetry to vocal sound in Petrarch, and to the way these new-old powers enable the artist to trace with more electric precision the contours of desire.

Programme

James Weeks	<i>Fantasie di strani e dolci misteri della parola</i> (for voice and violin, 2018/20)
Jacques Arcadelt	Madrigals from Il Primo Libro de' Madrigali (1539)
James Weeks	<i>Libro di fiammelle e ombre</i> (2017)

Duration

60 mins

Book of Flames and Shadows was released on Winter & Winter in May 2022.