



DEATH OF GESUALDO

2026 | From the creators of Secret Byrd



Corisca and the Satyr by Artemisia Gentileschi

Commissioners

The Church of St Martin-in-the-Fields, London
For the opening of the 300th anniversary of St Martin's Church

The National Centre for Early Music, York

The Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine

Music Before 1800, NYC



Featuring The Gesualdo Six with Tableaux Vivants

Created and Directed by Bill Barclay

Choreographed by Will Tuckett

The Gesualdo Six with six dancers

Produced by **Concert Theatre Works**



Judith Beheading Holofernes by Artemisia Gentileschi

The madrigalist Carlo Gesualdo may be most famous for murdering his wife and her lover in an explosive fit of jealousy, but among composers he is revered for anticipating chromaticism by 200 years.

Gesualdo's tortured mind led him into a life of suffering, concluding in astonishing tales of witchcraft and malfeasance.

However macabre his biography surely is, the Prince of Venosa's malignant narcissism can be traced to key incidents from his dark upbringing in the zero sum game of Catholic politics.



Supper at Emmaus, 1601. National Gallery, London

Following 25 cities of largely sold-out performances, The Gesualdo Six reunite with director Bill Barclay to create a follow-up to the hit international immersive tour, *Secret Byrd*.

Instead of a viol consort, six dancers enact stunning tableaux vivant, filled with iconography taken directly from Renaissance painting, to superimpose Gesualdo's psyche onto his most chilling music.



Praise for **Secret Byrd**

*"Profound, spiritual,
and beautiful"*

THE FINANCIAL TIMES

"Absolute perfection"

THE OBSERVER

"Quietly transfixing"

THE NEW YORKER

*"Ominous, buoyant,
and uplifting."*

THE GUARDIAN



Death Comes to the Banquet Table (Memento Mori)

Music is selected and edited by Bill Barclay, drawing from *Tenebrae*, the mass Gesualdo wrote for his own death, and his most fascinating madrigals from books 4, 5, and 6.

A new score is created with Gesualdo's finest works, through-sung in a 75-minute rhapsody of one of the most fascinating and infamous characters in music history.



Will Tuckett | Choreographer

As well as choreographing for and performing as a member of the Royal Ballet for over 25 years, Will is a multi award winning, internationally renowned director and choreographer, working in Europe, the USA, Canada, Japan and China.

He has directed and choreographed in theatre, opera, musical-theatre and film, including work for The Royal Ballet, Birmingham Royal Ballet, English National Ballet, The National Ballet of Canada, National Ballet of Japan, National Ballet of China, Texas Ballet Theatre, Sarasota Ballet, The Royal Opera, Opera North, Welsh National Opera, Garsington Opera, Grange Park Opera, Bregenz Festspiele, Sadlers Wells Theatre, Barbican, The Royal Shakespeare Company, Shakespeare's Globe, Almeida Theatre, PARCO Tokyo, New National Theatre Tokyo, Sage Gateshead, Whitechapel Gallery, Tate Modern, The National Gallery, the BBC, Channel 4, Sky Arts and 87North.

He also acts as an arts consultant and was the first ROH2 Creative Associate for The Royal Opera House and was the 2008 Clore Dance Fellow. His Olivier Award winning ROH production of *The Wind in the Willows* was the first to ever transfer into the West End and he has been nominated for three Critics Circle awards, two Evening Standard and Southbank awards.



THE GESUALDO SIX

"Ingeniously programmed and impeccably delivered, with that undefinable excitement that comes from a group of musicians working absolutely as one."

GRAMOPHONE

The Gesualdo Six is an award-winning British vocal ensemble comprising some of the UK's finest consort singers, directed by Owain Park. Praised for their imaginative programming and impeccable blend, the group formed in 2014 for a performance of Gesualdo's Tenebrae Responsories in Cambridge and has gone on to perform at numerous major festivals around the world.

Notable highlights include a concert in the distinguished Deutschlandradio Debut Series, performances at renowned

venues including Wigmore Hall (London), Miller Theatre (New York), the Sydney Opera House, and their debut at the BBC Proms in 2023. Last season, The Gesualdo Six made their South American debut in Colombia, and appeared in Japan, China and Singapore for the first time. The ensemble have collaborated with Fretwork and the Brodsky Quartet, and tour a work of concert-theatre titled Secret Byrd with Director, Bill Barclay.

The Gesualdo Six is committed to music education, regularly hosting workshops for young musicians and composers. The ensemble have curated two Composition Competitions, with the most recent edition drawing entries from over three hundred composers worldwide. The group recently commissioned new works from Shruthi Rajasekar and Joanna Marsh, alongside coronasolfège for 6 by Héroïse Werner.



Owain Park | Music Director

"Exciting, inventive, vibrant"

MUSICWEB INTERNATIONAL

Owain Park was born in Bristol in 1993. As well as directing The Gesualdo Six, he is Principal Guest Conductor of the BBC Singers and works with ensembles including Southbank Sinfonia, Chamber Choir Ireland, Ensemble la Sportelle and Capella Cracoviensis. In 2024, he conducted the BBC Singers in a selection of Bruckner motets at the BBC Proms, which served as a prelude to the Berlin Philharmonic's performance of Bruckner's Symphony No. 5. He also conducted the BBC Symphony Orchestra in works by Anne Dudley and Iain Farrington as part of the BBC Singers at 100 celebrations at the Barbican.



Bill Barclay | Creator and Director

Former Director of Music at Shakespeare's Globe, Bill Barclay is Artistic Director of both Concert Theatre Works and Music Before 1800, NYC's oldest early music presenter. Broadway and West End: *Farinelli & The King*, *Twelfth Night*, and *Richard III*, all starring Mark Rylance.

His original music has been performed live in 197 countries and 42 US states, before President Obama, for the Olympic Torch, at the United Nations, and three times for the British Royal Family.

A 'personable polymath' (LONDON TIMES), Barclay regularly works as a director, writer, composer, actor, producer, and conductor.

Barclay is the creator and director of several of the most important concert events in the last ten years, including: *The Chevalier* (London Philharmonic Orchestra, Cleveland Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Center, Music of the Baroque, Harlem Chamber Players, Buffalo Philharmonic, Chautauqua, Caramoor, and others); *Secret Byrd* (St Martin-in-the-Fields and international 20 city tour); *Peer Gynt* (Boston Symphony Orchestra,

Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra); and *Antony & Cleopatra* (LA Philharmonic, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Virginia Symphony Orchestra). He has been commissioned five times by The Boston Symphony Orchestra.

He has created works of concert-theatre in some of the world's most iconic places: The Hollywood Bowl, Kennedy Center, Southbank Centre, Barbican, Washington National Cathedral, Shakespeare's Globe, Hampton Court and Buckingham Palace. He has stage directed the Silkroad Ensemble on tour, conducted City of London Sinfonia on tour, and composed the historic Hamlet Globe-to-Globe which toured to every country on earth.

Recent collaborations include: *Mozart's Last Year* with the National Symphony Orchestra; *Apollo Resurrected* with United Strings of Europe and Gandini Juggling; *Beyond Beethoven 9* produced by Carnegie Hall with Marin Alsop and The National Youth Orchestra of GB; *Four Seasons Reimagined* with Max Richter and the puppeteers Gyre and Gimple; and *Letters to a Young Poet* with The Brodsky Quartet at Snape Maltings.



Arnold Böcklin, Self-portrait with Death playing the fiddle (1872).
Oil on canvas, 75 × 61 cm (30 × 24 in). Alte Nationalgalerie, Berlin

The stage is a simple, raised three meter square platform, with two candelabra, a table and two chairs.

The singers hold pocket lights that illuminate each tableaux as it freezes into place.

The music illuminates the story – precisely how Gesualdo's life should have always been regaled.



BOOKING FOR 2026
email Kate@avantiarts.com

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