

## 13. Holborne

### Pavane 'The image of melancholy' and Galliard 'Ecce quam bonum'

**(For Unit 6: Further Musical Understanding)**

### Introduction

- These two short pieces belong to the genre known as 'consort music', a popular form of domestic music-making in Elizabethan England.
- The word 'consort' itself may have been a representation of the Italian term 'concerto' and the French 'concert', both of which at one time implied an ensemble of voices or instruments rather than any particular form of piece.
- Many works were composed in the years from about 1575 to the late seventeenth century both for consorts of viols, as in these pieces, or for mixed ensembles, known as 'broken consorts'.
- The usual complement of a broken consort was lute, bandora, treble and bass viols, cittern and flute (the cittern was a wire-stringed instrument, in appearance similar to a lute but with flat back like that of a guitar; the bandora was of the same type but was a bass instrument).
- Thomas Morley (1557-c1603) scored his Consort Lessons (1599) for this combination, as did Philip Rosseter (c1575-1623) in his Lessons for Consort (1609).
- Consorts of viols began to appear in England from the time of Henry VIII, who in 1540 appointed to his court a complete consort of players from Italy.
- The earliest source of English consort music appears to be a Songbook of Henry VIII and many viols were found in his collection at the time of his death in 1547.

#### ***Music for Consorts of Viols***

There were three main forms:

- the In Nomine, originally based on the In Nomine section of the Benedictus from the Mass Gloria tibi Trinitas by John Taverner (c1495-1545)
- the Fancy or Fantasia, a through-composed, usually imitative type of work

- The Pavan and Galliard dance forms (single or paired).

In many pieces the character of the writing was very similar to contemporary writing for voices, therefore usually polyphonic in texture. Some vocal pieces appeared also as pieces for viol consorts.

Pavans and Galliards were court dances of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, and were probably of Italian origin. The word Pavan may be derived from *Paduana* meaning 'of Padua', suggesting a connection with that city (as is clear from Holborne's score, in which the word 'Paduana' appears as part of the title). The pavan was sedate in character and often used as an introductory, processional, dance. It is almost invariably in duple metre.

The earliest surviving English examples date from the time of Henry VIII. Early Elizabethan examples tend to be in simple homophonic style. Towards the end of the sixteenth century, when the Pavan as a dance was dying out, the form was given a new lease of life as a more contrapuntal piece. William Byrd included ten impressive examples for keyboard in his collection of 1591, *My Ladie Nevell's Booke*, and the form was widely used in England in examples for lute or keyboard or ensemble, until about 1625.

Thomas Morley described the form of a pavan as 'made of three strains, whereof every strain is played or sung twice; a strain they make to contain 8, 12 or 16 semibreves as they list, yet fewer than eight I have not seen....'

The pavan often appeared as the first dance in a group, with one or more of those that followed being in a faster triple time. Soon it became particularly associated with the galliard. Again, Morley, writing in 1597, commented: 'After every pavan we usually set a galliard.... This is a lighter and more stirring kind of dancing than the pavan, consisting of the same number of strains...'

When paired in this way, the Pavan usually had a more melancholy character and the galliard a more cheerful one, as in these two movements by Holborne (the title of the Galliard is taken from the first three words of Psalm 133, 'Behold, how good and joyful a thing it is, brethren, to dwell together in unity').

Like the pavans of the period from about 1590 to 1625, the galliards transcend mere functional dance music. Many of those for keyboard or lute brilliantly exploit playing techniques on those instruments, while those for consort often have a rich five- or six-part polyphonic texture.

### ***Anthony Holborne Biography***

- Not much is known about the life of Anthony Holborne.
- He appears to have been born about the year 1545 and to have died, probably in London, in 1602.
- He published two collections of his music, the one in which these two pieces appear in 1599, containing 65 works, and an earlier one with the title *The Cittharn School* in 1597 with 58 works.
- A number of other works or arrangements were either included in another collection (brought together by Philip Rosseter) or were entirely separate.

### **Performing Forces and Their Handling**

As the quotation from the original title page of Holborne's collection implies, these two movements were intended for an unbroken (or 'whole') consort of five instruments, viols, violins or wind instruments, for example recorders. Well-to-do households in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries would very often have had complete sets of at least one of these groups, led in England by the example of the royal court. Though it has already been noted that Henry VIII engaged a group of professional viol players, he was himself an able musician and most of this kind of music-making would have been amateur, with members of families taking the various instrumental parts.

Mention of violins may seem surprising but this family of instruments, which includes the viola, cello and double bass, dates from the early sixteenth century. References to their use are comparatively rare, at least in sixteenth-century England, but clearly they existed in some houses otherwise Holborne would not have mentioned them. The violin family gradually displaced viols during the seventeenth century, partly under the impetus of the new styles of writing being developed particularly in Italy,

e.g. the concerto and the sonata, and partly because of the development of the instruments themselves by the skilled makers of Cremona and elsewhere (e.g. Stradivarius and Amati).

Of wind instruments, the recorder consort would perhaps produce the most familiar sound to modern audiences but there were many other possible combinations, including oboes, cornetts and sackbuts. Some of these instruments, too, have figured prominently in the early music revival of recent years and can be heard on various 'authentic' recordings of sixteenth-century works.

Of all possible combinations, however, these movements lend themselves best to performance by a consort of viols, which in the hands of experienced players could convey the polyphonic texture of the music clearly. The viol had a very long history, appearing in Europe towards the end of the fifteenth century. There were basically seven different sizes available,

- pardessus (high treble)
- treble
- alto
- small tenor
- tenor
- bass
- violone (contrabass)

Only the treble, tenor and bass viols were regular members of consorts. In England, a 'chest' of viols (often kept in a special chest) normally included two trebles, two tenors (or one alto, one tenor) and two basses.

The chief differences that distinguish the viol from the violin are as follows:

- It is a bowed string instrument with frets
- It is usually played held downwards on the lap or, in the case of the viola da gamba, between the legs
- Its back is usually flat, not convex
- Its shoulders usually slope to the neck instead of meeting this at right angles
- It usually has six strings, tuned as follows:

Treble: d - g - c' - e' - a' - d''

Tenor: G - c - f - a - d' - g'

Bass: D - G - c - e - a - d'

- The bow stick curves outwards from the hair and the bow is held differently.

Holborne's work is scored for five instruments and, if played by viols, would need two trebles, one tenor and two basses.

## Texture

The texture of this music is five-part polyphonic, with imitation between the parts but no complete series of imitative entries as in a fugue or fugato. There is surprisingly little crossing of parts – the five instruments mainly keep to their own tier within the texture. However, notable exceptions to this occur in bars 35-36 and 41-42 of the Pavan, where the tenor viol part goes above both the treble viols. Less significant instances can be found at several other points.

Imitation can be seen in the following places:

***Pavan***

In the first strain (or section):

- Bar 1, beat 2: first bass viol imitates first treble viol
- Bar 4, beat 2: second treble viol imitates first treble viol (bar 3, beat2)
- Bar 5, beat 2: first bass viol imitates first treble viol (bar 3, beat 2)

Second strain:

- Bar 18, beat 1: second treble viol imitates first treble viol (17)

Note also the entry in the tenor viol, bar 17. This five-note figure in inversion is used frequently in the passage from bar 24, beat 2 (first treble viol), 25.1 (second treble viol), 25.2 (tenor viol), 26.1 (second bass viol). Notice also the entry in ascending form at 25.2 (first bass viol).

Third strain:

The same five-note figure is extensively used here. Students should study the score to see how and where this is used, and should also notice the return of the suspension figure from the first section from bar 47.2.

***Galliard***

First strain:

The five-note figure in bar 1 (first treble viol), followed by the ascending leap of a fourth, is the main 'point' here. Entries occur in the other parts at bar 1, beat 2 (tenor viol), bar 1, beat 3 (second bass viol) and bar 2, beat 1 (second treble viol). This figure also occurs in inversion in bar 1, second half of first beat (first bass viol).

Second strain:

Though the writing here appears to be more chordal, and there is undoubtedly less imitation, the individual parts have considerable melodic interest.

Third strain:

The main point here begins with an ascending leap of a fourth and then has a descending scale.

In bar 17, the tenor viol imitates the first treble viol at a distance of one beat, while the first bass viol begins with the descending scale, and then has the leap of a fourth and descending scale in bar 18. There are several other places where the full version of the point or some part of it is woven into the texture.

## Structure and Tonality

Each movement has three repeated sections (or 'strains'), as has already been mentioned. For a full understanding of their structure, reference should be made to the imitation procedures as outlined above.

### Pavan

First strain:

**16 bars.** D major, with brief modulations to

- A major (bar 10)
- G major (bar 11.beat 2 – bar 13, beat 1)
- A major again (bar 13, beat 2 – bar 14, beat 1)
- Then back to D (bar 14, beat 2).

Second strain:

**17 bars**, touching on:

- G major (bars 17 – 20, beat 1)

- D major (bars 20, beat 2 – 23, beat1)
- A minor (bars 23, beat 2 – 24, beat 2)
- A major (bar 25)
- E minor (bars 27 – 28)
- D major (bars 28 – 31)
- A major (bars 31- 33).

Third strain:

**26 bars.**

- D major (bars 34 – 46)
- G major (bars 46 – 47)
- A major (bars 47 – 51)
- D major (bars 51 – 53)
- A major (bar 53)
- D major (bars 54 – 59).

Each strain concludes with a perfect cadence.

***Galliard***

First strain:

**8 bars** – 4 + 4, the first phrase finishing with imperfect cadence, the second with perfect cadence. The second phrase begins with the same melodic material as the first.

The tonality here is more modal than in the Pavan – Dorian, with seventh sharpened whenever serving as the third in a dominant chord. (The Dorian mode scale, if starting on D as here, consists of the notes D, E, F, G, A, B, C (natural), D.) Notice that the final chord here has tierce de Picardie.

Second strain:

**8 bars** – 4 + 4, the first phrase finishing with perfect cadence in the dominant, and then the second with Phrygian cadence in D minor.

The music assumes a more diatonic character. The prevailing tonal centre of the movement is D. Bar 9 begins in the dominant minor, A minor, briefly moves into D minor at bar 10, beats 2 and 3, returns to A minor at bar 11, with a tierce de Picardie at bar 12. The second phrase begins at bar 13 with a chord of A minor but continues with more ambiguous tonality. It could be heard as C major (the relative major of A minor) but inevitably in its context it briefly has something of a modal character (Dorian or Aeolian). The introduction of the B flat at bar 14, beat 3 suggests F major tonality but at Bar 15, Holborne turns this into the Phrygian cadence in D minor.

Third strain:

**8 bars** – 4 + 4, the first ending with imperfect cadence in F major, the second with perfect in D minor. The second phrase (21 – 24) has a melodic line (first treble viol) that comes from the last three bars of the first strain, with some rhythmic augmentation.

This section begins unambiguously in F major (the relative major of D minor). It briefly moves to C major (bars 21-22), before returning to D minor at Bar 23 for the final cadence with tierce de Picardie.

## Harmony

The harmonic character of this music is largely created by the polyphonic movement of the parts, though at times there is a strong sense of a logical harmonic structure, particularly at the cadences. To that extent, there are elements here of functional harmony.

However, it would be quite misleading to try to understand the harmonic character of this music purely in terms of a late eighteenth-century diatonic framework. The approach here is much more linear; and as we have seen in the Galliard, there are some modal elements, not surprisingly for the period in which these pieces were

composed.

Typical devices include the following:

- Accented and unaccented passing notes, e.g. accented in the Pavan, bar 1, with the C sharp in the first treble viol; unaccented in the Galliard, bar 1, with the D in the first treble viol
- Suspensions, e.g. in the Pavan, bar 3, the tied note in the first treble viol part becomes a dissonance at bar 4, and is resolved downwards by step to the C sharp (creating a 7-6 suspension)
- In bar 5, in the second treble viol part, the G has been prepared at bar 4, beat 2, creating a 4-3 suspension
- N.B. Not all tied notes produce suspended dissonances, as the above examples do. So the A in the second treble viol at Bar 3, beat 1 could not be described as a suspension
- Some tied notes produce unexpected harmonic effects without producing dissonances. An example of this is the F sharp in the tenor viol part at bar 3, beat 1, where the expected chord of A, with an E, is delayed until the second crotchet beat
- A false relation occurs in the Pavan at bar 11 (tenor viol C sharp beat 1, first treble viol C natural beat 2).

## Melody

- The polyphonic texture of the music implies that the melodic interest will be shared between the parts; the extensive use of imitation further makes it clear that this is so. However, there is a tendency for the first treble viol part to take the melodic lead, particularly in the Galliard, where the phrase construction of that part gives an overall 4-bar phrase structure to the whole texture.

- The melodic writing is largely conjunct in all the parts, but particularly so in the first treble viol part, where there is only one non-conjunct interval in the first strain of the Pavan and only two in the second.
- Where melodic leaps occur, the intervals are never wider than a perfect fifth, except for the occasional use of an octave; in this respect, the writing is very vocal in character. The two successive leaps of a fifth in the first bass part (Pavan bar 31) are very unusual – melodic lines normally move back by conjunct interval after leaps of a fourth or fifth.
- The second bass viol part has something of the character of a baroque bass line, with more use of pedal points and leaps of fourths and fifths than in the other parts. This is less true in the Galliard where the second bass viol takes a fuller share in the imitative writing.
- The melodic range of each part is narrow. In the Pavan, the first treble viol part has an overall compass of a ninth (d' to e''). In the Galliard, this is even narrower – a seventh (a' to g''). The other parts are also confined to similar overall ranges. This aspect of the writing is another feature that gives the music a strong likeness to vocal music of the period.
- There is some use of inversion of melodic figures. This can be seen in the Pavan at various points, for example, in the first strain after the descending lines of the opening the second bass viol part has a rising scale from bar 6, which is then picked up by the first bass viol in bar 8 and the tenor viol in bar 10. Other examples are in 17-19 (first treble and tenor), 24-26 (treble, tenor and first bass), and in 36-37 (first and second treble). In the Galliard, there are examples in bars 1 and 5 (first treble and first bass).
- There are no obvious melodic links between the two movements but inevitably, given the restricted nature of the melodic writing, there are some echoes in the Galliard of figures used in the Pavan. For example, the descending scale (from dominant to tonic) heard in the first treble viol part in bars 17-20 of the Pavan, which becomes a downward leap of a fifth in bar 35

and then a rising scale, foreshadows the opening figure of the Galliard.

Equally, the melodic shape of the first treble viol part from bar 29-32 of the Pavan is also the shape of the cadence figure (though not exactly the same) at bars 7-8 and 22-24 of the Galliard. However, we should be wary about reading too much into this, as the latter example in particular, in its various possible rhythmic patterns, was very much a melodic cliché of the time.

## Rhythm and Metre

- As expected in these dance forms, the Pavan is in duple time and the Galliard in triple.
- The rhythmic character of the two movements differs considerably, reflecting the very different moods of each one.
- In the Pavan, the top four parts move smoothly, with combinations mainly of crotchets, minims and dotted minims. There is occasional use of a pair of quavers or a semibreve.
- Only in the tenor and first bass parts are there any examples of dotted crotchet-quaver movement (bars 3, 31 and 47).
- Within each part, rhythmic patterns are rarely repeated from one bar to the next.
- The second bass part, as noted in the section on 'Melody', has a different character and mainly moves with minims and longer notes.
- As with other aspects of the melodic writing, the rhythmic character of this movement strongly resembles contemporary writing for voices.
- The Galliard has extensive use of dotted crotchet-quaver rhythms in the first strain.

- In bar 13 of the Galliard, all five parts have the same rhythm (homorhythm). There are several other bars within this second strain where this is nearly so.
- The Galliard has, in bars 1-2 and 5-6, examples of very close rhythmic imitation which give the feel of syncopation (first treble and first bass parts).
- The second bass part is much more part of the polyphonic structure of the music here than it is in the Pavan. Note, for example, the imitation in this part of the first viol's point in bar 1.
- The Galliard, though basically in 3/2 time, has 6/4 time at bar 3 (i.e., two dotted minim beats instead of three minim beats).
- Bars 6-7 are typified by use of a hemiola pattern (three bars of duple time rather than two of triple time). Hemiolas also occur at the end of each of the other two strains, ie, bars 14-15 and 22-23.

## Bibliography

The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, second edition, edited Stanley Sadie (London 2001). Articles on *Consort*, *Galliard*, *Holborne*, *Pavan* and *Viol*.