

## Henry Purcell (1659-1695): the glory of the Restoration

**Start date** 18 August 2023                      **End date** 20 August 2023

**Venue** Madingley Hall  
Madingley  
Cambridge  
CB23 8AQ

**Tutor** Dr David Ponsford                      **Course code** 2223NRX043

**For further information contact** [inteng@ice.cam.ac.uk](mailto:inteng@ice.cam.ac.uk)

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### Tutor biography

Dr David Ponsford MA, PhD, FRCO, ARCM is both a scholar and a professional organist and harpsichordist, and is an authority on music of the 17th and 18th centuries. An exhibitioner at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, he studied organ with Peter Hurford, Lionel Rogg and Piet Kee, and harpsichord with Kenneth Gilbert and Gustav Leonhardt. He was awarded a PhD at Cardiff University, and for 17 years he was Associate Lecturer in Performance Practice as well as Conductor of Cardiff University Chamber Orchestra. In September 2021, he was appointed a professor at the Royal Academy of Music, London, where he teaches both organ and harpsichord continuo. His edition of Biber's Mystery Sonatas was published by Ut Orpheus, Bologna, in 2007, and his book 'French Organ music in the Reign of Louis XIV' was published by Cambridge University Press in 2011 (paperback edition, 2016). In 2020 his edition of Nicolas de Grigny's *Premier livre d'orgue* was published by Ut Orpheus, Bologna, and he has recently been commissioned to write three pedagogical volumes for Wayne Leupold Editions, North Carolina. In association with Nimbus Records, he has made seven recordings of French Baroque organ repertoire on historical French organs. In teaching and performing, he aims to combine executant skill with intellectual understanding, to bring the music alive with authority and meaning.

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## Course programme

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### Friday

Please plan to arrive between 16:30 and 18:30. You can meet other course members in the Terrace Bar which opens at 18:15. Tea and coffee making facilities are available in the study bedrooms.

19:00 Dinner

**20:30 – 22:00 Introduction: the Restoration of King Charles II; the implications for musician in both sacred and secular contexts after 20 years of civil war; the first generation of composers: John Blow, Pelham Humfrey, Matthew Locke**

22:00 Terrace Bar open for informal discussion

### Saturday

07:30 Breakfast (for residents only)

**09:00 – 10:30 Henry Purcell: his apprenticeship and association with Westminster Abbey and the Chapel Royal. Purcell's anthems and services.**

10:30 Coffee

**11:00 – 12:30 Odes and Welcome Songs; 'Come, ye sons of art' and 'Hail, bright Cecilia'.**

13:00 Lunch

14:00 – 16:00 Free time

16:00 Tea

**16:30 – 18:00 Harpsichord, organ, and chamber music for strings; the Sonatas in 3 and 4 Parts**

18:00 – 18:30 Free time

18:30 Dinner

**20:00 – 21:30 Concert of keyboard music by Purcell, Croft and Handel**

21:30 Terrace Bar open for informal discussion

### Sunday

07:30 Breakfast (for residents only)

**09:00 – 10:30 Purcell's operas and semi-operas (1): 'Dido and Aeneas'**

10:30 Coffee

**11:00 – 12:30 Purcell's operas and semi-operas (2): 'The Fairy Queen'**

12:45 Lunch

**The course will disperse after lunch**

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## Course syllabus

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### Aims:

The course will allow you to:

1. Gain an insight into the extraordinary and multifarious musical genres that were cultivated by Henry Purcell during the reign of Charles II.
2. Understand something of English Restoration style, its performance practices and the influence of both French and Italian music during the period.
3. Appreciate the qualities and characteristics of composers such as Purcell, his earlier contemporaries Blow, Humfrey and Locke, and his later contemporaries Croft and Handel.

### Content:

The restoration of King Charles II in 1660 was one of the most significant events in English history, marking the end of 20 years of civil war, a period which had huge consequences for English music and musicians. Charles II had spent some years in exile at the court of Louis XIV, and on his return to London urged his composers to abandon the 'grave and solemn' music of previous English compositional styles in favour of more up-to-date French and Italian styles. First generation Restoration composers, Matthew Locke, Pelham Humfrey and John Blow (Purcell's teacher) will be discussed in this light. Henry Purcell (b. 1659), the second generation, was the most important English composer in the second half of the 17th century, and in his music we can trace a plethora of styles: polyphony derived from Byrd and Gibbons, together with modern French and Italian styles. Among the genres to be analysed and discussed will be Purcell's anthems and services written for Westminster Abbey and the Chapel Royal, Odes and Welcome Songs, keyboard and chamber music, and two of his contributions to opera. The course will include a recital of harpsichord music, containing works by Purcell, Croft and music of the next generation, Handel.

### Presentation of the course:

1. Lectures introducing the various topics and particular works
2. Listening to CD recordings
3. Analysis of scores
4. Class discussion
5. A live concert of Purcell's and Handel's keyboard music.

**As a result of the course, within the constraints of the time available, students should be able to:**

1. Know about the political, religious and musical contexts of the Restoration.
2. Know about English sacred music, chamber music, organ, harpsichord, and opera from the Restoration period.
3. Understand English Restoration performance practices and its links with Italian and French practices.
4. Appreciate the scope, breadth, depth, as well as the refined styles of English Restoration music.
5. Understand something of the genius of Henry Purcell and his contribution to English music.

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## Reading and resources list

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Herissone, Rebecca (ed.), *The Ashgate Research Companion to Henry Purcell*, Farnham: Ashgate, 2012

J. A., Purcell, *Westrup*, London: Dent, 1975

Zimmerman, Franklin B., Henry Purcell, 1659–1695, *His Life and Times*, Philadelphia PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983