UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
SCHOOL OF MUSIC

presents its 127th program of the 1991-92 season:

ORPHEUS B Brittanicus

A celebration of music from 17th- and 20th-century England

with the

MADRIGAL SINGERS
Joan Catoni Conlon, conductor
Fredrick Lokken assistant conductor

and

COLLEGIUM MUSICUM
Margriet Tindemans, director

8:00 PM
MAY 26, 1992
MEANY THEATER
This concert focuses on the music of Henry Purcell (1659-1695) and Benjamin Britten (1913-1976), England's most celebrated 17th and 20th century composers. Both composers excelled in expressive setting of the English language, delighting in precise settings of poignant word rhythms and the well-turned rhyming phrase.

Britten's musical language frequently included compositional devices such as canon, retrograde, and augmentation, which routinely were employed by early English composers, a view expressed by him as early as 1936 in a personal diary entry ("It is the composer's heritage to take what he wants from whom he wants—and to write music."). Britten continued throughout his career to compose music which could be appreciated or performed by everyone, including his "Scherzo for Recorders," written for the Aldeburgh Music Club.

In the song for three voices with continuo, "If ever I more riches do desire," Purcell set the text of the 17th-century poet Alexander Cowley, a poet who was more acclaimed than Milton in his time, and who passed on to Dryden his sonorous lyric style. Known to be a quiet man with an insatiable ambition, he nevertheless created the text performed here: "If ever I more riches do desire, than cleanliness and quiet do require...continue, heavens, still from me to remove, the humble blessings of this life I love...An old plebian let me die..."

Benjamin Britten's poignant "Hymn to St. Cecelia" juxtaposes the celebration of the power of the muse Saint Cecelia with his staunch anti-war stance, a view which later evolved into his dramatic anti-war "War Requiem," composed for the rededication of Coventry Cathedral which had been destroyed during World War II.

Purcell's most famous work, the opera Dido and Aeneas, concludes with the richly expressive aria, "When I am laid in earth," and the following chorus, "With drooping wings ye cupids come and scatter rosebuds..." The passion reflected in the aria exquisitely disguises Purcell's use of a repeated ground bass.

John Joubert composed his tombeau "Reflections on the ground "When I am laid in earth" in 1975 in memory of a friend who was killed in a car accident in Spain. In this setting, Purcell's ground is elaborated, while slowly fragments of..."
the melody are interspersed with the ground till toward the end the entire song is played.

Carol Herman's settings of Emily Dickinson's poems are for soprano, treble viol and bass viol, in the manner of the 17th-century English lyra viol songs.

Motteux wrote, in April 1692, "The Fairy Queen, made into an Opera, from a Comedy of Mr. Shakespeare's (Midsummer Night's Dream): This in Ornaments was Superior to (King Arthur and Dioclesian); especially in Cloaths, for all the Singers and Dancers, Scenes, Machines, and Decorations, all most profusely set off; and excellent perform'd, chiefly the Instrumental and Vocal part Compos'd by the said Mr. Purcell, and Dances by Mr. Priest. The Court and Town were wonderfully satisfy'd with it; but the Expenses in setting it out being so great, the Company get very little by it."

MADRIGAL SINGERS

SOPRANO
Margie Fellenz
Lucretia Fleury
Carolyn Saunders

MEZZO-SOPRANO
Ann-Marie Ault
Gretchen Hubbert Bjork
Lisa Cole

ALTO
Ellen Kaisse
Ana Lackovic
Tara O'Brien Pride

TENOR
Eric Banks
Dennis Chan
Christopher Willman

BARITONE, BASS
Dwight Beckmeyer
Gabriel Dumitrescu
Fredrick Lokken
Pablo Sepulveda

Jonathan Graber, violin
Allen Kastelle, violin
Joe Bichsel, cello
Lisa Reedy, harpsichord

COLLEGIUM MUSICUM

RECORDER
Stoney Bird
Deirdre Jasper Forman
George Forman
Sally Weak

VIOLS
Joseph Bichsel
Ann Wilkinson
Margriet Tindemans
Sally Keller

HARPSICHORD
Marlitz Romano

SINGERS
Erin Durrett, soprano
Glynn Olive, soprano