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## Poetical Humors

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At first sight, the young accordionist Vincent Lhermet and veteran viola da gamba player Marianne Muller seem the oddest of odd couples. But a shared passion for early and contemporary music – albeit in different proportions according to the nature of their instruments – and an ‘artistic kinship and shared sensibility’ led them to form the duo Les inAttendus.

But what of this seemingly odd instrumental combination? We find nothing odd about the bandoneón and double bass. It’s all a matter of convention. Put aside your awareness of the accordion as ‘modern’, the gamba as ‘ancient’, and just listen. Their timbres, their ranges, their sonorities perfectly complement each other, as does these musicians’ profoundly poetical playing. Especially in the music of the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods, when the variegated, dark-hued sounds of mixed consorts of strings, winds and plucked instruments and the delicate plaints of the lute song were heard throughout the kingdom.

It is into this world that Les inAttendus plunge us, paying deference to the Elizabethan cult of melancholy with sweetly plangent performances of works by Gibbons and Dowland, as well as Hume and East. In Hume’s *What greater grief*, for example, swelling tones and reedy harmonies redolent of the portative organ usher in a

Author: William Yeoman



Poetical Humors

### Poetical Humors

(Dr) Bull's Goodnight

Myself

Can she excuse

Flow my Teares, 'Second Book of Ayres' No 2

In darknesse let mee dwell

Shall I sue

And I as well as thou

Fantasia a 3

Galliard a 3

Lully Lullay

Captain Humes Pavan

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programme where even such jaunty accordion solos like *Je t'embrasse* and *Godnight*, originally for keyboard, evoke a sailor's squeezebox yet are tinged with sadness and regret. Even the two superb works written especially for the duo, Thierry Tidrow's *Something rich and strange* and Philippe Hersant's *Lullay*, are another strange indeed. It is fitting that Dowland's *In darkness let me dwell* should bring the curtain down on this gorgeous and moving recital.

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What Greater Grief into something rich and strange

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