

Musica Secreta

For twenty years, Musica Secreta has been at the forefront of the discovery and interpretation of music for and by early modern women. They bring together internationally-acclaimed musicians and ground-breaking research to perform this fascinating and continually emerging repertoire.

Their programmes illustrate the many faces of women musicians in the 16th and 17th centuries: courtiers, courtesans, actresses and cloistered nuns. There is always an element of story-telling, theatre, and surprise, in their performances, for the women who first made this music had lives as compelling as the music itself.

Over the years Musica Secreta has performed in some intriguing venues throughout Europe from former monastic churches to a tent at the Latitude festival clad in habits and wellies - as part of a tour of the UK and Ireland with a music drama based on the best-selling novel, *Sacred Hearts*, by Sarah Dunant. They have also recorded a wide range of music from renaissance polyphony to early baroque music by women composers including Barbara Strozzi and the nuns Lucrezia Vizzana and Margarita Cozzolani. Their recent recording, *Lucrezia Borgia's Daughter*, won the 2016 Noah Greenberg Award from the American Musicological Society, and was described in the Gramophone as

'unrelentingly beautiful and fully captivating throughout'

Future dramatic collaborations will include a music drama based on the life of Suor Leonora d'Este, the probable composer of this extraordinary music, and in May the group will record the latest, major discovery from Laurie's archival researches.