

BIOGRAPHY

Based in the Netherlands, Duo Serenissima was founded by Canadian soprano Elisabeth Hetherington and Dutch lutenist David Mackor. Their name was inspired by the musical outpouring of Venice, commonly referred to as *La Serenissima*, or the most serene.

Since their founding in 2016, Serenissima has been invited to perform in esteemed concert venues around Europe, and have been featured in the Utrecht Early Music Festival, as well as the Concertgebouw as soloists with the Nederlands Blazers Ensemble. In addition to invitations from noted festivals and venues, they have been praised for their “beautiful and intimate settings of Monteverdi” (Het Parool, 2017) and the “...delicate singing and presentation of *airs de cour et parodies spirituelles*” (El Pais, 2017). Summer 2018, the Duo had the honour of bringing a programme of largely underperformed music written by 17th century nuns to the Ravenna Festival, playing in the UNESCO World Heritage site of the Basilica San Vitale. They also found themselves travelling to the United States, to play in playing in the Beacon Hill Festival in Pennsylvania. While specialising in music from the 16th and 17th century, the duo has presented a wide range of programmes – from English Lute Song, to Venetian Opera, to French *airs de cour*.

Recently, the duo has become involved in the field of Original Pronunciation (OP) of Elizabethan English – an area seldom explored, and even more seldom included into historical performance practice. Their research into OP has quickly gained traction and they have been invited to give several interviews, concerts and lectures on the subject.

In addition to thoroughly researching and passionately performing programmes comprising of traditional lute song repertoire, Serenissima has a strong interest in the more unconventional uses of early music. They actively find ways to utilise multidisciplinary performance and often incorporate aspects of theatre, movement, and story-telling into their concerts. They have also had the honour of expanding the lute song repertoire through numerous premieres, including an entire concert of commissions in Bergen, Norway.