

SONGS OF HOME AND DISTANT ISLES

Music from Scotland in the early Australian colonies

CONCERTO CALEDONIA

Lorna Anderson - David McGuinness

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CONCERTO CALEDONIA, directed by **David McGuinness**

Lorna Anderson, soprano

Aaron McGregor, violin

Gabi Maas, violin, viola

Dorian Komanoff Bandy, violin (track 11)

Alice Allen, cello

Jean Kelly, harp

David McGuinness, piano

1. The Marquis of Huntly's Highland Fling (Jenkins) / Steer the Gill
2. My Heart's in the Highlands
3. Lady Harriot Montague's Favourite
4. Sonata op. 5 no. 1 movements 1-2 (Corelli)
5. Nel cor più non mi sento from *La molinara* (Paisiello, arr. Ferrari)
6. The Marquis of Huntly's Snuff Mill, or The Royal Gift (Marshall/Gow)
7. Frae the Friends and Land I Love Tune: Carron Side
8. Lady Charlotte Campbell's Medley strathspey & reel (Mackintosh)
9. Logie O'Buchan (arr. Elouis)
10. Lady Caroline Montague's Strathspey (Nathaniel Gow)
11. Cauld Kail in Aberdeen (arr. Urbani)
12. Catalani's Waltz
13. My Love She's But a Lassie Yet (arr. Haydn)
14. Sonata op. 1 no. 4 Vivace – Adagio – Allegro – Presto (Corelli)
15. Lady Madelina Gordon's Strathspey / Miss Nisbet of Dirleton's Reel (Nathaniel Gow)

Harp by Sébastien Erard, 1815
Square piano by Thomas Preston, c. 1820

Recorded in the gallery, in the icehouse, and at the foot of the stairs
in Dalkeith Palace, Midlothian, 19-21 March 2019

Project directed by Jeanice Brooks and David McGuinness
Recorded and mastered by Matt Parkin
Album version edited by David McGuinness

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Follow the album link at www.concal.org for a video for each track.



SONGS OF HOME AND DISTANT ISLES

Jeanice Brooks

In October 1840, Georgiana McCrae and her four children boarded the *Argyle* for Australia, where her husband Andrew had emigrated some 18 months before in an attempt to improve the family's failing fortunes. During their first night onboard, Georgiana heard the sound of a barrel organ from the shore: her diary records that the familiar tune, wafted in snatches over the water, made her painfully aware of the contrast between the comforts of home and the strangeness of her new situation. And the voice of the Scottish ship's doctor brought to mind the "guid town of Aberdeen," where, Georgiana continues, "to say the truth, I would rather have found myself, than on an Outward Bound Emigrant Ship for the Antipodes."

The *Argyle's* hold contained as many of Georgiana's possessions as she could afford to transport. Amid plates, linens, chests of drawers, glassware, soap, candles, clothing, boots, and toys for the children were the books and artistic tools that were central to Georgiana's own sense of home and self. As the illegitimate daughter of the Marquis of Huntly, heir to the Duke of Gordon, Georgiana had been given an advanced education. She studied with the famous landscape artist John Varley and the portrait painter Charles Hayter, winning awards from the Society of Arts for her work. And her musical training under her beloved teacher Fanny Holcroft instilled a solid set of skills and an enthusiasm for making music that would allow her actively to remember her past while she adapted to a new life on the other side of the world.

Amid Georgiana's archives preserved in Victoria and in New South Wales are her precious music books which travelled with her in the *Argyle*. Georgiana's albums show the range of music she knew and loved, and like them, *Songs of Home & Distant Isles* represents a slice of the musical world that Britons would have recognized as part of "home," and which they brought with them in their minds and luggage to new lands in the early nineteenth century. This musical world was itself a kaleidoscopic blend of composed and traditional song that cut across social groups, languages, and national borders, but was at the same time deeply representative of the domestic soundscape of Britain.

This album was made to accompany the *Songs of Home* exhibition at the Museum of Sydney (August-November 2019), curated by Dr Matthew Stephens. *Songs of Home* explored concepts of home and homeland through the music of First Nations peoples, convicts, and settlers to understand the forces at work in creating a new and uniquely Australian soundscape in the early nineteenth century. Our contribution to the exhibition soundtrack was to research and bring to life the music brought to Australia by the large numbers of Scottish emigrants to the colonies. We recorded at Dalkeith Palace near Edinburgh, which in the early nineteenth century was the seat of Henry Scott and Elizabeth Montagu, 3rd Duke and Duchess of Buccleuch. From balls and concerts given in the grand Gallery, to more informal music-making by the duke and duchess and their children, to the songs of the servants and tenants of the wider estate, Dalkeith was home to the full range of domestic music of the period: music that emigrants from the Buccleuch estates took with them to colonies all over the rapidly expanding British empire.

Scots music was among the principal exports. Georgiana McCrae's handwritten music books include traditional songs she collected directly from workers on her grandfather the Duke of Gordon's land, an example of the widespread interest in national song collection that marked the period; but most of the pieces she copied were taken from printed sheet music borrowed from friends and relatives. Her music collection and those of many other emigrants drew on the explosion of the British music printing trade from the late eighteenth century onward, and its vast new production of sheet music for the use of amateurs at home. Scots songs and dances were arranged and published a variety of ways, from simple versions suitable for playing on the flute or violin—the principal instruments cultivated by male amateurs—to keyboard variations suitable for accomplished women players, to more elaborate arrangements for groups of performers. Scottish song and idealised images of Scotland became markers of a much broader British identity, and domestic music collections from all over Britain—for example, Jane Austen's family music books, compiled between 1750 and 1825—almost invariably include many prints of Scottish music produced by publishers in both Edinburgh and London.

The Duchess of Buccleuch was a loyal patron of Nathaniel Gow (1763-1831), whose father Niel Gow brought Scottish fiddle playing to national prominence. Nathaniel carried on his father's work as a composer and fiddler, and also became the leader of the most famous dance band in the country, playing in elite homes like those of the Buccleuchs and the Gordons and publishing large collections of dance music peppered with pieces named after his patron's family members. The Duchess of Buccleuch was the

dedicatee of the second volume of Gow's *Complete Repository of Original Scots Tunes, Strathspeys, Jigs and Dances* (1802) and her daughters Caroline and Harriet were honoured with Lady Caroline Montague's *Strathspey* and Lady Harriot Montague's *Favourite*. Georgiana McCrae's music books include many such numbers: tunes like *The Marquis of Huntly's Highland Fling*, *The Marquis of Huntly's Snuff Mill* and *Lady Madelina Gordon's Strathspey* were a reminder of her aristocratic ancestors and her years at Gordon Castle.

Composers from all over Europe drew upon and contributed to the dissemination of Scottish music, including Joseph Haydn (1732-1809) and the Bohemian Leopold Koželuch (1747-1818), who were both commissioned to make Scots song arrangements by Edinburgh publisher George Thomson. The French harpist Jean Elouis (1758-1833) who acted as an agent for the French harp maker Sebastien Erard, promoted the instrument in Scotland through recitals such as those in Edinburgh sponsored by the Duchess of Buccleuch in 1805 and 1811. The Duchess was also a subscriber to Elouis's *Selection of Favourite Scots Songs*, in which he arranged the traditional tunes with accompaniments for the most fashionable and elegant instrument of the day, the pedal harp. Elouis's music travelled to New South Wales with his son Charles, who later became the Deputy Director of the Sydney Mint. The Scots song arrangements of the Cremonese Pietro Urbani (1748-1816), who settled in Edinburgh in 1784, draw on the ornamentation techniques of Italian vocal music. Georgiana McCrae brought a printed copy of Urbani's *Selection of Scots Songs, Harmonized and Improved with Simple and Adapted Graces* with her to Australia.

In elite homes and music collections, Scots traditional song and popular dances rubbed alongside melodies from the latest operatic successes of the London stage. Aristocratic amateurs trained with famous Italian singing teachers such as Domenico Corri (1746-1825), who arrived in Edinburgh in 1771 at the invitation of the Edinburgh Musical Society, and his brother Natale Corri (1765-1822). Both gave lessons to the daughters of the Buccleuch and Gordon families, and Natale became central to the expanding music scene in Edinburgh as a concert organizer, using the family's extensive connections in the operatic world to mount his performances. His most successful concerts were those by Angelica Catalani (1780-1849) the most famous bravura soprano of the day. Her London debut in 1806 had been the operatic event of the year, and in 1807 she extended her reach to Edinburgh, performing a series of concerts at Corri's Rooms that were assiduously attended by all of the Buccleuch family. Playbills from the events are pasted into the Dalkeith Palace dinner book in an early example of scrapbook fandom, and there was great excitement when Catalani returned to Edinburgh in 1810 and spent the night at Dalkeith, performing in the Gallery after dinner. Among the diva's signature numbers was Giovanni Paisiello's *Nel cor più non mi sento*, which Catalani performed with elaborate variations made specially for her. While the Buccleuch family, their guests and servants heard Catalani herself, anyone with the funds could purchase the sheet music that British publishers used to package Catalani's magic for the domestic consumer. And tunes named after the celebrated prima donna travelled even more widely than the singer herself: Catalani's *Waltz* appears in a manuscript copybook made around 1807 in Britain that is held by Sydney Living Museums.

A lively interest in "Ancient Music" was another notable marker of music at home in the early nineteenth century. Domestic collections emphasised British national figures of the past such as Handel and Purcell, and also show the influence of the cult of **Arcangelo Corelli**, whose solo and ensemble string music formed a central repertoire for amateur players. Prints of Corelli's solo violin sonatas and trio sonatas for two violins and continuo were brought to Australia and played in some of Sydney's first public concerts. Corelli's trio sonatas figured in the domestic music library of the Murray and Maxwell families at Warrawang, near Lithgow, one of the earliest musical collections still extant from regional Australia. The book's original owner was Captain David Maxwell (1766-1835), tenant of Westwater Farm on Buccleuch lands in Dumfriesshire; as one of his contemporaries related, though he occupied one of the largest and best farms on the Buccleuch estates, he "turned out a sort of trifling character, seems to have relish for nothing but playing on the Fiddle." His beloved Corelli volume was brought to Australia by his son William Maxwell (1793-1874), who emigrated in 1839.

Songs such as *My Heart's in the Highlands* and *Frae the Friends and Land I Love* are poignant musical reminders of the homes that emigrating Britons left behind, and which many were reluctant to leave. At the same time, the domestic music that travelled with them helped to implant British domesticity in colonial settlements, a crucial aspect not only of migration but of dominion, as the soundscapes familiar to Australia's First Peoples were forever transformed by British understandings of home and homeland.

LIST OF SOURCES AND NOTES ON THE MUSIC

David McGuinness

1. **The Marquis of Huntly's Highland Fling** was copied into a manuscript by Georgiana McCrae, c.1822-1824, held at the McCrae Homestead (Victoria), from Niel Gow & Sons, *Part Second of The Complete Repository of original Scots Tunes, Strathspeys, Jigs and Dances* (Edinburgh: Gow & Shepherd [c.1803]). **Steer the Gill** by George Jenkins appears directly above it in the Gow book.
2. Lorna sang **My Heart's in the Highlands** in the icehouse which is set into the hillside at Dalkeith Palace. Its strikingly reverberant acoustic may have provided a place of refuge in the middle of a hard day for tenants and labourers on the estate to sing their own songs of home. The song is based on the version in *A Selection of Original Scots Songs in Three Parts. The harmony by Haydn*, vol. 2 (London: William Napier [1792]).
3. **Lady Harriot Montague's Favourite**, from Niel Gow, *A Fourth Collection of Strathspey Reels* (Edinburgh: Gow and Shepherd, [1800]).
4. Corelli's **Sonata op. 5 no. 1** was originally published in Rome in 1700, but we played from *A New Edition of Corelli's Twelve Solos for the Violin and Violoncello, with a Thorough Bass for Piano Forte or Harpsichord*, edited by Muzio Clementi (London: Longman, Clementi and Co, [1799]). Nathaniel Gow published his father Niel's favourite Giga from Corelli's opus 5 in his *A Select Collection of Original Dances* (Edinburgh: Penson, Robertson & Co.: [c. 1815])
5. **Nel cor più non mi sento**, from *La molinara*, composed by Giovanni Paisiello, arranged by Giacomo Gotifredo Ferrari, and found in *Nel cor più non mi sento, As sung in the opera of Il Fanatico per la musica, by Mad. Catalani with her own variations* (London: Kelly, [c.1810]).
6. **The Marquis of Huntly's Snuff Mill, or The Royal Gift** was copied into Georgiana McCrae's Homestead manuscript book, from Niel Gow & Sons, *Part Second of The Complete Repository of original Scots Tunes, Strathspeys, Jigs and Dances* (Edinburgh: Gow & Shepherd [c.1803]). The tune is attributed to Niel Gow there, but it is clearly derived from 'Miss Dallas's Reel', composed by William Marshall, from the second part of his *A Collection of Strathspey Reels* (Edinburgh: Neil Stewart, [1793]).
7. **Frae the Friends and Land I Love** was copied into Georgiana McCrae's Homestead manuscript book from *The Scots Musical Museum*, vol. 4 (Edinburgh: James Johnson, 1792), with text by Robert Burns.

8. **Lady Charlotte Campbell's Medley**, composed by Robert Mackintosh, was first published in Edinburgh as a single sheet by John Hamilton [c.1800], and then in *A Fourth Book of New Strathspey Reels* (London: Mackintosh, [1803]), and in Niel Gow & Sons, *Part Second of The Complete Repository of original Scots Tunes, Strathspeys, Jigs and Dances* (Edinburgh: Gow & Shepherd [c.1803]). In the first of these, the bassline includes pianistic left-hand octaves and a low B flat, but also a 'Pizicato' marking which only makes sense on cello. Georgiana McCrae's manuscript book contains tunes from Mackintosh's second, third and fourth collections.

9. **Logie O'Buchan** arranged by Jean Elouis, from *A Selection of Favorite Scots Songs with Accompaniments for the Harp or Piano Forte* (Edinburgh and London: Gow & Shepherd, Robert Birchall [1807]). The Erard harp from Hospitalfield near Arbroath, played here by Jean Kelly, was almost certainly sold to the Fraser family by Elouis himself.

10. **Lady Caroline Montague's Strathspey**, composed by Nathaniel Gow, from Niel Gow, *A Fourth Collection of Strathspey Reels* (Edinburgh: Gow and Shepherd, [1800]).

11. The verses of **Cauld Kail in Aberdeen** are by Georgiana McCrae's grandfather, Alexander, 4th Duke of Gordon, and the arrangement by Pietro Urbani, from *A Selection of Scots Songs, Harmonized and Improved with Simple and Adapted Graces*, book 2 (Edinburgh: Urbani & Liston, 1794).

12. **Catalani's Waltz** appears in an anonymous manuscript copybook, c.1807, held by Caroline Simpson Library & Research Collection, Sydney Living Museums.

13. **My Love She's But a Lassie Yet**, arranged by Leopold Koželuch, from *A Select Collection of Original Scottish Airs, For the Voice* (London: Preston [1798]), edited from the print and autograph MSS by Marjorie Rycroft.

14. Corelli's **Sonata op. 1 no. 4** was first published in Rome in 1681, but is played here from Arcangelo Corelli, *Twelve Sonatas for Two Violins & a Bass for the Organ or Piano Forte . . . Opera prima* (London: Preston [1790]).

15. **Lady Madelina Gordon's Strathspey** was copied into Georgiana McCrae's Homestead manuscript book from Niel Gow, *A Third Collection of Strathspey Reels* (Dunkeld & Edinburgh: Gow, [c. 1792]), where it appears as Lady Madelina Sinclairs Strathspey.

Miss Nisbet of Dirleton's Reel appears beneath it in Gow's book.



Front cover: Self-portrait aged 20, 1824 – Georgiana McCrae (State Library of Victoria)
Back cover: Miniature self-portrait, c. 1824-28 – Georgiana McCrae (State Library of Victoria)

Recording session photos by Jeanice Brooks, and from the videos by RCM Studios.
Architectural engravings of Dalkeith Palace by Richard Cooper (1730s), in William Adam,
Vitruvius Scoticus (Edinburgh: Adam Black, 1812).

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