

# *Frog Galliard*

Composed by John Dowland (1563 – 1626)

Arranged by Lady Isolde de Lengadoc, Kingdom of Ealdormere

Performed by Lady Asny Ravensdottir  
at Tir Righ Arts & Sciences and Bardic Championships  
October 22, 2011

The piece I will be performing today is John Dowland's "Frog Galliard". John Dowland was born in 1563, most likely in England, though one Irish historian believes he was born in Ireland. He died in 1626. The particular piece I will be performing today was written sometime before 1594, and published in the Folger Manuscript.<sup>1</sup> This places the piece within our period of study.

The Frog Galliard was written for the lute, a popular instrument during the Elizabethan period. However, lute and harp was a popular duet combination during this period<sup>2</sup>, which means that there would have been music written for the same pieces for the harp. As there seems to be very little remaining in the way of music written specifically for the harp during our period of study, it stands to reason that a piece written for the lute could plausibly have been played on the harp as well.

This rendition of Frog Galliard was arranged by a lady named Isolde de Lengadoc, who resides in the Kingdom of Ealdormere. There is more than one version of Frog Galliard in existence, but I have chosen to learn a version which has already been arranged for harp by someone else, simply for ease. As I have been playing the harp for less than a year, and it is my first stringed instrument (save the piano, which hardly qualifies based on playstyle), it was simply easier for me to choose a piece which was ready to learn, rather than attempt to learn lute tablature and arrange the piece myself.

One major difference between the lute and the harp is the lack of ability to play accidentals, or chromaticism. The lute, being a fretted instrument, has the ability to play a chromatic scale with relative ease. The harp must be tuned before playing, and then left in that key for the duration of the piece. The lever harp is a post-period invention, and the only method of playing a chromatic scale on a period harp would have been with a double-strung harp, which was not common in John Dowland's time. They are also extremely difficult to find modernly. Harps during John Dowland's time would have had been 22 and 30 strings, with 26 being common. My harp, while being a modern folk harp, also has 26 strings.

Lady Isolde has chosen to transpose the piece from its original G Major into C Major, which is a common key for harps to be tuned in, in order to fit the piece within the range of a 22 string harp. She also raised some bass notes by an octave, or changed them slightly to another note within the same chord to accommodate this range. I have further changed the odd note here and there to other notes within the same chords to accommodate my small hands.

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.cs.dartmouth.edu/%7Ewbc/julia/ap1/Folger.htm>

<sup>2</sup> McGee, Timothy J. "Untexted Repertoire." *A Performer's Guide to Medieval Music*. Ed. Ross W. Duffin. Bloomington: Indiana University press, 2000. pp 448-453.

Frog Galliard, however, has a key change approximately 2/3 of the way through the piece. To accommodate this on a single-strung harp without levers, the arrangement is written with the lowest B string tuned flat. There are no Bs played by the left hand up until that point, and by splitting the runs between the two octaves, the key change is preserved completely, and it also creates "an interesting call-and-response effect reminiscent of the vocal polyphony of about the same time (for instance, Thomas Ravenscroft)"<sup>3</sup>

In retrospect, choosing such a technically challenging piece might not have been the best choice for my first performance piece on a new instrument. At the time, I thought, "Well, that looks like it would be easy on the piano, so if I practice enough, I should be able to learn it for the harp!" Despite the challenges, I feel that I have risen to the challenge and am happy with my results.

---

<sup>3</sup> "Documentation for John Dowland's Frog Galliard, Arranged for Small Harp and Performed by Lady Isolde de Lengadoc", <http://welltemperedharpy.blogspot.com/2011/04/frog-galliard.html>

# Frog Galliard

by John Dowland  
Arr. Isolde de Lengadoc

Tune low B flat

Musical notation for measures 1-7. The piece is in 3/4 time. The treble clef staff contains the melody with various ornaments and fingerings (1, 2, 3). The bass clef staff provides a simple accompaniment.

Musical notation for measures 8-14. The treble clef staff continues the melody with more complex ornaments and fingerings (1, 2, 3, 4). The bass clef staff continues the accompaniment.

Musical notation for measures 15-20. The treble clef staff features a series of sixteenth-note patterns with intricate ornaments and fingerings (1, 2, 3, 4). The bass clef staff continues the accompaniment.

Musical notation for measures 21-24. The treble clef staff continues with sixteenth-note patterns and ornaments, including triplets (3) and fingerings (1, 2, 3, 4). The bass clef staff continues the accompaniment.

Frog Galliard

26

26

31

31

38

38

45

3 2 1 4 3 2

45

3 2 1 4 3 2 1

51

51

Frog Galliard

56

2 3 2 1 2 3 2 1

1

4 3 2 1

56

4 1

60

2 3 2 1 2 3 2 1 3 2 1 3

2 3 2 1 2 4 3 2 1

4 3 2 1 2 1 3 2

4 2 1 3

1 2 3

60