

Scintillating baroque..



.. Serious **fun**



Director from the Continuo
Andrew Lawrence-King
Early Harps & Research

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Action! Action! Action!

A *seicento* sense of humour: wine, women & song in *La Morte d'Orfeo*

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(Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions)

The tragicomic results of mixing drinks in 1619 seem strangely familiar even today. But *seicento* philosophy reveals complex links between liquids and emotions.

According to period Medical Science, changing *affetti* produce physical effects by altering the balance of the Four Humours. Other liquids also assume great importance: savagely undercutting the previous scene's high tragedy, Charon offers Orpheus the Waters of Lethe to the rollicking tune of a drinking-song.

Gendered emotional responses are brought into question. Is Orpheus 'effeminate'? How should we construe the period disconnect between 'noble anger' which *La Musica* inspires in men, and the poisoned Fury that overwhelms the Maenads?

Almost three centuries before Nietzsche, Apollo and Bacchus are the opposing Spirits of Music that brought about the birth of Landi's Tragicomedy. But how can we reconcile *muovere gli affetti* with Apollonian moderation? Can the cool discipline of academic investigation fuel the fire of artistic energy?

Baroque opera & orchestral director, Early Harp virtuoso and continuo-wizard, specialist in Baroque Gesture & Historical Action, **Andrew Lawrence-King** is one of the world's leading performers of Early Music and the most recorded harpist of all time. Last year he directed (stage & music) *La Morte d'Orfeo* in St Petersburg.