

Music for Two Kings GAVIN WRIGHT

I FELT THAT THE STONE HALL in DOVER TOWN HALL provided a perfect setting for this concert of music from the sixteenth century Courts of England France. Although I am reliably informed that the pennants and flags which hang from the walls in this part of the building date only from the early years of the nineteenth century, they seemed to lend an air of pageantry to the whole evening, quite in keeping with the style of music.

The evening, although forming part of the 1993 Dover Festival, was also part of "Music & Ramparts", Europe's only true Cross-channel Arts Festival with concerts featuring international artists in Boulogne and East Kent.

The first part of the evening comprised a selection of sixteenth century masses and other choral works, performed by the Rochester Cathedral Choir. From where I was seated towards the back of the hall, the lovely voices of the choristers carried remarkably well – indeed it was said that the Stone Hall had better acoustics for this form of music that had many churches and cathedrals.

The second part of the evening comprised lively music from banquets, and several pieces attributed to Henry VIII himself. Half of the works were performed by Musica Antiqua of London, and the others by members of the Ensemble Metamorphoses de Paris. Both groups combined a selection of musical instruments from the period with vocalists.

It was fascinating to witness the different styles of performance – very English and very French, a reminder, perhaps, that despite our increasing links with the continent our national cultures remain very distinct. Altogether a memorable evening.



Maison Dieu Hall.

Music for Two Kings. 29 May.

*A few of the men & boys of the Choir
of Rochester Cathedral.*