

# *Music through the Microscope*



**John Dowland**

***Flow my tears***

**A musical analysis**

**Music through the Microscope Volume 7**

Introduction .....	4
Sources .....	4
John Dowland .....	5
Flow my tears .....	5
Pavan .....	5
Structure .....	5
Melody & motif .....	6
A Section .....	6
Motif Z .....	6
B Section .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Motif Z .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Motif Y .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Motif X .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
C Section .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Motif Z .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Melodic direction .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Vocal range .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Texture.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Metre .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Rhythm .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Rhythmic organisation .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Tonality .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>

A Section.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
B Section.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
C Section.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Harmony.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
The Phrygian Cadence .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
A Section harmony .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
B Section harmony .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
C Section harmony .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Score .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Links .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Nick Redfern.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Music through the Microscope.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Other publications from Music through the Microscope	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
	<b>defined.</b>
Cloud Factory Publications Limited .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>

## Introduction

This document is a detailed analysis of *Flow my tears* by John Dowland. The purpose of this analysis is to aid the study of the work by isolating aspects of structure, melody and melodic development, harmony, texture, rhythm, etc.

This study is not a critique of the composer and does not seek to explore the cultural, contextual or historical aspects of the music.

If some of the illustrations appear too small then a free copy of the illustrations and a variety of scores can be downloaded as PDF files from:

[http://www.nickredfern.co.uk/Cloud\\_Factory\\_Publications.htm](http://www.nickredfern.co.uk/Cloud_Factory_Publications.htm)

## Sources

The source of this analysis is a Sibelius transcription made from **Winterson, Julia. *The Edexcel Anthology of Music*. Oxford: Heinemann, 2008. Print** and various scores at <http://imslp.org/>,

[http://imslp.org/wiki/Category:Dowland, John](http://imslp.org/wiki/Category:Dowland,_John) and

<http://artsongcentral.com/2007/dowland-flow-my-tears/>

The text has been excluded from many illustrations for visual clarity.

Nick Redfern

# John Dowland

John Dowland (1563 – 1626). English composer and lutenist.

## Flow my tears

The work was originally composed for solo lute with the title *Lachrimae Pavane*, or *Tearful Pavan*. The mode for melancholy music in the Late Renaissance is typified in this work.

## Pavan

A Pavan is a slow dance which was popular in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century in Europe.

## Structure

The work is in three distinct sections:

**A: bars 1 – 8 (X 2 with different lyrics on repeat)**

**B: bars 9 – 16 (X 2 with different lyrics on repeat)**

**C: bars 17 – 24 (repeated)**

The tripartite structure can be considered to be through composed. Although the three sections are unified by the common employment of motifs, rhythmic cells and harmonic devices they are each highly distinct in their character and construction.

# Melody & motif

## A Section

### Motif Z

The Vocal melody is complex and first glance there appears to be no overt repetition of phrases and no obvious use of motifs or recurring elements.



**Figure 1 Vocal melody bar 1 to 8**

This is not unusual for music of this period but does make the melody difficult to analyse in relationship to, say, a song from the Classical period. The sonata principle cannot be readily applied in an analysis of the melody; moreover, it is more logical to analyse *Flow my tears* as one would analyse Bartok or early Webern. This is certainly the case for the work's use of motif, pitch and rhythmic organisation.

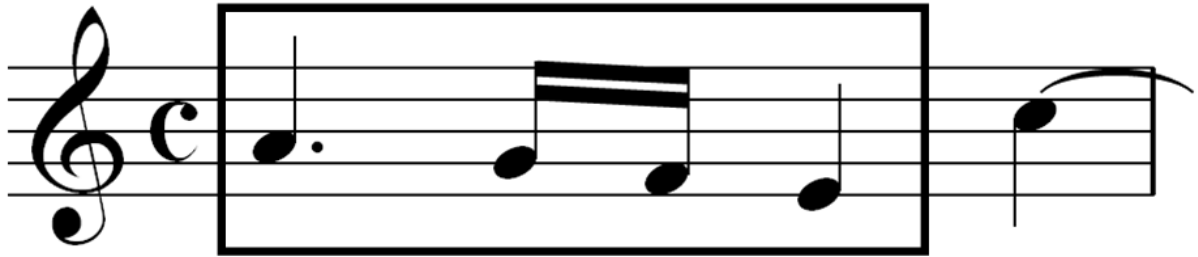
This song is not simply governed by melodic and rhythmic principles alone but by harmonic motion and the relationship between the Vocal melody and the Lute

countermelody. A glance over the contrapuntal texture of Section **A** reveals a composition which is defined by very clear shapes and contours.

The image displays a musical score for a piece in common time (C). It features two staves: a single staff for the Voice and a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) for the Lute. The score is divided into three systems, with bar numbers 3, 5, and 7 indicating the start of each system. The first system (bars 1-2) shows the voice entering with a half note, followed by quarter notes and a half note with a sharp sign. The lute accompaniment consists of a treble line with eighth and quarter notes and a bass line with chords and single notes. The second system (bars 3-4) continues the voice melody and the lute accompaniment. The third system (bars 5-6) shows the voice melody and lute accompaniment. The final system (bars 7-8) concludes the section with a double bar line and repeat dots. The lute accompaniment features a mix of eighth and quarter notes in the treble and chords and single notes in the bass.

**Figure 2 Verse 1, A Section, bar 1 to 8**

Herein can be found the motif on which the work is founded and once identified it becomes evident that the extract above is littered with examples of this very subtle, highly emotive and malleable compositional device.



**Figure 3 Tear Motif, bar 1**

The simple four note motif, known as the Tear Motif, is an archetypal compositional device of the period and served two essential concepts in *Flow my tears*. Firstly it is the fundamental building block for the whole work and brings a great sense of continuity and intellectual rigor. Secondly the motif has a very potent impact as a symbol; the depiction of a falling tear is tangible. The Tear Motif for the sake of clarity and continuity will from here be referred to as Motif Z.



**Figure 4 Motif Z bar 1 to 2**

1. The exposition of the Motif Z spans a descending perfect fourth