

The Caldwell Collection at Night

—*for Cathy*

Varnish gleams in the near dark; the viols begin to sound. The trebles first, their shorter nerves more tightly strung; tenors with ampler curves; then basses, deep and slow to speak, join in—the smoky, ringing French; the English, thin and silvery; Germans whose tone disturbs and startles all the rest.

Each preserves identity. And yet there's discipline, they sound as one.

They celebrate the makers, Tielke and Rose, the men who shaped the sides and carved the heads; the cultured lords whose pride commissioned them; the music and its players; survival through the diasporic years; and that impassioned pair who brought them here.

—Nicholas Jones
20 June 2011