

Saturday 19th September 2015. Joyce Rudall

All the business of the AGM having been accomplished and the re-elected officers signed in we got down to the important business of playing.

We started with the settings of two responsories, "Amicus Meus" and "Judas

Mercator Pessimus" from the Passiontide service of "Tenebrae" by the glorious but ever modest Tamas Luis de Victoria, who only ever acknowledged that he was the "organista".

Tenebrae is sung on the last evenings of Holy Week. After each "nocturn" one candle is extinguished until the last on the evening of Good Friday when the Benedictus is rendered in complete darkness (tenebrae).

The responsories translated well to the recorder setting.

To me Victoria has an "arab" edge, particularly when he goes modal and some of us were caught by unexpected accidentals, a feature of this lovely sixteenth century Spanish church music.

Victoria was succeeded by Schmelzer, Sonata For Seven Recorders.

This was a happy triumphal piece. It wasn't hard to imagine we WERE playing sackbuts.----Made me wish I had practised more. I find it very difficult to play to the required speed in a lovely upbeat piece like this.

Then we proceeded to "A birds' Choir" an original piece by one of our members, composer Riki Schnorr.

I found this piece "elegiac" in tone, almost as if Riki was thinking of the memory of birdsong as they all fly away for the winter. I couldn't help thinking of Rameau and his "Rappel des Oiseaux". He had the same idea. This piece required really delicate treatment and sensitive dynamic. It would be nice to play it again now we are familiar with the notes!

After tea we turned to the "Canzone del Terzo Tuono" of Massimiliano Neri-----fun with the fugue and many (for me) difficult time changes which the kind Joyce nursed us through. I think we got it in the end, even the trills, and really enjoyed it.

Lastly we played a piece by Colin Touchin a composer well known to the Society, "Ballade in Canon".

This had a very haunting melody, to me, Celtic in character which has not left my memory several hours later, and there was some very skilful weaving of this melody into the "canon". The whole piece was very atmospheric.

I felt as though I was piping on a remote Scottish island.

All thanks to Joyce The sympathetic and ever tolerant wielder of the baton and to everyone who made this meeting so enjoyable and satisfying.

Addendum: Thank you to Louise for writing this lovely report and also thank you again to Louise and Vivien (N) for the delicious selection of cakes.