

Playing Day Saturday 21st October with Sandra Foxall

We started the day relatively gently with 2 four part renaissance pieces, the first, Canzon in G by Merulo and the second by White, Fantas 3 in which we included the contra bass.

The first piece for our second session which followed the short drinks break was Laetentur Coeli in 5 parts by Byrd. For this Sandra moved us around and mixed up some of the instruments so that some trebles were playing with the descants, and some with the tenors. This produced some 'Chinese fingering' as Sandra referred to it, ie: the wrong fingering for the instrument. She suggested to us that if we find ourselves in this position we should look at the player next to us with a look of disdain and raise our eyes heavenwards as a means of transferring the blame to someone else!

In this second session we also played Mr. Beveridge's Maggot, part of a suite of English dances from 'Step Safely', arranged by James Carey. In this piece in particular, she gave us some very helpful tips for articulation, and throughout the day, Sandra stressed that we were there for enjoyment and not to be pressured – very reassuring for us all, and it did add to the enjoyment of the day.

After our break for lunch we moved forward in time to play the 4 movements of 'The Yorkshire Dales Suite' composed on her home territory by Judith Bush of the Cumberland branch of SRP. These were 'The Old Green Lane', 'The Ghyll', 'The Tarn', and 'The Beck' - all in 4 parts, and each with its little complications, the last being in 5/4 timing.

In the final session after our tea and cakes, we moved on to Gershwin's 'Let's Call The Whole Thing Off' arranged by Brian Bonsor. An interesting and challenging arrangement to complete what had been a successful Playing Day, conducted by a very enthusiastic Sandra Foxall.