

## ***basso continuo* play-along**

### The idea

To create an online resource of Renaissance and Baroque ***basso continuo* play-along** recordings for recorder players and other instrumentalists of all levels of experience to use in- and outside the home.

### The key elements of the project are to:

- Provide **high quality** *basso continuo* play-along tracks recorded by an established baroque specialist.
- Set up a valuable **playing and teaching resource** — the repertoire will be based on standard renaissance dances and songs, as well as baroque sonatas, suites and concertos, with an option of expanding to trio sonatas.
- Create a designated website with **easy access** to all tracks.
- Record the files in MIDI format to make the tracks **adaptable** to all needs.
  - The pitch and velocity can be adjusted to individual requirements.
  - The tracks will be suitable for players of other instruments.
  - Digitally sampled harpsichord and lute audio will guarantee authentic sound quality.
- Upload 20 tracks (c. 60mins of music) prior to the website launch.
- Extend the **catalogue** by approximately 4 – 6 tracks (max. 15 mins of music) each month during year one, and 2 – 4 tracks (max. 10 mins of music) from year two onwards.
- Schedule **regular reviews** of the project to guarantee meeting the project objectives.

### The project objectives are to:

- Promote active **enjoyment of music-making** at home, in schools and at conservatoires.
- Address the needs of recorder players of **all ages and levels** of learning.
- Be completely **player-focused** — instrumentalists can submit repertoire request via the website.
- Enable an **experience** of playing with harpsichord or lute *basso continuo* played by a specialist accompanist renowned in the early music scene.
- Provide an essential **teaching resource** for lessons and private practice (or when no accompanist or appropriate instrument is available).

### Project funding is sought for:

- The **recording fees** for all tracks recorded prior to the website launch (c. 60mins / 20 tracks) — the accompanist will be paid per recorded minute, based on Musicians' Union rates.
- The **set-up costs** for the first year — web-design and administration.

→ **The total funding amount applied for is £1,310.00.**

There will be an option for **voluntary donations** via the website from year one, and additional funding will be sought to cover all remaining costs.

### Timeline of the project (may be subject to change):

- May 2020: Funding stage.
- August 2020: Commission professional accompanist and web-design.
- September 2020: Website launch.
- October 2020 – August 2021: 4 – 6 tracks to be added the website per month.
- September 2021: First annual review.
- September 2021 – August 2022: 2 – 4 tracks to be added the website per month.
- September 2022: Second annual review.
- September 2022 – August 2023: 2 – 4 tracks to be added the website per month.
- September 2023: Third annual review.

## ***basso continuo* play-along**

The Corona pandemic has had a fundamental impact on instrumental music playing and teaching — all ensemble playing has been brought to a halt, and one-to-one lessons have to be provided remotely where possible.

Chamber music — regardless of how many players it involves — and playing with *basso continuo* is not only an essential part of learning a musical instrument (such as the recorder) in schools, music clubs and societies; it is also vital to the enjoyment of music-making as a whole. No longer being able to play with friends and fellow music enthusiasts is especially hard on elderly or vulnerable players, but it equally effects the motivation of young recorder players and other instrumentalists. Many of them, young and old, would usually participate in the wide range of workshops and opportunities offered by the Society of Recorder Players (SRP) and other organisations — which have been suspended for the foreseeable future.

Instead, recorder players of all ages and levels of learning are having to resort to playing their renaissance and baroque solo repertoire to pre-recorded accompaniments, which can be hard to find online, and unfortunately often have some downfalls.

This is where this project comes in: it will fill this gap by creating an easily accessible online resource of high-quality *basso continuo* play-along recordings for (recorder) players and teachers in the UK and abroad. I will commission an established professional accompanist specialising in early music and historically informed playing. This accompanist will record the play-along tracks in MIDI format, using digitally sampled harpsichord and lute sounds. This way the tracks sound authentic, and both playing pitch and velocity can be targeted to individual player's needs post recording. The tracks will be made available for streaming and downloading on a specifically designed website.

The catalogue will be based on standard renaissance tunes, songs and dances as well as baroque sonatas, suites and concertos. The website will be set-up with sixty minutes (approximately twenty tracks) of play-along recordings. The catalogue will be extended by between four to six tracks each month during the first year. To ensure that the ever-growing play-along library is tailored directly to the users' needs, a 'request' option on the website will give all players the opportunity to ask for specific pieces to be added.

The use of the website will be free of charge for everyone, with a voluntary option to donate towards the running of the project and the addition of further play-along tracks.

I believe that this online platform will be an invaluable resource for players and teachers of any instrument.

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## Budget *basso continuo* play-along

|                  |                                     | Set-up             | Year 1 (11 months)                | Year 2 (12 months)                | Year 3 (12 months)                |
|------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Online resources | Web-design                          | £500,00            | £0,00                             | £0,00                             | £0,00                             |
|                  | Logo                                | £100,00            | £0,00                             | £0,00                             | £0,00                             |
|                  | Domain (.com)                       | £20,00             | £20,00                            | £20,00                            | £20,00                            |
| Recording fees   | 1min @ £6.50<br>(MU rate)           | £390,00            | £1.072,50                         | £780,00                           | £780,00                           |
|                  |                                     | 60mins / 20 tracks | 15 mins / 4-6 tracks<br>per month | 10 mins / 2-4 tracks<br>per month | 10 mins / 2-4 tracks<br>per month |
| Administration   | Project Administration<br>1hr @ £15 | £225,00            | £45,00                            | £45,00                            | £45,00                            |
|                  | Website Maintenance<br>1hr @ £15    | £75,00             | £75,00                            | £75,00                            | £75,00                            |
| Total            |                                     | £1.310,00          | £1.212,50                         | £920,00                           | £920,00                           |