

Consort music minus one

a new project for these distracted times

With all of us in varying states of social isolation, the resulting musical isolation means that we are all denied the joy of playing consort music together with one's friends (unless one is fortunate enough to live with a consort of viol players).

Whilst not a replacement for the pleasure of such gatherings, the *Consort music minus one* project will hopefully enable us all to keep in practice and at least enjoy playing good polyphony "together" with the other parts.

Exploring the techniques of multi-track recording in order to produce a number of Mp3 files with which you can play along, I have recorded a number of pieces from an editing project that I have recently completed. This is a complete edition of a manuscript of German song from the early 16th century, originally published in Frankfurt by Christian Egenolf in 1535, under the title *Gassenhawerlin und Reutterliedlin*, (roughly, "Street songs and mounted attendants' songs"). The manuscript contains 78 short four-part pieces, all texted, by numerous composers. Unlike my previous publication (*Consort music from the court of Maximilian I*), this collection has fewer "high art" pieces, largely concentrating on more direct, earthy repertoire.

With each purchase, you will receive the link to a downloadable folder containing six files: the score from the new edition and five Mp3 sound files. One of these is a complete performance whilst the other four each have a part missing so that you can play along without being doubled. The pitch is A440 and the recordings are played on the set of Richard Jones viols used by the Linarol Consort (I have tried out playing along with Jacobean viols and they work perfectly well - you can always adjust the volume!). Each sound file begins with a click count-in to let you know when to start. Each piece is £4 and you can order by sending an e-mail to djhatcher@icloud.com.

Some of the skills involved in multi-track recording overlap with more normal music-making, but some have required adaptation and learning, not to mention advice from friends who spend their time at the other end of a mic - the end with all the knobs attached. Thanks are due to recording engineers Adrian Hunter, for advice on what equipment to get, and to Alan Crumpler for the loan of equipment whilst awaiting delivery. The project would not have been possible without the generous support of Angel Early Music.

The recordings are obviously not CD quality, but I am confident that they will provide an enjoyable way for us all to play consort music in the glory of our own, isolated homes.

Have fun!