

The Extrovert Recorder!

These sessions have to be fun! They are about the challenges and pleasures of getting up and playing to an audience, and so they cover a mixture of things – attitude, self-belief, technique and confidence. I've provided some music but we don't need to stick to that - I'm very happy to work with whatever you want to bring. If you've got a favourite melody or dance, I'd love to hear it. We might be able to help you play it differently – more musically, more confidently, more convincingly. We might not. But my aim is that you go away feeling a bit closer to, and more comfortable with your recorder.

I have no academic expertise in medieval music. Such skill as I have is as a player and performer, on recorders, early woodwind – the usual buzzies! – and early and modern brass. So we won't be dealing with transcribing or medieval notation or anything like that, though you can do that elsewhere in the festival. Just playing. Though we might mention modes.

Any and all recorders are welcome, but I'm going to base the sessions on soprano/descant in C. If you are happier on an F or G instrument, that's fine.

Here's a quick list of things we might cover:

Style of instrument – “renaissance” recorders tend to work well with this repertoire, but they can be expensive. One of the joys of the recorder is that some very very good plastic instruments are available at pocket money prices. They are nearly always baroque style though, so are quiet and lack projection in the lower register. By contrast, renaissance recorders generally don't have an easy top register. Which brings me on to –

Transposition. Most of the melodies from this period don't have a big range of notes, so it's fairly easy to shift them to a key which plays to your recorder's strengths. If you can use music writing software this is straightforward. I am a complete technophobe but even I have managed to do this, and I will send my efforts with this document. Or just do it by ear, which is probably better for your musicianship. Don't be controlled by the written music. It has the same relationship to the real music as a map has to the territory it represents.

Mistakes! They're fun. Take the transposition idea above too far and you can end up in some very outlandish places! Recovery from mistakes is part of the process of being a confident player. You're never more than a step or two from

the right note or a harmony to it, so take them in your stride, act like nothing happened and move on...

Technique. Not dazzling virtuosity, but unobtrusive control of the instrument and the music. Blow a single note for a few seconds. How did you start it? How did you stop it? Was the pitch constant, or did it vary? Likewise the volume (the two are interdependent of course). Would you like to vary the pitch, or the volume, or the sound quality? With breath control, or fingers? What about repeating the note? Hard tongue, soft tongue, no tongue at all... And breath control. Too little air can sound feeble and insecure, too much can sound coarse. So we'll spend most of our time in the sweet spot in the middle, but underblown and overblown have their places... Lots to think about here.

I've also sent you the well-known folk tune "Drops of Brandy" in various keys. Obviously, this is not medieval. It has the interesting quality however that when started on D (fourth line on the staff) you can play it using only your left hand! It's a great exercise for finger and tongue control and clean octaveing, if there's such a word. And when put into different keys it will get you used to the finger sequences that you'll meet time and time again.

Folk attending the more advanced workshop are welcome to bring their own pieces and I'll provide some more challenging material!

I'm looking forward to meeting you all!

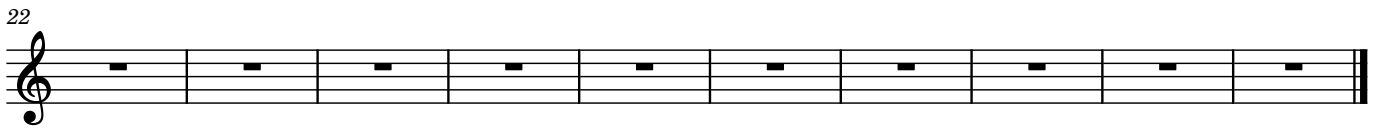
Bryd One Brere

English 13th cent



Bryd One Brere

English 13th cent



Bryd One Brere

English 13th cent



Bryd One Brere

English 13th cent



Drops of Brandy

NOT medieval - an exercise only!

Trad



Drops of Brandy

NOT medieval - an exercise only!

Trad



La Manfredina

Prima pars

Aperto

Chiuso

Secunda pars

Aperto

Chiuso

Terça pars

Aperto

Chiuso

Detailed description: This system contains the first six staves of music for 'La Manfredina'. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a common time signature. The notation includes various note values (quarter, eighth, and sixteenth notes) and rests. Vertical bar lines indicate the end of measures. The labels 'Prima pars', 'Secunda pars', and 'Terça pars' are placed below the first, second, and third staves respectively. The terms 'Aperto' and 'Chiuso' are placed below the staves to indicate the instrument's state: 'Aperto' is under the first, third, and fifth staves, while 'Chiuso' is under the second, fourth, and sixth staves.

La Rotta della Manfredina

Prima pars

Aperto

Chiuso

Secunda pars

Aperto

[Chiuso]

Terça pars

Aperto

Chiuso

Detailed description: This system contains the first six staves of music for 'La Rotta della Manfredina'. Each staff begins with a treble clef and a common time signature. The notation includes various note values and rests. Vertical bar lines indicate the end of measures. The labels 'Prima pars', 'Secunda pars', and 'Terça pars' are placed below the first, second, and third staves respectively. The terms 'Aperto' and 'Chiuso' are placed below the staves to indicate the instrument's state: 'Aperto' is under the first, third, and fifth staves, while 'Chiuso' is under the second, fourth, and sixth staves. A bracketed label '[Chiuso]' is placed below the fourth staff.

Lamento di Tristano

