

Charlotte Duckett HISS 2018 Review

I would like to prefix my report by expressing how incredibly grateful I am to HISS and to Graham and Mary Tyers for organising this amazing and fruitful experience and for allowing me to attend so generously. I would like to thank all of the tutors for their wonderful insights over the week and for allowing us to see performances at such a high and inspiring level. I am so incredibly grateful for this opportunity, for all that I learnt there and for all the friends that I made.

As someone aspiring towards a career within the world of Early Music, it was an invaluable experience to not only be allowed to partake in amazingly enriching activities that increased my awareness and appreciation of certain aspects of music, but to be given the added opportunity to take responsibility for aspects of running such a large musical course. Although I feel great sympathy for the number of trees required to print almost a hundred copies of *Spem in Alium* (!), I feel as if I have learnt as much about responsibility and helping people as I have

The biggest shame of this course is that I cannot be multiple places at once! There were so many brilliant electives and progressives happening simultaneously that, if had I a time machine, I could go back and do an entirely different full course and still have electives I would have wanted to attend! The highlight of my week was probably the Hull City walk with Vivien Ellis. This was a walking-and-singing tour of Hull, exploring both the city and folk songs that reflect all aspects of the history of the city. It was fascinating to pretend to be a suffragette in the art gallery and sing a ballad about the statue of Queen Victoria sitting on the loo! It was truly a memorable experience! I also really enjoyed the collection of 'shorties' – small lectures by other coursemates around small aspects of early and folk music. It was inspirational learning all about female troubadours, the music of a *Midsummer Night's Dream* and Swedish cow herding calls!

Just how sad we all were to be leaving. It was only 5 days, but I left having thought I'd known some of these people all my life. One brilliant aspect of HISS was the amount of student helpers that they were able to bring in. I have never been on a course with more than one or two bursary students, which can lead to a sort of isolation, a feeling that, being unable to afford the entry price, that I was somehow less worthy. Early music is such a distinct subset within musical interest that it can sometimes feel quite isolated in wanting to perform it. HISS this year has allowed me to see that this is not the case – there are plenty of young people performing or wanted to perform this music, but we are usually kept apart, on separate courses. In allowing this many bursary students to take part, HISS, and its members, are making a firm investment in the future of early music performance.