

# In Flower of April Springing

Seasonal Songs from 16th and 17th Century England

This collection is the first of the *Passamezzo* series to contain songs from all the seasons and it supplements *This Merry Pleasant Spring*, *In Peascod Time*, *To Shorten Winter's Sadness* and *Old Christmas Returned* with new material.

As ever, there are more songs associated with Spring than any other season, and this is reflected here with a number of songs rejoicing in the melting of the ice and snow and the growth of new life. There are also many love songs – some happier than others!

The songs for Summer continue to describe the beauties of nature and the pleasure of outdoor pursuits.

The Harvest songs contain Ravenscroft's "Hawking for the Partridge" (13) once the fields have been scythed (naming all the dogs involved), one about the wine harvest and "Harvest Home We Bring Her" (15) which describes the harvest feast. I have also included two seasonal songs from Purcell's "Fairy Queen" – one for Harvest (16) and one for Winter (17).

Winter features Byrd's setting (18) of a fable about the ant and the grasshopper (the ant who works all Summer to gather food and make sure enough is stored to last the Winter, while the grasshopper dances all Summer and is then surprised to find that it has nothing left to eat), two love songs and a song about how ale will warm you and help you to forget the cold.

Tamsin Lewis  
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