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Claude Le Jeune *Benedicta est coelorum Regina*, Fantasie for five part consort, Paris 1612, Edition Güntersberg, 2006, Euro 14.50

This 5 part piece is for TrTTTB or Tr/TTBB viols with parts in treble, three alto and bass clefs for strings or octave treble instead of the alto clefs for recorders provided. It is in the long tradition of pieces based on famous models, re-using the same themes as the original. Despite searching at length on the internet for Josquin Desprez's "Benedicta est coelorum Regina" I was unsuccessful so it was good to find the publisher has provided at least the first page of the original. Players can then see that Le Jeune has been very faithful in re-using the two initial themes of Josquin. I suspect that a complete score would show that this continues throughout the piece. In general the piece is in the tradition of Continental polyphony with long phrases in imitation and the difficulty is moderate. There are no notes above the frets and no rhythmic problems. For those who have played mainly English viol fantasies this provides a welcome chance to experience something a bit different. The parts are clearly printed and the page turns are restricted to the treble and bass and even here the turn comes at the end of the first part, before the second. We enjoyed playing this piece: it's encouraging to find it in such a good modern edition.

Richard Corran