

VIOLA DA GAMBA SOCIETY PACIFICA GAMBA NEWS

Volume 34, No. 6 • February, 2019

Join us for our next Play Day with coach Amy Brodo Saturday, Feb. 9th

- 9- 9:30 am – Set up, coffee/tea. **Be ready to play by 9:30.**
- 9:30- 12:30 – Group session w/ coach, then 1-on-a-part coached consorts
- 12:30 – Bring a bag lunch to enjoy with us
- 1- 2:30 pm – Uncoached DIY consort playing

Hillside Swedenborgian Community Church
1422 Navellier Street, El Cerrito, CA 94530

FREE – a great membership benefit!



Before moving to San Francisco, **Amy Brodo** (cellist and gambist) performed for many years in Italy, Israel, and England, including as assistant principal cellist of the Orchestra del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino in Italy, and as cellist with the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra. As a freelancer in Europe, she performed with Andrew Parrott and the Taverner Players, the Norskbarok Orchester, the Hanover Band, the Royal Philharmonic, D'Oyly Carte Opera, and the City of Valencia Symphonic Orchestra. In the Bay Area, she has performed with groups such as Lux Musica, Sex Chordae Consort of Viols, Magnificat Baroque Orchestra, American Bach Soloists, El Mundo, Musica Angelica, Archetti, and Albany Consort; her festival performances include the Santa Cruz Baroque, Berkeley Early Music, the Beaune Festival (France), and the San

Luis Obispo Mozart Festival. Amy plays principal cello with Festival and Livermore Opera Companies. Former Music Director of the Junior Bach Festival, Amy is an active teacher and competition judge. She is a member of the new piano quartet with voice—Persephone Chamber Ensemble—and a board member of the Berkeley Piano Club. Amy has recorded for CDI, Centaur, Sony, Golden Horn, Koch, Helicon, Kleos, MRS, and New Albion.

We will explore the *Concert pour quatre parties de violes* by Marc-Antoine Charpentier. All the movements are accessible and beautiful, especially the final Passacaille. We'll talk about ornamentation and dance rhythms as well as ensemble playing in general.

>> Important! RSVP to Cindi by Thurs. Feb. 7 to guarantee your seat

Send her the info below so that she has time to copy sufficient music and to organize consort groups.

1. Will you attend the 9:30 am group session?
2. Will you attend the late-morning consort session? If so, would you prefer to play double on a part?
3. Viol sizes you will bring _____
4. If you are new to our Play Days, please include your playing level. (Refer to the self-rating guide at <https://vdgsa.org/pgs/Self-RatingGuide.pdf>.)
5. Send this info to cindi.olwell@gmail.com.

Upcoming Events

Quartets for Carl Friedrich Abel **Johann Christian Bach's Opus 8 Quartets**

Fri., Feb. 15, El Cerrito

6:30 PM, Hillside Swedenborgian Church

Katharine Heater, *harpsichord*

Anthony Martin, *violin*

David Morris, *viola da gamba*

Marc Schachman, *oboe*; Stephen Schultz, *flute*

Since 1764, J. C. Bach and his friend the great viol player Carl Friedrich Abel had been living in London among a society of very collegial English (and German expatriate) musicians working for Queen Charlotte (Mrs. King George III), the grand patroness of the arts.

Among the works Bach published was an unusual set of quartets for violin, flute or oboe, viola, and continuo (many editions, starting in 1772). Recent research has revealed that the original (manuscript) scoring was for viola da gamba rather than viola, and that the later, published version featured a viola part only because of the scarcity of competent viola da gamba players at the time.

The viola da gamba player who played this music originally for the queen's musicians was, of course, Bach's great friend Carl Friedrich Abel, who was (together with Ludwig Christian Hesse) the last of the great virtuosi of the viol. One can safely assume the part was written for him. The manuscript viol parts are idiosyncratic and demanding (the published viola parts were "dumbed down" for publication). Our performance features David Morris as C. F. Abel, and Katherine Heater as Queen Charlotte, who often sat in as the harpsichordist of the group. As far as we can find out, these quartets have never been performed before on the West Coast in this original form.

Wine and snacks!

Cost: \$20 (Free admission for 18 & under)

Tickets at the door or order online (recommended)

<https://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/3614342>

Sponsored by **Barefoot Chamber concerts**

Early Music Open Mic Night

Wed., Feb. 27, El Cerrito (4th Wednesday)

7 - 9 PM, Hillside Swedenborgian Church

This is your opportunity to perform early music in a friendly cabaret style setting. Soloists, groups, Instrumentalists, singers, students, youngsters—amateurs and professionals—all welcome!

- Bring your own music stand (and a stand light if you need it.)
- A state-of-the-art Roland harpsichord/organ will be available on site as well as a piano.
- 6 time slots (max 15 min.) available per night
- **To request a spot, email Heather Wilson at hi2dougan@gmail.com.**
- \$5 donation accepted to cover refreshments and venue rental.

Stylus Phantasticus **Buxtehude, Erlebach, Schmelzer & Krieger**

Fri., March 22, El Cerrito

6:30 PM, Hillside Swedenborgian Community Church

David Wilson, *violin*

Lynn Tetenbaum, *viola da gamba*

Katharine Heater, *harpsichord*

This highly dramatic music is in a category all of its own; a contemporary described it thus: "The fantastic style is especially suited to instruments. It is the most free and unrestrained method of composing...bound...neither to any words nor to a melodic subject, it was instituted to display genius and to teach the hidden design of harmony and the ingenious composition of harmonic phrases and fugues."

Our program features an artisanally-curated sampling of this captivating idiom. The Swedenborgian church is the perfect acoustic for this!

Wine and snacks!

Cost: \$15 (Free admission for 18 & under)

Tickets at the door or order online (recommended)

<https://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/3614368>

Sponsored by **Barefoot Chamber concerts**

SFEMS LECTURE SERIES:

A Survey of Early Music in North America with John Prescott

Mon.-Fri., March 4-8, Berkeley

10 am - 12:30 pm, St. Mary Magdalene (NortonHall)

This five-day lecture series will explore the fascinating and often overlooked history of music in North America before the mid-19th century. It will focus primarily on composed art music rather than the rich history of popular and folk music in North America. **We'll discuss how the religious and cultural foundations of each settlement determined its relationship to art music.**

Five independent sessions led by John Prescott:

Day 1: Music in New England: William Billings and the beginnings of a simple American choral idiom.

Day 2: Williamsburg: recreating London's music scene.

Day 3: The Moravian communities of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania and Salem, North Carolina: High art music in the service of protestant devotion.

Day 4: New Orleans: the New World center of French opera.

Day 5: The California missions: the glories of Spanish cathedral music given New World vigor

Cost: \$125 for the full course or \$30/day
SFEMS members: \$110 for full course or \$25/day

To register in advance, send an email **before March 1st** to suzannesiebert@gmail.com.

Indicate whether you are reserving for the full course, or else specify the particular days you plan to attend; also note if you are a SFEMS member. **On or after March 1st, please register and pay at the door.**



Proceeds from this course will go to benefit the SFEMS Music Discovery Workshop, a day camp that introduces children to early music and Renaissance social history through music instruction and theater projects.

John Prescott earned a PhD in musicology from U.C. Berkeley. He has written extensively on the music of Handel, and was the musicologist for the SF Elderhostel Arts and Humanities Program. He gives pre-performance lectures for Berkeley West Edge Opera, Livermore Valley Opera and the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra. John is an Affiliate of the San Francisco Early Music Society. (www.sfems.org).

NEW COURSE:

Five-Chord Fretboard Geometry Made Simple

Saturdays, Mar. 23- Apr. 13, St. Helena

10- noon, Napa Valley College's Upper Campus Library

Explore and expand your playing of nearly any fretted instrument, including **viola da gamba**, guitar, mandolin, banjo, violin, cello or bass in this informative hands-on class. Noted cellist and published music educator Jeffrey McFarland-Johnson will share **the key to unlocking any popular song that you wish to play on your fretted instrument.** By learning five basic chord forms (C-A-G-E-D) and their corresponding pentatonic scales in major and minor, students will quickly and easily learn to play these songs.

McFarland-Johnson holds an MA in composition from UC San Diego and studied cello at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki, Finland. Trained in musical instruments tuned in fourths as well as fifths, he performs throughout the Bay Area with pianist Terry Winn as the Napa Valley Duo, as a soloist and in ensembles.

The required text can be purchased at the first class: \$10 (eBook) or \$20 (textbook).

Students should bring their own instrument to each class meeting.

Cost: \$110

Lifelong Learning Class #74752

To register call 1-707/967-2901

Mon.-Fri. 9-5 or Sat. 8:30-1 and 2-5pm.

Thinking ahead to our BASH-

Now is not too early to begin to talk with other members, gather music and start practicing for our Pacifica's annual **Members' Bash**, scheduled for **Sat. June 8**. We'd like to hear you! Sign-up details will come in a later newsletter this spring.

Pacifica Viols 2018-19

Play Days / Coaches

Sept. 8, 2018: **Farley Pearce**

Oct. 13, 2018: **Frances Blaker**

Nov. 10, 2018: **Julie Jeffrey**

Dec. 8, 2018: **Roy Whelden**

Jan. 12, 2019: **Gretchen Claassen**

Feb. 9, 2019: **Amy Brodo**

Mar. 9, 2019: **Erik Andersen**

Apr. 13, 2019: **Shira Kammen**

May 11, 2019: **David Morris**

Jun. 8, 2019: **Members' BASH**

SAVE THE DATES

• Conclave: July, 2019

The next **Conclave** (annual conference of the Viola da Gamba Society of America) will be held July 21-28, 2019 in Forest Grove, Oregon (~30 miles west of Portland).

• Viols West: Summer, 2020

Our next **Viols West** gathering will be in summer, 2020, since it is not scheduled on years when Conclave is held on the West Coast.

Join our proofreading team!

Do you have a sharp eye? Could you give 1-2 hours a month to help us prevent errors in our newsletter? For more info, contact Sue Jones scjones360@gmail.com.

March is Early Music Month

March is Early Music Month — the fourth annual nationwide venture of Early Music America (EMA). I am on the board of EMA and (along with Bay Area musician Derek Tam) have been helping to promote Early Music Month throughout North America.

What is it? A chance for all—professionals, amateurs, scholars, fans—to show their solidarity with the thousands of others across the country who find the music of the Medieval/Renaissance/Baroque eras to be exciting and fulfilling. **EMA encourages all kinds of events: pop-ups, outreach gigs, special concerts**, or just a few words about Early Music at one's regular practice session, play-in, rehearsal... (for example, our March Pacifica Playday!) Maybe some of us would like to organize a little viol music somewhere unusual?

Take a look at the [Early Music Month page](#) which will include a daily blog, calendar, pix, etc. from across the country. While you're at it, browse through the [EMA website](#). If you haven't been there in a while, you may be surprised by rich offerings of news, reviews, resources, opportunities, and so forth.

—*Nick Jones*

Your Pacifica Chapter Contacts 2018 - 2019

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<http://vdgsa.org>

The VdGS Pacifica Chapter is an Affiliate of the San Francisco Early Music Society (SFEMS).