

# GAMBA NEWS

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Viola da Gamba Society/Pacifica

February 2002

## Tour de force from Japan

*The Yukimi Kambe Consort  
comes to Berkeley*

By Ellen Seibert

When the four players of the Yukimi Kambe Consort came onto the stage and sat down, an unusual quiet fell over the audience – 200 members

of the Viola da Gamba Society of America Conclave, held at Reed College, in Portland, in July 2000.

The four women formed a tableau of beautiful colors and shapes. They wore matched but slightly varied silk tunics and flowing pants of whites and light blues, arms draped in wide sleeves of silk.

Their bows were always held delicately; their fingers

fell on the viol frets with ease. Pizzicati were worthy of ballet choreography.

Their music was extraordinary, as precise and singularly intentioned as the best of a modern string quartet. Some pieces incorporated Japanese sounds and percussive effects. At the end of the performance the entire audience leapt to their feet

### Why you should hear the Kambe Consort

*From a review of a performance by the consort at Portland Conclave, 2000:*

**"Highly polished technique and a cosmopolitan, dominating intelligence, warmth and humor"**

— Lyle York

**"Crystal clarity"**

— Julie Jeffrey

**"The instruments ... sound like they are being played by a single person"**

— Ken Perlow

## John Dornenburg to coach February 9 at Stanford

Please mail your reply card ASAP to John Dornenburg, who will coach Pacifica's play day February 9 at Stanford. You can also e-mail him at [jdrnbg@concentric.net](mailto:jdrnbg@concentric.net).

Play will start at 9:30 a.m. and end at 4 p.m. The fee for the day, for members and non-members, is \$10. Players gather in Room 102, next to the office, at the Braun Music Center, Stanford campus.

From the East Bay, take the Dumbarton Bridge (84) and exit left on University, which crosses 101 and becomes Palm Drive at the campus. Turn left onto Campus Drive East. Turn right on Mayfield to the Braun Music Center. From 101, exit University and follow directions above. From 280, exit at Sand Hill Road; turn right on Junipero Serra; bear left on Campus Drive East; turn left on Mayfield.

Parking on campus is free on Saturdays, including permit zones. Players can buy lunch on campus at the Union Coffee Shop or Mexican restaurant, both close to the music department.

*See Page 5 for complete Play Day schedule*

and applauded wildly. It was a spontaneous gesture of appreciation for a viola da gamba consort

*Continued on Page 3*

## Yes! I want to join VdGS/Pacifica!

Just fill out the form below, write a check and mail them both in.

YOUR FIRST AND LAST NAME

YOUR MAILING ADDRESS

CITY, STATE AND ZIP

YOUR E-MAIL ADDRESS

( ) -  
YOUR PHONE NUMBER

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ **Playing Member (\$25):** You can attend monthly consort meetings for free, you get a free subscription to Gamba News, and you get a discount on consort-coaching sessions.

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ **Two-Person Membership (\$35):** Two playing members in the same household. You share all the rights and privileges of a Playing Member.

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ **Newsletter-Only Membership (\$10)**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ **Donations (\$10, \$25, \$50, \$100 or more!)** to VdGS/Pacifica will help us buy sheet music and rental instruments.

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ **TOTAL ENCLOSED**

Make out checks to *VdGS/Pacifica*. Mail them with this form to:

*Helen Tyrrell, Treasurer  
VdGS/Pacifica  
P.O. Box 188  
Orinda, CA 94563*

## GAMBA NEWS

Published nine times a year by the Pacifica chapter of the Viola da Gamba Society. It goes on vacation during the months of June, July and August.

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**Contributions welcome:** Send concert listings and reviews, opinions, workshop experiences, CD reviews, drawings, or photos to **Lyle York**, Editor, 1932 Thousand Oaks Boulevard, Berkeley, CA 94707, or via e-mail: lleyork@earthlink.net. Phone (510) 559-9273.

**Classified ads:** Short classified text advertisements in *Gamba News* are free to VdGS/Pacifica members. For non-members, ads are \$5 per issue. Please mail your check to **Lyle York** (address above), made out to VdGS/Pacifica.

**Newsletters by e-mail:** If you'd like to receive your monthly *Gamba News* on-line, please e-mail **Lyle York** at lleyork@earthlink.net. Your reply postcard will take e-mail form as well.

**Web site:** Our VdGS/Pacifica chapter Web site, <http://home.pacbell.net/hesuome>, is maintained and regularly updated by **Helen Tyrrell**. It contains the Viol Players' Calendar, which is often more up to date than the *Gamba News* calendar – along with a list of local teachers, sources for music, supplies, inexpensive viols, repairs, and travel tips. The VdGSA (national) Web site is [www.vdgsa.org](http://www.vdgsa.org).

**Rent a viol:** Pacifica has trebles, tenors and basses to rent. Donations of viols and bows to our rental program are extremely welcome — we'll accept them in any condition. Rental fees range from \$10 to \$25 per month. In charge of rentals is **John Mark**, at 10 Holyrood Manor, Oakland, CA 94611; (510) 531-1471; mark\_bach8@hotmail.com.

The VdGSA, Pacifica's parent organization, also rents viols. For VdGSA members, rates are \$250 per year for trebles and tenors, \$300 for basses, and \$750 for a complete consort of viols. For more information, contact **Stephen Morris**, 2615 Tanglewood Road, Decatur, GA 30033-2729; (404) 325-2709; smmorris@mindspring.com.

The VdGSA has instituted a Rent-To-Own program. If interested, contact **John Mark**, address above.

unlike any we had ever heard.

Yukimi Kambe first organized a viol consort in Tokyo in 1983. The makeup has changed over the years, but this particular group of four has been together since 1993. I was fortunate to hear a five-member group in 1988 at the VdGSA Conclave held in Los Angeles. The concert was half European Renaissance music and half 20<sup>th</sup> century viola da gamba pieces, some of them commissioned for the group. I came away in awe of their precision, musical interpretations and utterly astonishing virtuosity, shown clearly in the contemporary music.

An all-too-brief solo performance by Yukimi Kambe earlier in the Reed College Conclave included two exquisite contemporary compositions with roots in traditional Japanese musical forms. "Jiuta," by the American composer David Loeb, featured voice-like unisons and pizzicati suggesting the plucked strings of the *sangen* and *koto*. "Kappa," by Tsutomu Mizuno, depicted a legendary Japanese animal, something like a giant frog, employing bent notes, *col legno*, knuckle beatings and slaps to the viol.

Of the consort's performance selections, only three were composed before the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Two were arrangements of Bach. The other was by Diego da Conceicao, a Portuguese composer flourishing around 1695. Other selections included contemporary Japanese works by Yoko Sato and Shin'ya Takahashi, an American piece by David Loeb written for the consort, and an arrangement of "The Girl From Ipanema" by Antonio Carlos Jobim. Loeb's, Sato's and Takahashi's pieces were all U.S. premieres.

The Yukimi Kambe Consort will tour the United States starting in Berkeley, February 16, and moving on to Milwaukee, Santa Cruz, Seattle, Washington, DC, Duke University in Durham, NC, and

Brasstown, GA, near Atlanta.

As a very young violin student in Japan, Yukimi Kambe was introduced to the viol by the Japanese player Toshinari Ohashi, playing the music of

Marin Marais. She was fascinated by the chords made on the viola da gamba. Her love of earlier music included Gregorian chant as well.

After finishing her violin studies Kambe went to the Schola Cantorum in Basel, Switzerland, to study for three and a half years with Hannelore Mueller, one of the great viol teachers. Then she went on to The Hague to study with another great teacher and performer, Wieland Kuijken. By now, her life work and passion was determined. She began giving viol recitals, making recordings and teaching others. Kambe plays treble viol in the consort.

Kambe's own mother became interested in the viola da gamba after Yukimi returned from study at Basel and The Hague. After she learned all three sizes of viol, she began building and repairing them – an unusual avocation for a Japanese woman.

Kambe has also studied the history of the viol in Japan. It is widely thought that Japan closed itself off to foreign influences, but in fact this isolation did not begin until the Edo era, beginning in the early 17th century. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century Portuguese missionaries brought viols to Japan to accompany vocal masses in the churches, standing in for the organ, leaving a tradition of viol playing in Japan for some years afterward. (Much of Kambe's research can be read in her article in *The Journal of the Viola da Gamba Society of America*, Volume 37, 2000: "Viols in Japan in the Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries.")

Eriko Ozawa, who plays treble and tenor viols in the consort, started playing piano before the viola da gamba, like many others in Japan. She graduated from the Ferris Junior College of Music in Yokohama, where Kambe is a lecturer. Ozawa

## Where to see Kambe perform

The consort will present a free lecture-demonstration at Music-Sources, 1000 The Alameda, in Berkeley at 2 p.m. on February 16.

That evening, at 8 p.m. at St. Albans Episcopal Church, Curtis and Washington streets, Albany, it will perform a program entitled "Buffet delle quattro Viole da Gamba – Music for the Viol from Japan and the West."

See Calendar, Page 5, for details.

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now gives piano and viola da gamba lessons herself and is raising a family.

Kaori Hashizume, who plays seven-string bass viol in the consort, graduated from the Kunitachi College of Music in Tokyo, where Kambe also lectures. Hashizume also began her music study with piano. Now she teaches at an unusual school, Ueno-Gakuen Junior and Senior High School, in Tokyo, where students begin playing the viol in the first grade. In the third grade they are introduced to the recorder as well.

Maki Noguchi (tenor and seven-string bass) also graduated from the Kunitachi College of Music and plays other instruments, but viola da gamba is her first love. She is the most petite member of the ensemble, yet manages to play a large seven-string bass gamba with the utmost ease and relaxed bowing and fingering. She plucks strings as though pulling up delicate feathers and tossing them into the air.

The Kambe Consort plays matching instruments by Sato, a great Japanese maker. At home, the

group rehearses once a week. When a concert or tour approaches they rehearse intensively three times a week. I asked Ozawa, Hashizume and Noguchi if they would suggest interpretations or try to influence how pieces would be played. Laughter erupted. They said that they could speak up, but, in the end, what Kambe decides is what they do.

The Kambe Consort opens our ears to new works of great beauty. While we love the traditional works for the gamba, we recognize that an instrument lives on when it has new relevance for modern audiences. After all, the viola da gamba died away for more than a century once before when a European public thought it old-fashioned. The Yukimi Kambe Consort presents us with the best of the old and the new.

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*Ellen Seibert of Seattle is the Pacific Northwest Chapter representative to the Viola da Gamba Society of America.*

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## A new CD from Sex Chordae

A long-awaited CD from the Sex Chordae Consort of Viols is now available: *Josquin Des Prez and Heinrich Isaac: Music of the Renaissance*, with Susan Rode Morris, soprano, and Scott Whitaker, tenor. Centaur CRC 2548.

For an early copy, send \$15 (which includes postage and handling) to:

**John Dornenburg**  
**3931 Linwood Avenue**  
**Oakland, CA 94602.**

# Mark your calendar

**FEBRUARY 6, 2002**

**MID-PENINSULA RECORDER ORCHESTRA** Music regular meeting, for players of recorder, early winds or early strings. Bring a music stand. For information: (650) 591-3648.  
8 to 10 p.m., Music Room 2,  
J.L. Stanford Middle School,  
480 E. Meadow, Palo Alto.

**FEBRUARY 9, 2002**

**VDGS/PACIFICA PLAY DAY AT STANFORD:** John Dornenburg will coach at Braun Music Center, on the Stanford campus, from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Fee is \$10.

**FEBRUARY 16, 2002**

**THE YUKIMI KAMBE VIOL CONSORT:** A lecture-demonstration entitled "The Magical Charm of the Viola da Gamba in Historical and Contemporary Music." (510) 848-5591. Free.  
2 p.m., MusicSources,  
1000 The Alameda, Berkeley.

**THE YUKIMI KAMBE VIOL CONSORT:** "Buffet delle Quattro Viole da Gamba - Music for the Viola da Gamba from Japan and the West." \$18/\$15. (510) 848-5591.

8 p.m., St. Albans Episcopal Church,  
Curtis and Washington streets, Albany.

**FEBRUARY 23, 2002**

**JOHN DORNENBURG, VIOLA DA GAMBA, AND YUKO TANAKA, HARP-SICHORD:** Concert of music by Caix d'Herlevois, Marin Marais, St. Colombe, and Antoine Forqueray. Tickets: \$8.  
For information: (650) 725-2787.  
8 p.m., Memorial Church, Stanford University.

**FEBRUARY 27, 2002**

**SFEMS COLLEGIUM EVENING:** Nueva España: Renaissance Music in the New World. Eileen Hadidian, conductor. For information and reservations: Frances Feldon, (510) 527-9029, [franfel@aol.com](mailto:franfel@aol.com).  
7:30-9:30 p.m., St. Albans Episcopal Church, Curtis and Washington streets, Albany.

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## PACIFICA PLAY DAY SCHEDULE

All play days except those at Stanford are held at Zion Lutheran Church, 5201 Park Boulevard, Oakland.

The church is just west of the Park Boulevard exit off Highway 13. We meet at 9:30 a.m. for the coached session. Lunch break is at 12:30; players can go to nearby restaurants or bring lunch from home. Uncoached afternoon playing goes on till 4:00 p.m.

Sheet music, coffee and tea will be supplied. Please bring a music stand and any music of your own you'd like to play. Consorts are formed based on the information you provide on the enclosed postcard. **Please mail it in immediately!** Or e-mail your data to **John Mark**, [mark\\_bach8@hotmail.com](mailto:mark_bach8@hotmail.com).

Newcomers and rank beginners are welcome. If you're coming for the first time, please phone ahead: (510) 531-1471.

DATE	COACH
February 9	JOHN DORNENBURG, Stanford campus
March 9	TBA
April 12-14	Annual North/South Viol Meet, Fresno
May 11	TBA

## Classifieds

**VIOLS MADE** by **Alexandra Saur**. Beautiful copies of Bertrand, Jaye, and Hoskins masterpieces. (510) 558-6927, (510) 559-9563.

**TREBLE VIOL** Kelischek workshop with Metal bow, lined wooden hard case and extra Dlugolecki strings. \$2500. Contact **Cindy Share**, (925) 939-3551.

**TREBLE VIOL** by Dominic Shann, 1981, after English models; 38 cm string length. Cooped top, double purfling, inlaid fretboard and tailpiece, open scroll, tiger maple sides and back. Very light construction. Baroque blackwood bow with ivory nut by Ralph Ashmead; hard case by Early Music Shop (UK), extra gut strings by Damien Dlugolecki. Asking \$4,500 for viol, case and bow. Contact **Oliver Iberien**, (510) 834-6062; [oliver.iberien@mindspring.com](mailto:oliver.iberien@mindspring.com)

**TREBLE VIOL** by Higgins; neck replacement by him; viol in excellent condition. Early ratchet bow by Neil Hendricks and hard case "arranged" by Herb Myers. \$1,500 for viol, bow, and case. Contact **Kris Montague**, (650) 969-1668.

**SEEKING A BOW:** I am looking for a good tenor bow. Contact **Bill Lazar**, [jblazar@aol.com](mailto:jblazar@aol.com); (408) 737-8228.

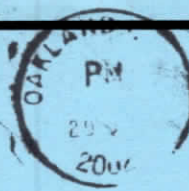
**WANT TO TRY AN ALTO?** Pacifica has an alto viol available for short-term loan, not rental, to any of our experienced members wanting to try such an unusual instrument. It is tuned A to a, one step up from a tenor. Contact **John Mark**, (510) 531-1471 or [mark\\_bach8@hotmail.com](mailto:mark_bach8@hotmail.com) (408) 737-8228.

**LOOKING TO BUY A SEVEN-STRING GAMBA:** My first choice is a historical instrument, but I will also consider a contemporary instrument. Whatever I buy, it needs to be a professional quality instrument with which I can fall in love. Contact **Barbara Bailey-Metz** at (480) 350-9827 or [JohnRMetz@aol.com](mailto:JohnRMetz@aol.com).

**BASS VIOL BOW FOR SALE:** Excellent condition, like new. Snakewood. Sturdy, plays well on a six-string. Made in 2000 by Christopher English. \$1300. For information: **Marina Vidor**, (413) 585-6085, starting 1/28/02.

## Gamba NEWS

c/o Higuchi, 2502 Hearst Avenue, Oakland, CA 94602



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