

VIOLA DA GAMBA SOCIETY PACIFICA VOLUME 19, NO. 2 OCTOBER 2005

GAMBA NEWS

Renew Your Membership **Now!**

Please renew your membership with a check in the enclosed envelope. Many thanks if you have already renewed! Make your check payable to Viola da Gamba Society-Pacifica and mail it to:

Pj Savage, Treasurer VdGS-Pacifica
436 Hudson St.
Oakland, CA 94618

Please note there is a December 10 play day, left inadvertently off the schedule last month.

Sheet music, coffee and tea will be supplied. Please bring either a sack lunch for yourself or a dish or

Pacifica Play Day Schedule, 2005-2006

DATE	COACH
October 8	✓ Amy Brodo
November 12	○ Joanna Blendulf
December 10	✓ Yayoi Isaacson
January 14	○ William Skeen
February 11 (Date to be confirmed)	✓ John Dornenberg at Stanford
March 11	Lisa Terry (coaching and master class)
April 8	✓ Julie Jeffrey
May 4-6 5-7	Fresno North/South Meet (Coaches TBA)
June 3	Pacifica Chapter Concert for Friends/ Family/Each Other, 3-5 pm at St. Alban's

drinks to share at our customary potluck. The church has a microwave we can use. There is also a Mexican restaurant close by.

Please bring a music stand and any consort music of your own you'd like to play. Consorts are formed based on the information you provide to John Mark. Newcomers and rank beginners are welcome.

Each month, as soon as you receive your Gamba News (or before), please call or email John Mark, our peerless consort arranger, to tell him you will attend the upcoming play day and what size(s) you will bring. (510) 531-1471; mark_bach8@hotmail.com.

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 9:15 am for the coached session.

○ Rebecca Ahrent
○ Suira Kammen
○ Joanna Blendulf
○ Steve Lehning



Saturday, October 8
Play Day
with Amy Brodo

For Sale

Bass Viola da Gamba bow by Ralph Ashmead; \$1,500 or best offer. Contact **Elisabeth Reed**, (510) 482-1684.

Visit Your Local Viol Builder! 7-string bass, Bertrand model, rich sound. 6-string bass, Jaye model, bright and delightful to play. Treble, Hoskins model. Tenors and other bass models also available. Soft and hard cases custom-fitted to your instrument. Repairs. Come by to try an instrument, take a shop tour and learn about building viols, or for idle chit-chat. **Alexandra Saur**, (510) 558-6927; (510) 559-9563, in Albany.

Bow Repair Alexandra Saur is now offering rehairing for both modern and early bows. Top quality hair and quick turnaround! 510-559-9563, bowrehair@alexandrasaur.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.

Bass viol, 6 string, German-made in the 1970s. With bow and hard case. \$3500. Contact **Helen Tyrrell**, (925) 253-1782; hesuome@pacbell.net.

Lazar's Early Music

Moeck (recorders and early winds), Kueng, Mollenhauer, Yamaha, Aesthe, Dolmetsch Millenium Recorders, and others in the near future. Competitive prices, instruments sent on approval, personalized service and advice. **Bill Lazar**, (408) 737-8228.

Bass viol, Peter Tourin, Jericho, VT. English division bass after Henry Jaye; no. 49, 1983. With decorated fingerboard and tail-piece, carved rose. 67.3 cm free string length. Very nice condition with a few chips to the finish on the edges. It sold in 1983 for \$3225 for the decorative work. The viol would sell now for about \$9-10,000, according to Peter Tourin. Comes with a nice custom-fitted hard case and bow. Asking \$7000.

Bass viol, Wolfgang Uebel, Celle, Germany, 1977. With carved rose on sound board; 64 cm free string length. Very nice condition. Asking \$6000 with unpadded soft case. Bows available separately.

Treble viol, Neil Hendricks, Reno, CA, 1973. With gear tuning machines. Suitable for a beginner. Asking \$450, with Hendricks 'ratchet' bow, no case.

Bows (4): Chris English, octagonal/round stick, 60 cm free hair length, 74 gms., asking \$1000; **Harry Grabenstein/Tourin bow** (1983), ebony frog/nut, 60 cm free hair length, 68 gms., new hair, asking \$1000; **William Monical**, octagonal stick, ebony frog/nut, 60.5 cm free hair length, 59 gms., new hair, asking \$800; **H.R. Pfretzschner**, 61 cm free hair length, 59 gms., new hair, asking \$700.

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Gamba News is published 10 times a year by the Pacifica chapter of the Viola da Gamba Society. It vacations in July and August.

PACIFICA CHAPTER BOARD

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Contributions Welcome

Send concert listings and reviews, opinions, workshop experiences, CD reviews, drawings, or photos to Julie Morrisett, Editor, 1148 Norwood Ave. #1, Oakland, CA, 94610, or jmorrisett@gmail.com; (510) 444-2380.

Classified Ads

Short classified advertisements in Gamba News are free to VdGS-Pacifica members. For non-members, ads are \$5 per issue. Please mail your check made out to VdGS-Pacifica to Julie Morrisett, Editor, 412 Arkansas Street, San Francisco, CA 94107.

www.pacificaviols.org

Our VdGS-Pacifica chapter website is maintained and regularly updated by Helen Tyrrell. It contains the Viol Player's Calendar, along with a list of local teachers, sources for music, supplies, inexpensive viols, repairs, and travel tips. The VdGSA (national) website is 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 \$15 to \$30 per month. In charge of rentals is John Mark, 10 Holyrood Manor, Oakland, CA 94611; (510) 531-1471; mark_bach8@hotmail.com.

Donating to VdGS-Pacifica

The Pacifica Chapter is an affiliate of the San Francisco Early Music Society (SFEMS), and along with other privileges this affiliation confers, we can receive tax-deductible donations. These include not only cash but viols, bows, musical scores, method books, tuners, stands and other viol paraphernalia. Especially since we now have a Youth Project working to teach young people the viol, please remember the chapter when you are cleaning out your music room.

Cash donations can be used for new rental instruments and bows, new music for the chapter playing library, the Pacifica Youth Project, or our scholarship fund.

To ensure that your donation will be tax-deductible, please make out the check to SFEMS with a note on the lower left corner: "for VdGS-Pacifica." Then send your donation check to Penni Savage, Treasurer, VdGS-Pacifica, 436 Hudson Street, Oakland, CA 94618. She will forward your check to SFEMS.

SFEMS will accept and record the donation, then transfer the funds to us. You will receive an acknowledgment letter from SFEMS for your tax records.

When you donate a viol or other materials, you will receive a letter citing the estimated value of the instrument or materials for your tax records.

Viol Talk

Next Board Meeting October 21

Will be held at 7:30 pm at the home of Lyle York. All are invited! Cookies! Friday, October 21, 7:30 pm. 1932 Thousand Oaks Blvd., Berkeley.

Treasurer's Report: June 2004–August 2005

Income	
Membership dues	1,185.00
Donations	275.00
Instrument rentals	2,936.00
Stanford Coaching	160.00
Youth project (income)	1,740.00
Reimbursements	110.00
Misc. (BerkFest)	325.00
Total Income	\$6,731.00
Expense	
Bank Charges	14.39
Chapter website	155.35
Coaching	1850.00
Instrument purchase	1200.00
Music purchases	321.90
Newsletter	1066.82
Stamps	37.00
Refund	10.00
Rental Space	100.00
SFEMS affiliation	40.00
Stanford Music Dept.	100.00
Youth project (expenses)	1890.00
Total Expenses	\$6785.46

Treble Viol Available to Rent

High-quality treble viol available for rent at reasonable price. Contact Lee McRae, (510) 848-5591, LmcR@aol.com.

For Sale, cont'd

Pictures of all are available on my website (www.bill-lazar.com) on the 'used instruments' page. Contact Bill Lazar, jblazar@aol.com, (408) 730-2238 for more information.

Ruby Instruments

The world's first production model of a 7-string solid body electric viola da gamba! Play traditional and crossover music on one instrument! To hear and play the Ruby, contact Kirby, (510) 317-0834 or (510) 332-0834 (24-hour message); gambaguy@msn.com.

Mark Your Calendar

Upcoming Playing Opportunities, Concerts and Workshops

Sunday, October 9

Music at Stanford presents Carla Moore, violin, John Dornenburg, viola da gamba and Elaine Thornburgh, harpsichord. Program includes music by Buxtehude, Biber and Erlebach.

2:30 pm, *Memorial Church, Stanford University Campus.* (650) 723-2787, <http://music.stanford.edu>

Wednesday, October 12

Noon Concert: **La basse continue.** Faculty recital including Elisabeth Reed, viola da gamba. French baroque sonatas, including music by Francois Couperin, Joseph Bodin de Boismortier, and Michel Corrette.

12:15 pm, *Hertz Hall, UC Berkeley Campus.* Free. (510) 642-4864

Saturday, October 22

Flauti Diversi presents **Bach to Bach**, works by J.S. and C.P.E. Bach. With Karen Clark, mezzo-soprano; Frances Feldon, baroque flute; Yuko Tanaka, harpsichord; and Roy Whelden, viola da gamba.

8:00 pm, *St. David of Wales Church, 5641 Esmond Ave., Richmond.* \$18/\$15. (510) 527-9840

Saturday, October 29

Baroque Etcetera presents **Joy, Despair and Double Concertos: The Mastery of JS Bach.** Program includes two double concertos, including the double violin in D minor with Felicia Mcfall and Paula White, soloists; two cantatas, including #115 Mache dich, mein Geist, bereit, with viola da gamba obbligato (Julie Morrisett.)

8:00 pm, *Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd, Hearst Ave. @ 9th St., Berkeley.* Suggested donation \$10. www.baroqueetc.org

Sunday, October 30

Baroque Etcetera repeats program of October 29.

7:00 pm, *St. John's Episcopal Church, 5th St. @ C, Petaluma.* Suggested donation \$10. www.baroqueetc.org

Friday, November 4

The Wildcat Viols (Joanna Blendulf, Julie Jeffrey, Elisabeth Reed) present **Orpheus Britannicus-England's Greatest Masters of Song.** With guest artists Catherine Webster, Soprano; and Michael Leopold, lute & theorbo. The finest musical compositions of

17th-century Britain, as expressed in fatasies and airs for voice, viols, and lute. Presented by SFEMS.

8:00 pm, *First Lutheran Church, Palo Alto.* \$25/\$22. (510) 528-1725; www.sfems.org.

Saturday, November 5

The Wildcat Viols repeat program of November 4.

8:00 pm, *St. John's Prebyterian Church, Berkeley.* \$25/\$22. (510) 528-1725; www.sfems.org.

Sunday, November 6

The Wildcat Viols repeat program of November 4.

4:00 pm, *St. Gregory's Episcopal Church, San Francisco.* \$25/\$22. (510) 528-1725; www.sfems.org.

Sunday, November 13

Baroque Etcetera repeats program of October 29.

4:00 pm, *St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, 3281 16th St. @ Dolores, San Francisco.* Suggested donation \$10. www.baroqueetc.org

Upcoming Workshop November 20

The Era of Figured Bass and the Viola da Gamba

In June of 2005 I conducted a workshop in Berkeley which focused on continuo playing for viola da gamba players. We discussed music which appeared on the page looking something like the following:



but which departed significantly in actual performance from the expected instrumentation. Normal baroque practice would call for one sustaining instrument, cello perhaps, playing the bass, and at least one chordal instrument, harpsichord most likely, playing both the bass line and adding the harmonies indicated by the numerical symbols.

This segment of music, taken from the tenor aria "Quando è parto" from Handel's oratorio "La Resurrezione," was indicated by the composer to be played by violoncello and viola da gamba (senza cembalo), with the

The Era of Figured Bass and the Viola da Gamba cont'd

gamba taking over the harpsichord's traditional role of realizing the figured bass. In the workshop, we discussed the various methods by which thorough bass parts, with examples taken from the earliest to the latest decades of the thorough bass era, could be performed by the gamba player. As a coup de grace (at least to my thinking), we used some short figured bass exercises to use as frameworks for group improvisation.

On November 20, I plan to offer another workshop on continuo playing for viola da gamba players. We will begin, as in the earlier workshop, with the fundamentals: the numerical notation and the basic principles of accompaniment. This workshop, however, will refer often to C.P.E. Bach's wonderful treatise and pedagogical tool titled *Essay on the true art of playing keyboard instruments (Versuch über die wahre Art das Clavier zu spielen)*. Despite its title, it has much information to offer viol players learning the Baroque art of continuo playing. Especially interesting is Bach's use of a ground plan or a figured bass formula for extempore playing.

The overarching purpose of this workshop will be to (1) acquaint viol players with the notation of thoroughbass; (2) develop facility in reading the most common figures; and (3) study the use of figures in

improvisation, with especial reference to C.P.E. Bach's practice. It's important to remember that the art of thorough bass is an improvisatory art and as such, the player uses his or her existing technique, at whatever level that may be, in the most tasteful and imaginative way possible.

Details for this workshop, which will take place in Berkeley, will be available in the coming weeks. For more information, please contact me at (510) 601-1370 or roywhelden@mac.com.

Roy Whelden is a performer on the viola da gamba and vielle, a composer and a music theorist living in the San Francisco Bay Area. He studied early music performance at the Indiana University School of Music, where he was a student and assistant to the legendary lutenist and musicologist Thomas Binkley. In 2005, Whelden founded the Galax Quartet, a near string quartet consisting of two Baroque violins, viola da gamba, and violoncello. He is devoted to extending the repertoire of historical instruments into the 21st century using the full range of modern compositional techniques, as well as exploring the copious music of centuries past. Early Music America called Whelden "a key figure in the world of new music for gamba" and several of his compositions can be heard on recordings issued by New Albion. (New Albion recordings can be found in CD stores as well as on iTunes.)

Join VdGS-Pacifica or renew for 2005-2006

First and last name _____

Mailing address _____

City, State and Zip _____

e-mail address _____

Phone number, including area code _____

_____ Playing Member (\$25): *You can attend monthly consort meetings 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)

_____ Donation to VdGS-Pacifica will help us buy sheet music and rental instruments and fatten our scholarship fund.

_____ TOTAL ENCLOSED

Make out check to VdGS-Pacifica. Mail it with this form to:

Penni (Pj) Savage, Treasurer
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436 Hudson Street
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