

VIOLADA GAMBA SOCIETY PACIFICA VOLUME 19, NO. 3 NOVEMBER 2005

GAMBA NEWS

And Now, A Word From Your Treasurer:

As your Treasurer, I'd like to thank the new VdaG-P members and those of you who have renewed your membership. Our coffers are filling, and it's a good thing as we've been on a spending spree this summer and it isn't quite finished yet! As you are aware, we are a not-for-profit group and thanks to your membership and generous donations we have been able to send you a wonderful monthly newsletter, purchase a new viol for our rental program and purchase new music for our library.

The Board just approved an additional purchase of music from our very own (and local) PBRs. So, come to a play day, fill your heart, mind and soul with beautiful viola da Gamba music and the wonderful camaraderie we get from being with each other.

Please check your mailing label! If you find the words *Last Issue*, then we have not yet received your renewal. Please do so ASAP in order to ensure your name appears on our next Membership List, due out in January.

Make checks payable to VdGS-Pacifica and mail to:

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

Pacifica Play Day Schedule, 2005-2006

DATE	COACH
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 5 - 7	Amy Brodo and Phebe Craig (Fresno North/South Meet)
June 3	Pacifica Chapter Concert for Friends/ Family/Each Other, 3-5 pm at St. Alban's

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

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.

based on the information you provide to John Mark. Newcomers and rank beginners are welcome.



Saturday, November 12
Play Day
with Joanna Blendulf

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. Pffretzschner**, 61 cm free hair length, 59 gms., new hair, asking \$700.

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GAMMA NEWS

VIOLA DA GAMBA SOCIETY, PACIFICA VOLUME 19, NO. 3 NOVEMBER 2005

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

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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

New Music Store in Albany

"A Cheerfull Noyse" opens the first week of November at 1228 Solano Ave., Albany. Phil Robbins' store specializes in early, Classical and folk music, and will carry instruments, sheet music, accessories and gifts. Other planned features include a play area for children's music, workshops, sales of local musicians' CDs, and rehearsal space.

A Cheerfull Noyse

1228 Solano Ave.
Albany, CA 94706
(510) 524-0411
(877) 524-0411
www.acheerfullnoyse.com
info@acheerfullnoyse.com

Youth Project Update

Elisabeth Reed reports that classes are going well; the four young people meet with Elisabeth twice a month and then on their own on the alternate weeks. They are working on eight pieces for a concert in January; Elisabeth is also trying to arrange another play day visit.

Elisabeth was recently interviewed by *Early Music America* Magazine about her work with young people. The future article may lead to national notice for our program.—Lee McRae

Next Board Meeting

Will be in January; date TBD.



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.

Treble Viol Available to Rent

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

Mark Your Calendar

Upcoming Playing Opportunities, Concerts and Workshops

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.

November 6-12, Week 1

November 13-19, Week 2

Hidden Valley Institute of the Arts Early Music Elderhostel 2005 (no qge requirement.) Choose either or both fabulous weeks: Week 1 Faculty includes Letitia Berlin, Frances Blaker, Pat Petersen and Shira Kammen; Week 2 Faculty includes the Farallon Recorder Quartet (Letitia Berlin, Frances Blaker, Louise Carslake, Hanneke van Proosdij) and Margriet Tindemans. Open to adult recorder and viol players of all ages who play at intermediate to advanced levels, harpsichordists also welcome.

Hidden Valley Institute for the Arts, Carmel Valley. For more information

contact Peter Meckel (831) 659-3115; hvms@aol.com. Register online at hiddenvalleymusic.org.

Sunday, November 13

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

Monday, November 14

Musicians needed for a concert reading of the new opera "The Woman in the Wall", O-Lan Jones, composer, and Kathleen Cramer, librettist. There will be two rehearsals prior to the 14th., remuneration available. Specifically looking for Recorder, Medieval Fiddle, Hammered Dulcimer, Lute and Viola da Gamba.

8:00 pm, Magic Theatre, Fort Mason Center, Building D, 3rd Floor, San Francisco. Contact Kathleen Cramer, KCram@aol.com.

Sunday, November 20

The Era of Figured Bass and the Viola da Gamba, a workshop with Roy Whelden. The workshop will cover the fundamentals of numerical notation and the basic principles of accompaniment, allowing participants to express the art of thorough bass at their own skill level.

Contact Roy Whelden for details, (510) 601-1370, roywhelden@mac.com.

Sunday, December 18

Skyflower Ensemble (Gael Reed, Soprano; Felicia Mcfall, baroque violin; Sarge Gerbode, Arch Lute; Gary Digman, bass viol, lute, baroque guitar; Robin Easterbrook, bass viol) presents "Sanctus, Sanctus / Heilige, Heilige," music of Bach, Biber, Castello, Marini and Stradella.
2:00 pm, Chapel of the Mission San Francisco/Solano, in Sonoma at the corner of East Spain and 1st St. East. Suggested donation \$10 adults, \$5 children/seniors.

Monday, December 19

Skyflower Ensemble repeats program of December 18.
7:00 pm, Sonoma Christian Fellowship, 170 Andrieux (at the corner of 2nd), Sonoma. Suggested donation \$10 adults, \$5 children/seniors.



Membership Updates

New Member

Roberta E. Newman
205 Camino Alto, Ste 200
Mill Valley, CA 94941
robertaellen@mac.com
(415) 383-4334

“Solo Viola da Gamba”

John Dornenburg's recent CD reviewed by David Vernier in *Classics Today*

For many listeners, Jordi Savall is the undisputed king of this repertoire, and indeed he has contributed reference versions of most of the works on offer here. But John Dornenburg proves absolutely worthy of company with Savall, with his consistently articulate and elegant performances, enlivened by a tone quality and expressive range that's as close to the human voice as a viol can achieve. Whether it's the instrument, the engineering, or some combination of both, the viol sound here is warmer and less obtrusive in the lowest register than we often hear from recorded bass viol performances. Thus, it's easier to listen to long stretches of this one solo instrument than we might otherwise be inclined to. In fact, I happily listened to the program's entire 67 minutes with only one or two touches of the pause button.

Although Marais and Sainte-Colombe may be the big names on the list of works (Marais' Chaconne from the First Book of Pièces à une et à deux violes is played completely solo, to fine effect), I found the most striking and overall engaging work to be August Kühnel's Partita XIII in A minor. This set of dances, composed in the latter 17th century, shows an exceptional mastery of the viol and a real facility for its

expressive possibilities, not to mention a sure command of technical challenges--particularly harmonic development and counterpoint--presented in writing for a solo stringed instrument. The result is a work that requires a highly skilled, musically mature player--Dornenburg is both--and one whose thematic and expressive devices occasionally make you wonder whether Bach might have been familiar with Kühnel's solo-viol creations.

Likewise, Carl Friedrich Abel's Pieces for Solo Viol--a modern compilation of different movements from Abel's works to form a "suite"--makes a fine if quite substantial concert work, rich in drama and again demanding virtuoso-level technique, although a couple of the movements are nothing more than sketches that leave much to the discretion of today's performers. Dornenburg does all the right things here, letting his instrument "sing" and "speak" with a certain tasteful flair that both respects and indulges the viol's full range. This is a superbly performed and artfully recorded recital that should please viol enthusiasts as well as listeners who want to explore some of the under-exploited yet highly sophisticated repertoire of the 16th and 17th centuries.

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
VdGS-Pacifica
436 Hudson Street
Oakland, CA 94618

Former Newsletter Editor Learning to Relax



Lyle York, former *Gamba News* helmswoman, shown here enjoying some down time with Ricardo Hofer.



Saturday, November 12
Play Day
with Joanna Blendulf

Turnout for October Play Day Unprecedented



John Mark instructs a new student, with support from Lyle York.
Photograph by Mary Elliott.

Gamba News
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