

# VIOLA DA GAMBA SOCIETY PACIFICA

# GAMBA NEWS

VOLUME 22, NO. 4 MARCH 2009

## INTRODUCING JOSH LEE

Marie Dalby

Cited for his "stylish and soulful playing," Josh Lee leads a mixed-up musical life performing on viols and double bass with some of the world's leaders in early music. Josh is an alumnus of the Peabody Conservatory and the Longy School of Music where he studied double bass with Harold Hall Robinson and viol with Ann Marie Morgan and Jane Hershey. Founder of the ensemble Ostraka, he has performed with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Carmel Bach Festival, Musica Pacifica, Atlanta Baroque Orchestra, Washington Bach Consort, Indianapolis Baroque Orchestra, Opera

### Happy Birthday to Us

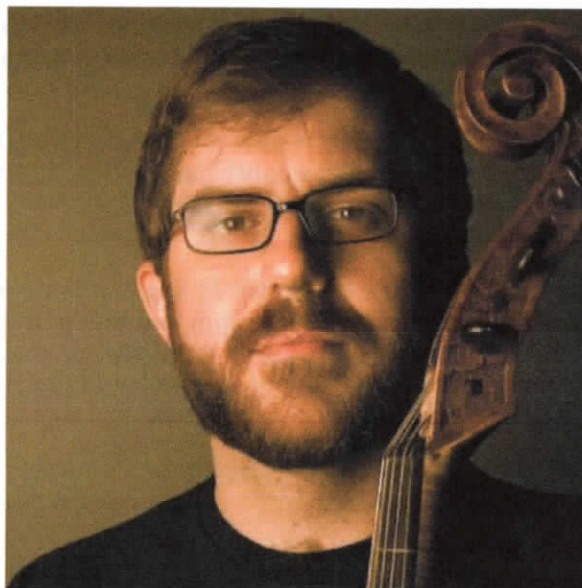
VdGSA-Pacifica Chapter is celebrating its 20th anniversary and a small group of members is building an archive. If you have any documents related to our organization, and would be willing to part with them or allow us to make copies, that would be swell. In particular we're fishing for old newsletters. Or, if you were ever an officer or director of the Board, perhaps you would have items you could contribute to this effort. Send any material to:

Joan Lounsbery, 36 Oak Forest Place, Santa Rosa, CA 95409. If you have questions, call or write Joan: (707) 546-8505 or joanl@sonic.net. Thanks!

*Look for more Anniversary features in future issues of the Gamba News.*

### Play Day 2008 - 2009

DATE	COACH
March 14	Roy Whelden
April 11	Farley Pearce
May 9	Bill Skeen
June 6	Music Potluck



Lafayette, New Trinity Baroque, Musica Angelica and Hesperus. Josh's performances have been heard on National Public Radio's "Performance Today" and "Harmonia." Josh has recorded for Dorian, NPR and Koch International. His most recent recording with Baroque Nouveau, Rameau's complete Pièces de Clavecin en Concert will be released by Reference Recordings in 2009. Josh is also leading the VdGSA's first Young Players' Weekend workshop, which will be held in Massachusetts from March 20th to the 22nd.

*What made you move to the Bay Area?*

Jon [Soileau, Josh's partner] and I had been in Atlanta for about five years, and while we enjoyed it, we both became aware of the potential in the Bay Area—for me as an early musician and for him in the creative and decorative arts. We have so many opportunities here! For me, it was that there is a critical mass. Here, you can throw a rock and hit some kind of specialist in some esoteric aspect of music that I'm interested in. I was tired of sitting in my Atlanta living room, playing by myself. Here, whether it's playing consorts in

*Continued on page four*

## For Sale

**Ask Miss Fret-Knot:** A guide to consort manners, by Prudence Fret-Knot and Lyle York, is available for \$14.95 plus shipping from Lazar Early Music: [www.bill-lazar.com](http://www.bill-lazar.com), [jblazar.com](http://jblazar.com), or (408) 734-4920.

**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 Rehair** Alexandra Saur is now offering rehairing for both modern and early bows. Top quality hair and quick turnaround! 510-559-9563, [bowrehair@alexandrasaur.com](mailto:bowrehair@alexandrasaur.com).

### Lazar's Early Music

Moeck (recorders and early winds), Kueng, Mollenhauer, Yamaha, Aesthe, Dolmetsch Millenium Recorders, and others in the near future. Viols, used and new. Competitive prices, instruments sent on approval, personalized service and advice. **Bill Lazar**, (408) 734-4920.

**Bow, Bass Viol.** William Salchow, 73 gms, 71.7 cm stick, 57.8 cm free hair, snakewood. \$1200

**Bow, Tenor/Treble Viol.** Stephen Marvin, 59 gms, 71.2 cm stick, 57.2 cm free hair, highly figured snakewood, clip-in frog. \$1200 (\$2000 new)

**Bow, Treble Viol/Baroque Violin.** 51 gms, 64.1 cm stick, 53.2 cm free hair, clip-in frog, figured snakewood. \$600 (\$1000 new)

**Viola da gamba, treble.** Uebel, 1966. 36.7 cm string length. Carved rose and fingerboard, some finish wear, but generally in good condition. Homemade hard case, new frets, new Gamut strings. \$1250

**Viola da gamba, 6-string bass.** Zuchowicz, 1983, 68 cm string length, new Gamut strings, like-new condition, hard case. \$7000 (\$9200 new)

**Viola da gamba, treble.** Unknown maker, 37 cm string length, female carved head, antiqued to look like old instrument. New frets, Gamut strings, soft case. \$2050

Pictures are available on [www.bill-lazar.com](http://www.bill-lazar.com). Contact **Bill Lazar**, [jblazar@aol.com](mailto:jblazar@aol.com), (408) 734-4920 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 Leong**, (510) 317-0834 or (510) 332-0834 (24-hour message); [gambaguy@msn.com](mailto:gambaguy@msn.com).

## GAMMA NEWS

*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, 1266 East 34th St., Oakland, CA, 94610, or [jmorrisett@gmail.com](mailto:jmorrisett@gmail.com); (510) 534-3690.



### 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, 1266 E. 34th Street, Oakland, CA 94610.

### [www.pacificaviols.org](http://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](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 \$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](mailto: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.

## Membership

### Renewals

Elizabeth Brownell

Daniel Deitch

Mary Elliott

Peter Hallifax

Billie Hamilton and Dorothy Orolin

Elisabeth Reed

Nancy Rifkin

Walter Unterberg



## Josh Lee

*continued from page one*

someone's living room or working with Philharmonia Baroque, I am grateful every day for the chances I get to make music.

*What first interested you about the viol?*

When I was a junior in high school, a friend of mine had a Baltimore Consort recording with a Praetorius bransle on it. I remember listening to that and thinking, wait a minute, there is something extremely cool here—I was a bass player at the time, and I started reading about what bows these musicians were using and experimenting with holding my bow in all different ways to see if I could make the same sounds. A couple of years later, I was a student at Peabody and I found out you could sign up for gamba as a minor. So I signed up, but caught some grief from my bass teacher, who wasn't thrilled with the idea of me taking time away from bass practicing to fool around with gamba. In fact, I was so unsure I could manage both that I actually didn't show up for my first gamba lesson—Ann Marie Morgan, who was the gamba teacher there, showed up outside another one of my classes to find out what had happened! She tracked me down, and I couldn't say no! What she ended up teaching me with this new instrument was a different way of music making. I am so intrigued by the exploration that can happen with playing the gamba—whether it's interest in iconography and how that relates to the actual instruments we play today, or the social and economic history of the people who played them. These stories behind the music makes it very vital to me—what happened back then still has voice today.

*So you went from being a bass player to dabbling in gamba to changing your major at Peabody from bass to gamba? What were some of the highlights of your time there?*

That's right. I was at Peabody for two and half years as a bass major, but ended up leaving school because I felt like I was falling out of love with music. I did come back—but this time, as a gamba major. I

didn't even really know what I was doing. I played two Hume pieces for my audition, and didn't even have a handle on how to keep my legs from falling asleep or what kind of technique I needed to use. But I knew that making music with the gamba was what I wanted to do, so I committed myself to figuring it out. I still play bass a great deal these days—I have come back to being able to love that, too. As far as highlights go, in 1997, Ann Marie Morgan asked me to play on a concert with her and members of the Washington Bach Consort. We did a cantata by Johann Christoph Bach called "Ach, dass ich Wassers gnug hätte" for alto voice, violin, three bass viols and continuo—this is just the most luscious, dark-chocolate-sounding, amazing piece and there I was, up on stage, performing with incredible people. I was playing a huge, 80-pound, clunky German school instrument, but I felt like I couldn't ask for a better musical experience.

*What are you most excited about as a viol teacher?*

I love to demystify technical issues for people. My experience has been that there is no voodoo or rocket science involved—it's all about breaking the technical actions into pieces and understanding how they work together to make a good sound. I love to work on the bow and how to make the most of it. This is part of what really attracted me to early music in the first place—how important the bow is. So much of what you can do on the gamba is in the right hand. I am also really excited about bringing the viol to more young people. I was lucky to come across the instrument fairly early in life, and I am committed to showing younger players what kinds of resources are available to help them pursue this passion. The national viola da gamba society and the chapters are so incredibly rich with people who want to help others love the instrument, and I want to help make sure people are given the chance to have their experience be more interesting and fruitful. People helped me out along the way, and I'm happy to be in that role for others now. It's my job to do that! I love the gamba, and everyone else should too. End of story!





# Mark Your Calendar

## Friday, March 13

**Sex Chordae Consort of Viols** with soprano Robin Fisher; John Dornenburg, Julie Jeffrey and Farley Pearce, viols. Late Renaissance Music from England, including works by Byrd, Bevin, Gibbons, Locke, Campion, and Dowland.

8:00 pm, CSU Sacramento Music Department, Capistrano Hall (Room 151), 6000 J Street, Sacramento. \$8 general/\$5 students and seniors. Parking garage next to music building is open to public for evening events. (916) 278-5155 <http://calendar.csus.edu/MasterCalendar.aspx>

MusicSources presents "**Dancing with the Stars in the Jacobean & Mantuan Courts**," the recreation of two court dance spectacles from the late Renaissance, *The Lord Hay's Masque* and *Tirsi e Clori*. Featuring many soloists including the Galileo Project.

7:30 pm, Northbrae Community Church, 941 The Alameda, Berkeley. \$75 with preconcert reception; \$35 performance only. Wheelchair accessible. (510) 528-1685 or [www.musicsources.org](http://www.musicsources.org)

Voices of Music presents "**The Young Artists Concert**," with Andrew Newbery Levy and Young Min Kim, recorders; Erica Schuller and Amy White, sopranos; Michael Peterson, harpsichord; and Lisa Silverman, viola da gamba performing music by Dowland, Marais, Purcell, Telemann, Sanchez and Strozzi. This concert is a benefit for food charities; you are invited to bring a donation of non-perishable food.

8:00 pm, St. Alban's Episcopal Church, 1501 Washington Avenue, Albany. Free. (510) 236-9808 or [www.voicesofmusic.org](http://www.voicesofmusic.org)

## Saturday, March 14

Early Music at Las Positas College presents **Sex Chordae Consort of Viols** with soprano Robin Fisher; John Dornenburg, Julie Jeffrey and Farley Pearce, viols. Late Renaissance Music from England, including works by Byrd, Bevin, Gibbons, Locke, Campion, and Dowland.

7:30 pm, Las Positas College Library, 3033 Collier Canyon Road, Livermore. \$15 general, \$5 students. Wheelchair accessible. [www.lpclearlymusic.org](http://www.lpclearlymusic.org)

## Wednesday, March 18

Mid-Peninsula Recorder Orchestra regular meeting for players of recorders, early winds, and early strings. Bring your music stand.

8:00-10:00 pm, Music Room number 060, J.L. Stanford Middle School, 480 East Meadow, Palo Alto. Wheelchair accessible. (650) 591-3648 or [www.sfems.org/mpro](http://www.sfems.org/mpro)

## Saturday, March 21

Live at Mission Blue presents "**The World of Harp**" with Cheryl Ann Fulton, harp, Peter Maund, percussion, and Roy Whelden, vielle and viola da gamba playing works from the 12th through 20th centuries.

8:00 pm, preconcert talk at 7:30, Mission Blue Cultural Center, 475 Mission Blue Drive, Brisbane. \$20/\$12. Wheelchair accessible. [www.LiveatMissionBlue.com](http://www.LiveatMissionBlue.com)

## Sunday, March 29

Music of J.S. Bach and Friends, performed by **Wieland Kuijken**, viola da gamba, **Eva Legêne**, recorder, and **Corey Jamason**, harpsichord.

8:00 pm, San Francisco Conservatory of Music, Concert Hall, 50 Oak St., San Francisco. \$30/\$25/\$20. Wheelchair accessible. Tickets: [www.cityboxoffice.com](http://www.cityboxoffice.com); information: [www.sfcm.edu](http://www.sfcm.edu)

## Wednesday, April 1

Mid-Peninsula Recorder Orchestra regular meeting for players of recorders, early winds, and early strings. Bring your music stand.

8:00-10:00 pm, Music Room number 060, J.L. Stanford Middle School, 480 East Meadow, Palo Alto. Wheelchair accessible. (650) 591-3648 or [www.sfems.org/mpro](http://www.sfems.org/mpro)

## Friday, April 3

East Bay Chapter, ARS, monthly meeting. Frances Blaker, guest conductor. Viols welcome!

7:30 pm -10:00 pm, Zion Lutheran Church, 5201 Park Blvd., Oakland. \$5 payable at the door for non-EBRS members. Wheelchair accessible. (510) 483-8675 or (415) 472-6367

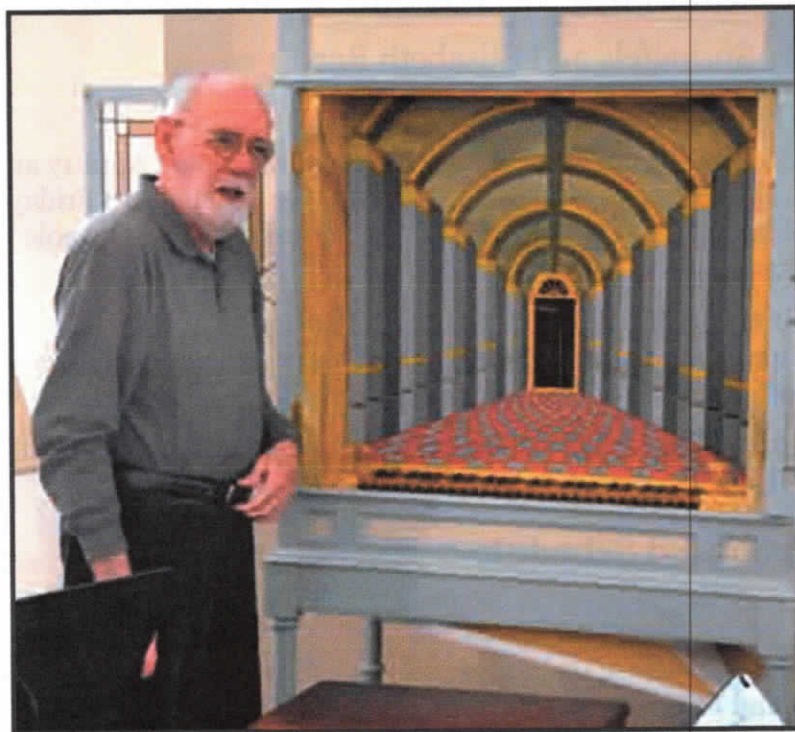
# JOHN SHORTTRIDGE

Nelda Smith

The early music community is diminished by the death of John Shortridge, on Feb 21, 2009. John, husband of Linda, was a scholar of early keyboards, an author of articles, the former curator of the

Smithsonian's rare instrument collection, and was a skilled reproducer of interesting early instruments. The recent Presidents' Day weekend workshop in Albuquerque celebrated the completion of a replica of a most unusual house organ known to have been played by Lawes and Jenkins. The organ was played by John at the master class held in the Shortridges' home and students could try it on the last day after the conclusion of the formal classes. The workshop faculty concert featured Linda's viols and was open to the public and held in a large church. Besides their interest in making and playing viols and keyboards, the Shortridges both played historic double reeds and have been offering summer workshops for players of antique double reeds.

The photos show a clavichord that John made and an amazing little organ, which has a full 51-note keyboard and 3-1/2 ranks of pipes for a divided keyboard. Also packed into the small cabinet at the back is a wind chamber that connects the bellows that inflate below the keyboard with a second set that rises above the top of the unit. A foot pump operates the bellows. John died less than two weeks after finishing this instrument. He had a fatal fall while hiking.



Photos courtesy of Scott Mason





## March...

## and April

Saturday, March 14

Play day with  
**Roy Whelden**

Saturday, April 11

Play day with  
**Farley Pearce**



Please contact John Mark  
(mark\_bach8@hotmail.com or 510-531-1471)  
as soon as possible to let him know you will  
attend. Newcomers and rank beginners are  
always welcome.

**Start Time 9:15 am**

*Sheet music, coffee, and tea supplied*

Zion Lutheran Church  
5201 Park Blvd., Oakland

Join VdGS-Pacifica or renew for 2008-2009

*Make out check  
to VdGS-Pacifica.*

*Mail it with this form to:*

First and last name \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State and Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
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Phone number, including area code \_\_\_\_\_

Penni (Pj) Savage, Treasurer  
VdGS-Pacifica  
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Oakland, CA 94618

\_\_\_\_\_ Playing Member (\$35): *Attend monthly consort meetings free; plus  
receive a free subscription to Gamba News.*

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

\_\_\_\_\_ Donation to VdGS-Pacifica will help us buy sheet music and rental instruments and grow  
our scholarship fund. May we acknowledge your donation in the newsletter?

Yes ☐ No ☐

\_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL ENCLOSED

## HE PLAYED LIKE HE WAS IN JAIL - BEHIND A FEW BARS AND COULDN'T FIND THE KEY

-ANONYMOUS

Greetings, readers. Welcome to 2009 and the second half of our play day season.  
May you find your keys on a daily basis!

### Board Meeting

The next board meeting of the Pacifica VdGS will be Jan 28, 7:30 pm, at the home of Ricardo Hofer: 370 63rd St (between Hillegass and Colby.)

### Sarah Cunningham

Sarah Cunningham will be in town and available to give private or group lessons. She is great on all repertoire (French solo music, lira viol stuff, diminutions, etc.) and on technical questions such as: string crossings; making the low strings speak quickly and accurately; making a glorious sound up high; choreographing your left hand so shifting and chords are graceful and easy; and breathing, energy and body awareness. Her passion is improvisation, especially as a freeing and consciousness-altering recreational practice-- so there is the possibility of organising one or more group sessions to experiment with this: don't be scared. If you are interested please get in touch! Dates to be determined between Feb 20th and March 1st 2009. The exact location in the East Bay (Berkeley, El Cerrito, Oakland, Richmond, Albany) will be announced. Contact Sarah by email at [sarahcunning@gmail.com](mailto:sarahcunning@gmail.com) or text or call (484) 340 9147.

### Save the Date

Please save the dates on your 2009 calendar: The East Bay Recorder Society's Marin Headlands Recorder and Viol Workshop will be held on May 15, 16, and 17, 2009.

### 2009 Conclave Site Change

Conclave 2009 will NOT be held at St. Olaf College in Minnesota, as originally planned, but at St. Xavier University in Chicago instead. St. Xavier is a Catholic, co-ed, liberal arts university for 5000 students. Founded by the Sisters of Mercy in 1846, St. Xavier is located on Chicago's southwest side, approximately 15 minutes south of Midway Airport. Housing options will include suite-style (2 doubles, though some may be singles, 2 bathrooms, living room, kitchenette) and traditional (doubles and singles, sink in each room but bathrooms down the hall). All buildings are air-conditioned and ADA accessible. For more information on the campus, visit their web site at <http://www.sxu.edu>.

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