

VIOLA DA GAMBA SOCIETY PACIFICA VOLUME 23, NO. 1 OCTOBER 2009

# GAMBA NEWS

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## Now oh now

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After many pleasurable years as your editor, I needs must part. Adieu, adieu, to you and you...and in parting, may I say, I am not a crook? One thing is true: If that plane leaves the ground and I'm not on it, I'll regret it. Maybe not today. Maybe not tomorrow. But soon and for the rest of my life. So, happy trails, until we meet again. Is this the end? Of course not, it's only the beginning.

Welcome to Peter Brodigan, your new editor.

*6 (in)famous (mis)quotes were (ab)used in the construction of the above paragraph.*

Cheers!  
~Julie

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## 2009-2010 Play Day Schedule

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DATE	COACH
November 21	Josh lee
December 12	Roy Whelden
January 16	David Morris
February 13	Stanford Workshop with John Dornenburg
March 6	Elisabeth Reed
April 10	Bill Skeen
May 8	Peter Hallifax/Julie Jeffrey
June 5	End of year Bash!

### November 21

Josh Lee will lead us at the upcoming play day. 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.

Zion Lutheran Church  
5201 Park Blvd., Oakland

Start Time 9:15 am

*Sheet music, coffee, and tea supplied*

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## 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.LazarsEarlyMusic.com](http://www.LazarsEarlyMusic.com), [Bill.Lazar@gmail.com](mailto:Bill.Lazar@gmail.com), or (650) 938-5367.

**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](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**, (650) 938-5367.

*Bass viol*, Zuchowicz, 2002, 6-string English Consort. 68 cm string length, carved head, new Gamut strings, excellent condition. \$7000.

*Bass viol bow*, Arnold Dolmetsch. 78 gms, 62 cm free hair, 74 cm octagonal/fluted stick, ivory frog and button, excellent condition. \$1800.

*Treble viol*, unknown. Female carved head, antiqued to look like old instrument. 37 cm string length. New frets, Gamut strings. Soft case. \$1950.

Pictures are available on [www.LazarsEarlyMusic.com](http://www.LazarsEarlyMusic.com). Contact **Bill Lazar**, [Bill.Lazar@gmail.com](mailto:Bill.Lazar@gmail.com), (650) 938-5367 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).

### Bass Viola da Gamba for Sale

Bass viol, Wolfgang Uebel, Germany, 1967. Good condition. 65cm string length. A division viol, nice and small. Comes with hard case and/or padded soft case. \$1,900. May be viewed and played in Berkeley. Contact Joan (707) 546-8505



## GAMBA NEWS

*Gamba News* is published 5 times a year by the Pacifica chapter of the Viola da Gamba Society.

### PACIFICA CHAPTER BOARD

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VdGSA chapter Representative	Lee McRae <a href="mailto:LmcR@aol.com">LmcR@aol.com</a>
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Mary Elliott	<a href="mailto:mary.elliott@pineground.com">mary.elliott@pineground.com</a>
Julie Jeffrey	<a href="mailto:jjeffrey@library.berkeley.edu">jjeffrey@library.berkeley.edu</a>
Elisabeth Reed	<a href="mailto:soundbodies@gmail.com">soundbodies@gmail.com</a>
Lyle York	<a href="mailto:lileyork@earthlink.net">lileyork@earthlink.net</a>

### EX OFFICIO

Marie Dalby	<a href="mailto:marie.dalby@aya.yale.edu">marie.dalby@aya.yale.edu</a>
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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 East 34th Street, Oakland, CA 94610.

### 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

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### New Members

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#### Troy Brunke

304 Beach Road  
Marina, CA 93933  
[brunkeda@gmail.com](mailto:brunkeda@gmail.com)

#### Jamie Jim

1509 Grant Street  
Berkeley, CA 94703  
(816) 286-0861  
[j\\_jim60@hotmail.com](mailto:j_jim60@hotmail.com)

#### Brian Nelson

651 Elm Street  
El Cerrito, CA 94530  
(510) 525-6910  
[brimanel@sonic.net](mailto:brimanel@sonic.net)

#### Hallie Pridham

285 Bartlett Street  
San Francisco, CA 94110  
(775) 560-6799  
[halliepridham@gmail.com](mailto:halliepridham@gmail.com)

#### Debora Tully

819 14th Street  
San Francisco, CA 94114  
(415) 571-3221  
[deboratully@yahoo.com](mailto:deboratully@yahoo.com)

### Updates

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#### Bill Lazar

#### Lazar's Early Music

425 N. Whisman Rd., Ste 200  
Mountain View, CA 94043  
[www.LazarsEarlyMusic.com](http://www.LazarsEarlyMusic.com)  
[Bill.Lazar@gmail.com](mailto:Bill.Lazar@gmail.com)  
(866) 511-2981  
(650) 938-5367  
(408) 705-1960 (fax)

### Renewals

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Peter Ballinger, Alice Benedict, Carolyn Butler,  
Dalton Cantey, Leslie Gold, Kristina Herrick,  
Robin Easterbrook Leal, Nancy Rifkin, Pj Savage

## Next Board Meeting

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Will be held on Tuesday, February 8, 7:30 pm  
at the home of Ellen Farwell: 1807 Butte Street,  
Richmond. All are welcome! Cookies, coffee and  
tea served.

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## Tuesday, December 1

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**Sacramento Recorder Society** meeting. Members conduct. Viols and other early instruments welcome! Bring a stand; refreshments and music provided.

6:45 – 9:15 pm, *Friends Meeting House, 890 57th St., between H and J, Sacramento.* (916) 489-2771 or [shermsj@sbcglobal.net](mailto:shermsj@sbcglobal.net)

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## Friday, December 4

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**East Bay Chapter, ARS**, invites all instrumentalists and singers to their annual collegium! Conducted by Bay Area favorite Cindy Beitmen, the evening features music of Josquin des Prez, thought by many to be the greatest composer of the high Renaissance. In testament to his extraordinary compositional ability, Martin Luther wrote, "He is the master of the notes. They must do as he wills; as for the other composers, they have to do as the notes will." We will explore Josquin's amazing range of styles, from the exquisite, austere *Miserere* – Psalm 50 to the somewhat ludicrous, secular *Allégez moy*. Bring a music stand; refreshments provided. Please RSVP to [glen.shannon@k183.com](mailto:glen.shannon@k183.com) to help provide an accurate account for copies. A=440 for the evening.

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

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## A Varied Recital by Ostraka

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*The Smiling Crocodile*

October 16, 2009, saw the inaugural concert of the first full season of the newest concert presenter in the Bay Area, Barefoot (aka Julie Jeffrey and Peter Hallifax, cavorting around, you guessed it, barefoot). It was most fitting that this was, also, the first recital in the Bay Area by the featured gambist of Ostraka, Josh Lee.

It is not often, if ever, that wine and solid delicacies are served before and during a concert as was the case at this event. The munching and slurping in between the musical pieces added to the warm, informal and personable atmosphere (rest assured, dear reader, that your correspondent ate nothing and drank but a smidgen of wine to preserve his wits and objectivity.)

Ostraka consists of Josh Lee, playing a 7-string bass, with continuo on lute and theorbo by John Lenti and David Walker; the latter playing Spanish guitar on some selections.

The name of the recital, *Division*, said it all: every piece on the program was some form of variation, half

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## Saturday, Dec. 5

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MusicSources' artists in residence **Josh Lee, viola da gamba, and Gilbert Martinez, harpsichord**, present Bach's viola da gamba sonatas as well as rarely heard works for harpsichord.

2:00 pm, *Most Holy Redeemer Church, 100 Diamond Street, San Francisco.* \$20/\$15. (510) 528-1685 or [www.musicsources.org](http://www.musicsources.org)

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## Sunday, Dec. 6

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**Josh Lee and Gilbert Martinez** repeat concert of December 5.

5:00 pm, *MusicSources, 1000 The Alameda 1000 (at Marin), Berkeley.* \$20/\$15. Wheelchair accessible. (510) 528-1685 or [www.musicsources.org](http://www.musicsources.org)



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from the Renaissance by Italian and Spanish composers and half from the early Baroque by English and French composers.

Variations are almost by definition virtuoso pieces, and the program was studded with virtuosity (let me just mention Rognoni, Simpson, and Marais, to name a few.) Josh proved himself more than equal to the technical challenges that his choices of pieces presented. Most telling, however, was that his stellar technique was completely at the service of the music, rather than being an opportunity for muscular display. The result was an utter aural and intellectual delight. We can only hope that we will have many more opportunities to hear Josh in the future.

One final confession: I did not hear the last piece on the program as I had to leave, but for the very good reason that I was already late meeting my spouse.

(For a listing of the other five concerts presented by Barefoot go to [www.BarefootChamberConcerts.com](http://www.BarefootChamberConcerts.com))



# Using the Feldenkrais® Method to Heighten Musical Awareness and Skill

Elisabeth Reed, GCFT

*Ed. Note—This article is reprinted with permission of the author and of SFEMS.*

**L**ike many musicians, I came to the Feldenkrais® Method in the course of dealing with a repetitive stress injury. The Method is invaluable for addressing such injuries, since it not only looks at the presenting symptoms but also investigates the underlying context of behaviors that produced them. Yet, while the Feldenkrais® Method alleviated what was a potentially career-threatening injury for me, its power as a tool for understanding those holistic contexts of movement and thought has been the Method's greatest contribution to my musical life. In the years of incorporating the Method into my playing and teaching since first using it to heal my arm, I have come to believe that the benefits of Feldenkrais® study for the non-injured musician, in the form of heightened musical awareness and skill, even outweigh its more well-known role as an approach to free oneself from pain.

The language of music is very physical; we speak constantly in terms of things like breathing, gesture and weight. Musical gesture, like physical gesture, can be initiated from anywhere we can imagine: from our breath, from our spine, from our feet, sitz bones, pelvis, or belly. While it is of course legitimate to generate musical ideas intellectually, the valuable thing about the Feldenkrais® Method is that it helps us discover many more options for initiating or refining a gesture, a direction for the phrase, or an emphasis. By using the Feldenkrais® Method to explore how we go about making music, we can begin to notice what our habits are — perhaps we tend to make a certain quality of sound which we don't vary much, or we have a limited range of emotional affects we are comfortable with. Once we are aware of what we are doing, we can begin to sense a whole new range of possibilities for creating and shaping sound through movement.

Here is a short Awareness Through Movement® lesson to play with — one specifically for cellists or gambists, but easily adaptable to other instruments:

Sit comfortably on a chair, at first without your instrument. Feel your two sitz bones on the chair and begin to sense the central "line" of your spine, as well as the lines of your arms and legs. Sense yourself almost as a stick figure composed of the line of your

spine ascending from the chair, and the four lines of your legs and arms extending out.

Now pick up your cello and feel the relationship of the instrument to this image you have of the five connected lines of your spine, arms, and legs.

Begin with long, slow bows, down and up. As you play the down bow, arch your back, roll forward on your sitz bones, and look up toward the ceiling, breathing in. As you play the up bow, curl your back in, roll back on your sitz bones, and look down toward the floor or your belly button, breathing out.

Do this several times, keeping a sense of the five lines of your spine, legs, and arms, and shifting your attention from your feet to your knees, your sitz bones, your spine, shoulder blades, neck, head, eyes, and breath.

Now start to play with initiating the movement from each of the different places mentioned above. Begin the movement in your feet, for example, or start it with your breath. Let the impulse for beginning to move the bow shift from one place within you to another, and listen to the changes in the quality and character of the sound.

Then, reverse the direction, so that you are curling everything in on the down bow and breathing out — then arching everything on the up bow and breathing in. Notice the differences in your experience of the down and up bow.

Which way feels more habitual to you?

Experiment with moving the bow almost entirely with your breath: as you breathe in, your rib cage expands and your arm may move almost without any muscular effort in the arm itself. Play with it.

If you can, try doing this with another musician. Have them play and initiate the sound from different places and see what you notice about changes in the quality of the sound. Don't be afraid to sound "bad" sometimes. Cultivate an interest in the variety of sounds you can make.

# Viol Talk

## Correction

An article in last June's Gamba News on the viol students of Elisabeth Reed at San Francisco Conservatory of Music incorrectly reported the name of one of the instrument donors. A treble and a tenor viola da gamba were donated to the program by Luciana Lombardi.

## Our President Speaks Out: Last June's Bash

I thought the "bash" went off beautifully. The best we've had. Thanks to all who took part, and for those who couldn't make it, we missed you. Special thanks to Ricardo for his advance preparations, to John Mark for all the coordination and physical arrangements with the church, and to Robin for the last minute preparations (including the lovely printed program) and the magnificent job as emcee. We also owe a great debt to Monika for (again) handling the refreshment tables. Good job, everybody! I meant also to thank Lou Leal (how could I forget!) for the wonderful wine that he donated from his own wine-making establishment. It made our celebration really special. Thanks, Lou!

## Thank You to Brandes Printing

A very big thank-you to Homer Colvin at Brandes Printing Company, who worked with John Mark on making satisfactory color and black-and-white copies of our flyer. Homer printed several hundred free flyers during the process.

Brandes Printing Company  
726 Addison St.  
Berkeley, CA 94710-1970  
(510) 841-2085  
[www.brandesprinting.com](http://www.brandesprinting.com)

## William Shakespeare Speaks Out: On Music

The man that hath no music in himself,  
Nor is not mov'd with concord of sweet sounds,  
Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils;  
The motions of his spirit are dull as night  
And his affections dark as Erebus:  
Let no such man be trusted.

~*Merchant of Venice* (V, i). Submitted by Lee McRae.

## Ricardo's Rosin



Autumn jewels glow  
with Summer's burned-out fires.  
White Winter behind.

Inside viol case  
sleeping stonehenge discovered.  
Time for new rosin?

Family jewels  
beautiful with uselessness.  
No traction for bow.

Peripatetic  
man of many languages.  
¿quieres jugar?

(Photograph by Len Farwell, staging by Robin Easterbrook)

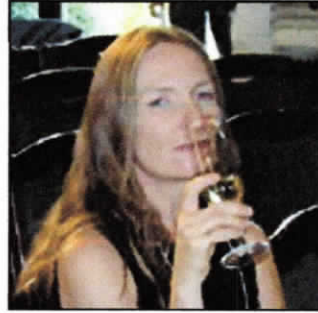


# Here's to You

Julie,

We wish you good health and healing.

-The VdGS-Pacific Board



Join VdGS-Pacific or renew for 2009-2010

*Make out check  
to VdGS-Pacific.*

*Mail it with this form to:*

Perni (Pj) Savage, Treasurer  
VdGS-Pacific  
436 Hudson Street  
Oakland, CA 94618

First and last name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State and Zip \_\_\_\_\_

email address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number, including area code \_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_ Two-person membership (\$45): *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-Pacific 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