

Dear gentle readers,

We send our warmest wishes to you during our new 'normal' situation, sheltering in place to slow the spread of Covid-19.

As we learn to negotiate the difficulties, I have new appreciation for more time to take a walk, cook, play (solos/duets), read, garden...

Pages are missing from this newsletter because in April there are no concerts to urge you to attend, no monthly Open Mic as a performance goal for us amateurs, and no PlayDay with a visiting professional to bring us together and stimulate our learning.

This might be the time to consider supporting gamba teachers by taking an online lesson... see the teacher list on our website under [Resources](#).

Something fun: Shira Kammen is hosting "NoonyTunes" on her Facebook page; join in playing (on your own) the tune of the day.

VdGSA's Conclave has been cancelled. They're exploring what could be done online during that week July 26- Aug. 2. Stay tuned!

Workshop status unknown as yet:

- SFEMS' June and July music workshops
- Viols West in August. This will depend on Cal Poly decisions about availability and cancellation policies. And of course California's state health policies.

We'll keep you informed.

More than ever, we'd love to hear from you with your 'take' on this period, musically or otherwise.

Take care,

Sue Jones, editor

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EMA Relief Fund: Supporting Early Musicians in Need

Help for freelance musicians

In March, SFEMS and Early Music America (EMA) established relief funds for musicians hit hard financially by the coronavirus pandemic.

Recently at an EMA board meeting, I (Nick) heard the passionate testimony of Gwyn Roberts, director of Tempesta di Mare, speaking about the effects of having to cancel a tour to Germany. "I want to pay my musicians; I can't. I put all this money down for venue reservations, plane tickets, hotels, and meals. I just can't pay them."

As of 4/1, EMA's fund had raised over \$50,000 and helped more than 200 early musicians.

Please consider a donation to

[SFEMS Music Freelancers' Relief Fund](#)

[EMA Relief Fund](#)

New!

EMA Online Interest Sessions

...an ongoing series covering historical performance practice and early music. Its first session was presented on Mar. 23 by musicologist Adam Gilbert, who explored 15th c. composition and improvisation.

[Watch it here.](#)

[Subscribe](#) to Early Music America's weekly E-notes to get notices of upcoming sessions.

Following Italy's inspirational lead:

BERKELEY MUSIC CIRCUS

From Lisa Bullwinkel,

Chair of Berkeley Civic Arts Commission

These need not be such dark times. There is still art to be made! Warm up your vocal chords or start practicing your instruments.

Each week, on Wednesday at noon, step outside your door or open your window and make the hills (and the flats) come alive with music.

These are simple songs and easy for everyone to learn. You will have one week to learn the words or practice on an instrument. This will give kids incentive to practice their violin or flute and lessen the boredom of being sequestered, just a bit. It may even put a smile on your face.



If you are a block captain, or feel like you are capable, please go out in the middle of your block to act as the conductor, starting your neighborhood off at the same time and setting the tempo for the music. On the sidewalk please!

Here's the program: Find more information and links to the lyrics [here](#).

Wed., April 8 **All Together Now**

Wed., April 15 **Lean on Me**

Wed., April 23 **Three Little Birds**

Wed., April 29 **Celebration**

Thanks for playing!

Lisa

AnotherBullwinkelShow.com

P.S. The Berkeley Music Circus was originally conceived by Dan Plonsey during the Berkeley Arts Festival many years ago.

Berkeleyside

Free for all, funded by readers

**“Best of Times
(in the Worst of Times)”**

Berkeleyside, Berkeley's free independent e-newspaper recently launched a new pop-up Saturday e-newsletter “Best of Times (in the Worst of Times).” It will carry [news of positive activity](#) during this ‘shelter-in-place’ period, including the *Music Circus* story above.

Click [here](#) to sign up.

A fascinating [article](#) from a recent edition of EMA's magazine:

A Historically Informed Approach To Music In Times Of Pandemic



by Christopher Macklin, March 20, 2020

Two excerpts:

“Music was not a luxury in times of epidemic uncertainty, it was a necessity. Letters from the 16th-century diplomat Sebastian Giustinian indicate that when fear of the plague prompted King Henry VII to dismiss his entire court and to remain in quarantine at Windsor, the only people who remained with him were his physician, his three favorite gentlemen, and the Italian organ virtuoso Dionisio Memo. Given that Memo’s relationship to the court in other records is described purely on the basis of his musical ability, the assumption must be that he was retained in this capacity, and that, in other words, during a plague epidemic so deadly that the English court was dissolved, a musician was among the people the reigning monarch felt he could not do without.

.....

During plague time, Tommaso del Garbo, a 14th-century professor of medicine in Perugia and Bologna, advised his patients in his treatise *Contra alla peste* to:

...not occupy your mind with death, passion, or anything likely to sadden or grieve you, but give your thoughts over to delightful and pleasing things. Associate with happy and carefree people and avoid all melancholy. Spend your time in your house, but not with too many people, and at your leisure in gardens with fragrant plants, vines, and willows, when they are flowering... And make use of songs and minstrelsy and other pleasurable tales without tiring yourselves out, and all the delightful things that bring anyone comfort.”

Pandemic

What if you thought of it
as the Jews consider the Sabbath—
the most sacred of times?
Cease from travel.
Cease from buying and selling.
Give up, just for now,
on trying to make the world
different than it is.
Sing. Pray. Touch only those
to whom you commit your life.
Center down.

And when your body has become still,
reach out with your heart.
Know that we are connected
in ways that are terrifying and beautiful.
(You could hardly deny it now.)
Know that our lives
are in one another’s hands.
(Surely, that has come clear.)
Do not reach out your hands.
Reach out your heart.
Reach out your words.
Reach out all the tendrils
of compassion that move, invisibly,
where we cannot touch.
Promise this world your love--
for better or for worse,
in sickness and in health,
so long as we all shall live.

– Lynn Ungar

Berkeley, CA • March 11, 2020

www.lynnungar.com

[Click here](#) to hear this poem sung by a virtual choir, with parts provided as well. You can also listen to the author read her poem.

Meet our would-have-been April coach:

Gail Ann Schroeder became acquainted with early music and instruments through her music history courses at Indiana University. It was the viola da gamba, and especially Renaissance music, that captured her initial interest. Her fascination with this period eventually became manifest in a cross-departmental independent study program in Renaissance Studies. A desire to concentrate on her skills and performance on the viol then led her to the University of Michigan where she continued her music history program and studied viola da gamba with Enid Sutherland, graduating in 1980 with a Bachelor of Music in Music History.



Consort Amsterdam, Leipzig Barokorchester, Ricercar Consort, Currende Consort, Capilla Flamenca and Catacoustic Consort. She has performed in many of the European Festivals including Holland Festival Oude Muziek in Utrecht, Resonanzen, Innsbrucker Festwochen, Les Académies Musicales de Saintes, Festival van Vlaanderen, Festival de Wallonie and Internationale Festtage Alter Music Stuttgart.

As a founding member of Ensemble Rebel she concertized extensively in Europe and North America, recorded for Deutsche Harmonia Mundi/BMG and won first prize in 1991 at the Fifth International Competition for Early Music Ensembles (currently the Van Wassenaar Competition) in Utrecht, Netherlands.

Since returning to the USA in 2006, Ms. Schroeder has been in demand as a teacher and ensemble coach at workshops for the Viola da Gamba Society of America, the Amherst Early Music Festival, Mountain Collegium and has participated in the French Baroque Project at the University of Alabama. Currently living in North Carolina, she teaches privately, free-lances on viola da gamba and is artistic director of *Asheville Baroque Concerts*.



Continuing her viol studies at the Royal Music Conservatory of Brussels (above) under the tutelage of Wieland Kuijken, she obtained her First Prize in 1983 and the Higher Diploma with distinction, in 1986. From 1988 to 2002 she was assistant to Wieland Kuijken at the Brussels Conservatory where she taught viola da gamba, didactics of viola da gamba and was director of the viol consort.

Ms. Schroeder has had an extensive career as soloist and as chamber musician, concertizing and recording with various ensembles such as the Huelgas Ensemble, Combattimento

You Too Can Play the VIOLA da GAMBA!

- It's thrilling! It's accessible!
- It can be your first stringed instrument!
- Local Viol Chapter can rent instruments.
- The Chapter can help you find a teacher.



Viola da gamba [gahm-ba] means "leg viol" in Italian, because all sizes of viol [VI-ol] rest on the legs. It has six strings, a fretted neck, and is tuned similarly to a guitar. You will soon be able to play with others. The Bay Area is alive with amateur gambists of all levels whom you can meet at our monthly play days. You are invited!



Julie Jeffrey, local gamba teacher, comments:
"The whole principle of viol playing is based on relaxation. You are sitting naturally, holding it naturally, and everything is more



at rest. You're not in a position of stress or strain. It's user-friendly, and very forgiving to beginners. Within weeks you can be making sounds and playing actual tunes".



• A free introductory session can be arranged



For more information visit our website: www.pacificaviols.org — To try out a gamba call John Mark at 510 531 1471 (mark_bach8@hotmail.com) or Lee McRae at 510 848 5591 (Lmcr@aol.com)

Anyone know when this flier came out?

Ancient tablets found— Secrets revealed!

Secretary deciphers lost cuneiform texts!

—special to Gamba News by Nick "Indiana" Jones

Little did you know that your board secretary has a time machine! It consists of old copies of Gamba News, stretching back to 2000 (remember that year? the millenium? the collapse of all computer systems? the time we couldn't figure out what to call the next decade?).

His find: Troves of tidbits about what this group has done over the past twenty years.

All these are now scanned and available online on our spanky new website (same old address: www.pacificaviols.org). Go to the RESOURCES menu and pull down for the [NEWSLETTER ARCHIVE](#).

I thought readers of current GambaNews editions would enjoy tasting some of these tidbits, so here's a first installment:

- The GambaNews used to be printed and distributed by what I think we did not then call "snail mail" with 33 cent stamps. The paper changed each month to a different shade of pastel. Lyle York was newsletter editor; Julie Jeffrey was President.
- PlayDays, apparently organized by John Mark, seem much the same as today. They were held at Zion Lutheran on Park Blvd in Oakland. Coaches for 2000-01 included Amy Brodo, Julie Jeffrey, Lynn Tetenbaum, and David Morris
- There were February workshops at Stanford, led by John Dornenburg, an April "Viol Meet" at Fresno, the Marin Headlands workshop with East Bay Recorders, and Viols West at Cal Poly.

- [November 2000](#):



- [January 2001](#): a fascinating article on the making of the CD of Monteverdi's Third Book of Madrigals, by Sex Chordae Consort (John Dornenburg, Julie Jeffrey, Amy Brodo, Farley Pearce and Michael Sand); Peter Ballinger's PRB Publications made the viol parts and the group recorded at Pacific Lutheran in Berkeley – trying to avoid airplane noise and rain on the roof! You can hear this album on Spotify.
- [March 2001](#): news about the newly-reworked website (*plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose!*), engineered by Helen Tyrrell
- [April 2001](#): fascinating articles: Brent Wissick summoned to play the viol at the White House; Thomas Jefferson and the bass viol; the infestation of death-watch beetles leaping out of cathedral ceilings to chomp on viols all over Britain. John Mark commented, "compared to the pest destroying the cathedral, the bug eating a few viols is the lesser of two weevils."
Nota bene: the issue is dated April 1.

*Thanks to Mary Elliott and others for preserving
past copies of GambaNews— Nick*



Viol Pedagogy Archives: The Art of the Viol: A Video Method for Viola da Gamba (1986)



In **Part I**, Catharina Meints (Oberlin Conservatory viol teacher, above) presents a wide range of technical tips.

Part II consists of a recording of two concerts at the Oberlin Conservatory with famed teacher August Wenzinger, gambist James Caldwell and harpsichordists James Weaver and Penelope Crawford. She begins with a solo performance of Carl Friederich Abel's *Sonata in d minor*.

Here's a [direct link](#) to both parts.

Pacifica Viols PlayDays 2019-2020

Sept. 14, 2019: Elisabeth Reed

Oct. 12, 2019: Julie Jeffrey

Nov. 9, 2019: Erik Andersen

Dec. 14, 2019: David Morris

Jan. 11, 2020: Pat O'Scannell

Feb. 8, 2020: Mary Springfels

~~cancelled: Mar. 14, 2020: Amy Brode~~

~~cancelled: Apr. 11, 2020: Gail Ann
Schroeder~~

**?? Stay tuned: May 9, 2020: Frances
Blaker**

**?? Stay tuned: June 27, 2020: Pacifica
BASH**

Pacifica Viola da Gamba Society 2019 - 2020

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Pardessus CD Review

Mélanie Corriveau, the talented pardessus player with Les Voix Humaines, stayed with Nick and Sue Jones leading up to the group's Bay Area January SFEMS concert. As a result, Nick's been listening to her CD of music for the pardessus with Eric Milnes on harpsichord. He reviewed it for Early Music America; you can check it out [here](#).



Pacifica Viola da Gamba Society
is a Chapter of the
Viola da Gamba Society of America