

Gamba NEWS

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Play with recorders at Marin Headlands

Viols welcome at annual workshop

The spectacular Marin Headlands, near Sausalito, is the setting for the annual Workshop for Recorders and Viols the weekend of May 19-21, 2000. This workshop, sponsored by the East Bay Chapter of the American Recorder Society, presents 10 talented conductors in 16 different sessions in music from the 14th to the 20th centuries. Intermediate to advanced recorder and viol players can choose to attend all or part of the weekend, since each session is self-selected and self-contained.

The workshop begins with a potluck dinner and large-group play Friday night with **Joanna Bramel Young**. Participants will choose two sessions from six offerings both Saturday morning and Saturday afternoon. Conductors Saturday morning are **Frances Feldon**, **Eileen Hadidian** and **Fred Palmer**. Saturday afternoon leaders are **Tish Berlin**, **Frances Blaker**, and **Judy Linsenberg**. **Bob Dawson** and **David Barnett** will conduct Saturday evening. The workshop will conclude Sunday morning with a rehearsal and performance of a Josquin des Pres mass, led by **David Morris**.

There are no sessions for viols alone, says organizer **Britt Ascher** of EB-ARS, but viol players who do not want a full dose of recorders can come just for Saturday day or Saturday day and evening. If viol players stay in the main Sunset playing room all day, they will not have to move their viols. Frances Feldon, Fred Palmer, Frances Blaker and Tish Berlin will be rotating through Sunset on Saturday, with Bob Dawson there Saturday evening. Judy Linsenberg, Eileen Hadidian and the others will be offering sessions in the Headlands rooms during the day Saturday. Sunday morning with David Morris should also be rewarding for viol players.

There will be ample time on Saturday and Sunday after lunch to enjoy the beautiful Marin Headlands setting from beach to hills. The Marine Mammal Center and Point Bonita Lighthouse are both open for tours. Accommodations are dormitory-style; the food is excellent and healthful.

PLAY DAY SCHEDULE

April 28-30, 2000

FRESNO MEET with coaches **Lynn Tetenbaum** and **Tina Chancey**

May 13, 2000

PLAY DAY with coach **Lynn Tetenbaum**

Past participants agree that the Marin Headlands Workshop cannot be equaled for excellence in music, setting, friends and food.

For further information contact Britt Ascher: (925) 283-7134, or e-mail brittascher@home.com.

Aloha, viola da gamba

Perhaps all those ukeleles at recent Viols West workshops sent a subliminal message to the Honolulu Symphony. On March 31 and April 1 it presented the first complete Hawaiian performance of J.S. Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* with the famous viola da gamba obbligato arias included. Previous Hawaiian attempts to perform the piece had been shortened by as much as one hour, which routinely meant cutting the arias "Gedult" and "Komm suesses Kreutz." For these performances **John Dornenburg** was flown to Honolulu to play the two recitatives and arias.

Aloha means both goodbye and hello. Let's hope the complete *St. Matthew* becomes a Hawaiian tradition.

Update on the Berkeley Festival

A master class in viola da gamba conducted by **Erin Headley**, part of the Berkeley Festival and Exhibition, June 4-11, still has room for one more participant (individual or consort). The participant fee is \$40; auditors pay \$5. Headley will give the class in Morrison Hall on Friday, June 9, from 10 a.m. to noon. She will be appearing with the ensemble Tragicomedia (with **Paul O'Dette**, **Stephen Stubbs** and **Alexander Weimann**) in several Festival programs.

Erin was born in Fort Worth, Texas, and moved to London in 1979, where she has lived ever since. Her study of the cello led to an interest in early music. She is particularly interested in the lirone, the bass counterpart to the lyra da braccio, and has been almost entirely responsible for restoring this instrument to its rightful place as a continuo instrument. In 1987 she co-founded Tragicomedia with Stubbs and Andrew Lawrence-King. Through their touring and award-winning recordings, she became known as one of the world's leading continuo players and as a gamba soloist with a distinctive vocal approach. She has toured with many other distinguished European ensembles and made more than 100 recordings. Erin directs the Baroque performance program at the Malmo Academy of Music in Sweden and the academy's Baroque opera productions for the Swedish Baroque Festival. She teaches early music courses in Germany, Italy, England and the United States, and is the author of the lirone article in the New Grove Dictionary of Musical Instruments.

How will she conduct her master class? "I am very much interested in effective communication in performance," Erin said -- "in trying to understand what makes a particular piece of music tick, and how best to put it across to the listener. This usually brings in the attendant technical aspects -- bowing, fingering, articulation, ornaments, chord playing, and so on."

Erin said she is always glad for at least one participant to bring in a solo aria he or she has transcribed for the viol. "My main crusade is to try to get more players to imitate the voice when it is appropriate." Or if a participant wants to create an accompaniment for a singer, he or she may bring in a singer with a vocal piece from 1500 to 1650 or so.

If you are interested in participating in Headley's master class, giving a mini-concert, or helping at the VdGSA Exhibition booth, please contact **John Mark** at (510) 531-1471, or by e-mail at mark_bach8@hotmail.com.

Going to Conclave?

Registration forms have been mailed for the VdGSA Conclave, held July 23-30 in Portland on the Reed College campus. This year's attendance should be a record, and certainly a draw for Westerners. There is no Viols West workshop in August in deference to the Conclave.

According to Portland veterans, attendees can do pretty well without a car. The Reed College campus dorms have some kitchenettes, and a Trader Joe's is two blocks away. For information on Portland, the campus, classes to be offered, and on-line registration, go to VdGSA's web site, www.vdgsa.com. *ng*

If you drive, Portland is about 12 hours from the Bay Area—a long driving day. Alternatively, you and your viols can travel by train. Some stations, such as Jack London Square in Oakland, offer checking for bags, which ride in a separate unconditioned area. But passengers may carry on a certain number of bags. That number is not fixed; apparently it depends on how crowded one's train is when it departs. We strongly advise any player making plans to carry more than one viol in the passenger car to call his or her departing station just to make sure this will be acceptable. **Penni (PJ) Savage** is excited by the prospect of riding Amtrak from Oakland to Portland, and kindly passes on this info, cited by Amtrak in late March:

A ticket is \$164 round trip. Prices will undoubtedly go up in summer. A quick phone or Internet reservation may get you a good price if you reserve soon. For schedules, fares and reservations, call (800) 872-7245, or go to Amtrak's web page: <http://www.amtrak.com>. Seniors 62 or older get a 15% discount. Groups of 20 or more get discounted the equivalent of one person's ticket (not much of a deal).

A sample itinerary for a sleep-in-your-chair economy trip: 7/22/00, Train #14 leaves Jack London Square, Oakland, at 9:07 p.m., arrives in Portland at 3:32 p.m. the next day. That coach seat costs \$88 one way. 7/30/00, Train #11 leaves Portland at 2:33 p.m., arrives in Jack London Square at 9:15 a.m. the next day. This coach ticket costs \$76.00. Total round trip: \$164.

This particular train goes from Oakland to Sacramento (arriving 12:10 a.m.), then continues north all night. The hardy Sacramento players may want to join the train contingent at this point.

Sleepers are available, but cost a lot more. Amtrak furnishes pillows (unless they run out) and rents blankets to coach passengers. The grapevine says that traveling coach with your viol(s) is safe for the viols and not any more exhausting than driving all day. Who knows, maybe en route consorts would work. "City of New Orleans" a 6?

Random notes

Contributors wanted: Send *Gamba News* your stories, opinions, CD reviews, concert listings, drawings, photos, poems, jokes and recipes. We'll publish anything not libelous. Send all contributions to **Lyle York**, Editor, 1932 Thousand Oaks Blvd., Berkeley, CA 94707, or via e-mail: ly@sfgate.com. Phone (510) 559-9273. Short classified advertisements in plain text to be placed in *Gamba News* are free to VdGS/Pacifica members. For non-members, ads are \$5 per issue. Please mail your check for \$5 to **Lyle York** (address above), made out to VdGS/Pacifica. Deadline for calendar submissions, classified ads and all editorial contributions for a given month's newsletter is the 15th of the preceding month (e.g., the deadline for the May issue is April 15).

Newsletters by e-mail: If you'd like to receive your monthly *Gamba News* on-line, please e-mail **Lyle York** at ly@sfgate.com. Your reply postcard will take e-mail form as well. Of course, we will continue to mail postal newsletters to members for the foreseeable future, or until every man, woman and child in VdGS/Pacifica asks for e-mail.

Information, please: Our VdGS/Pacifica chapter Web site: home.pacbell.net/hesuome. The site is regularly updated by the able **Helen Tyrrell**. The VdGSA (national) Web site: www.vdgsa.org. Need a list of local teachers? Sources for sheet music, supplies, inexpensive viols, repairs? Travel tips? We have extra copies of a back issue full of information. We also welcome contributions and corrections to our store of knowledge. Contact **Lyle York**, Editor, *Gamba News*, 1932 Thousand Oaks Blvd., Berkeley, CA 94707, (510) 559-9273; or via e-mail: ly@sfgate.com.

Join VdGS/Pacifica! The annual membership rates are: Playing Members, \$25 (can attend regular coached consort meetings free, receive *Gamba News*, and get a discount on special consort-coaching sessions); Two-Person Memberships, \$35 (two playing members in the same household); Newsletter-Only Members, \$10. For a membership form, contact **Annette Barnett**, 2502 Hearst Avenue, Oakland, CA 94602; (510) 482-8649; annette.barnett@esis.com.

Classifieds: I have a new (unopened, bought in Jan. '00) Damian Dlugolecki roped gut bass C-string. I would be willing to sell it for a discount.
— **Bill Lazar**, jblazar@aol.com, (408) 737-8228.

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c/o Barnett, 2502 Hearst Avenue, Oakland, CA 94602