

GAMBA NEWS

Newsletter of the Viola da Gamba
Society of America Pacifica Chapter

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Since our illustrious, industrious editor is still abroad, this edition was prepared by Lee McRae, put into neat columns by Todd Wetherwax, and mailed out by Peter Brown.

OCTOBER MEETING Our second meeting of the season features John Dornenberg who will give us a lecture-demonstration as well as informally coach our small groups. His description of the lecture is below, as well as directions to the Stanford campus.

Date: Saturday, October 21st

Place: Braun Music Center, Stanford University, Palo Alto. Time: 9:30 am (gather (go to Music Dept. office for directions to hall))

9:45 am: small group playing

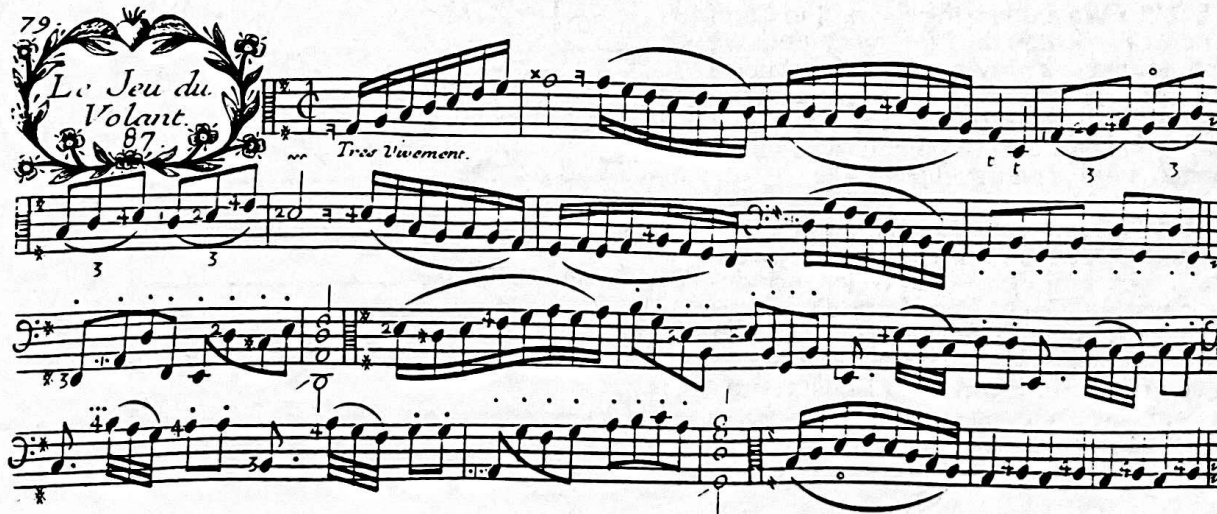
12:00 pm: lunch - BYO, or try coffee house or cafeteria nearby

1:00 pm: Lecture-demonstration *Marais as Teacher*

2:15 - 5:00 pm: small groups

(a donation will be requested for this event)

Marais as Teacher Marais was one of the viol's most skillful performers and teachers, and in his five books of "*Pieces de viole*" he has left us what may be our best source of practical instruction for good viol playing. More than any other composer he was particularly careful about the notation of his music, and through the course of his published works he tried to be more and more specific about communicating the "correct" manner of their performance to his public. This included proper fingering techniques, bowing regulation, and even indications for expressive playing. The principles he emphasizes form the basis of our modern day viol technique, once we have learned how to read his intentions. In this sense, Marais is still our greatest teacher of the viol, and I hope to explain his basic techniques in a way that can be applied to most of the music we play, and to all sizes of viols.



EXPLORE the intricate and delightful world of early 17th century English music for viols! We are very pleased that SFEMS has included a viol technique/consort class this fall. We have felt the need for such a group class to serve those viol players who want to improve their technique and consort playing. John Dornenberg will be teaching the class and has given us the following description:

The **SFEMS NIGHTSCHOOL VIOL CLASS** will work on the repertory of English consort music. It is not aimed at endless read-throughs, but rather a longer range study of individual pieces with attention paid to bowing, fingering, sound, and musicality. There will be anywhere from 3-6 players in the class, and depending upon demand there may be two classes each Wednesday evening. There will be no doubling of parts. I will try to group participants according to level as much as possible, and after the first night we can make adjustments where possible. Class times are 7:00 pm and 8:30 pm. First class is October 4th. Please register in advance. 843-2119.

VIOL PLAYERS IN DEMAND! Gambists John Mark, Anita Axford, Carolyn Coolidge and Julie Jeffrey, were called upon to provide strings for Purcell's verse anthem "O Sing Unto the Lord at St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Berkeley in September.

The Wykeham Singers, a well-known Palo Alto-based group of 8 singers, are interested to talk with local gambists who have ideas on collaborating with voices and viols. Call Kathy Chapin, 415 325 0502.

QUOTATION OF THE MONTH

"...above all, singing poetry accompanied by the viol seems especially pleasurable, for the instrument gives words a really marvelous charm and effectiveness... And no less delightful is the playing of a quartet with the viols producing music of great skill and sophistication... The human voice adds ornament and grace to these instruments." Castiglione, *The Courtier* (ca. 1515). Send us your favorite viol quotation! (Don't read that last sentence out loud.)

PREVIEW I We are looking forward to Carol Herman's Workshop on November 18th. We can be assured of a nitty-gritty, all (bow) holds explored and body language demonstrated session - the kind we have come to appreciate with Carol's teaching. Consorts prepare! More information in the next Newsletter.

PREVIEW II Mark your calendar for Monday, November 13th. MusicSources promises a wonderful program of new music which includes the gambist Stephen Lenning from NYC, harpsichord, and Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra favorites, Judith Nelson, soprano, and Jeffrey Thomas, tenor. The composer is Donald Aird - one of our best composers of music for voices - and this is a world premiere.

PREVIEW III We are talking with Lyn Elder about possibly having one or two of our chapter meetings at Dominican College. It is fascinating to see a viol maker at work! Stay tuned. Also, if you can get over to Dominican, be sure to see Lyn's instrument collection on display in the library, including many that he has made. Until October 18th.

PREVIEW IV Your VdGS/P board is working with Pearl Winter of Fresno to plan the North-South Meet, April 27-28. At this point we would like to hear of your preference for location: either the Marriott Courtyard, or the Piccadilly Inn.

See you at Stanford October 21st. **BE SURE TO SEND IN YOUR RETURN CARD!**

STANFORD VICINITY MAP

On Saturdays, you may park in any area marked A or C without penalty. Also, you do not need to feed parking meters on weekends.

