

Newsletter of the Viola da Gamba Society of America / Pacifica Chapter

Volume 2, Number 7 November 1989

While your editor was away in England, the newsletter was invaded by small winged humanoids: you will be relieved to see that order has been restored. But, congratulations to Lee, Todd and Peter Brown for a job well done! (Archivists should note that the October issue was really Volume 2, Number 6, as we have been running on a calendar year basis.)

November Meeting

This meeting will be a Workshop, directed by **Carol Herman**. It will take place at a new location, First Presbyterian Church of Hayward, 2490 Grove Way, Castro Valley (see map). We are greatly indebted to the Eugene Graves, of the church, and to our own **John Mark**, who made these arrangements. Date: November 18; assemble at 9:00 for tuning etc. Carol will discuss problems of the right hand and the left hand from 9:30 until 10:30. Small groups will then play, with Carol as revolving coach, until lunch (BYO). In the afternoon, three groups will each work on material for a final large concerted "big b[l]ow" from 4:00 — 4:30. Fee: \$15.00 for playing members, \$20.00 for all others. Please send your return card as soon as possible.

October 21st Meeting

Twenty-three intrepid gambists braved the weather and disrupted freeways to enter Stanford's Braun Music Center, crossing recently rescinded yellow cordons to do so. We were rewarded with a superb day of viol playing: four groups, assembled by **Julie Jeffrey** with commendable efficiency, especially after numerous last minute changes in attendance, played consorts of 4 to 6 parts, with expert assistance from our host, **John Dornenburg**. John gave us a synoptic survey of Marais, with two pages of examples of his precise notation, followed by a page of excerpts transcribed for all three sizes of viols, for us to play. A

full account of John's talk appears on page 3 of this newsletter.

Future and Continuing Events

November 13 at MusicSources: new music for viol, voice and other instruments by Donald Aird (world premiere). (415 528-1685).

November 19, First Congregational Church, Embarcadero and Louis Roads, Palo Alto; 8.00 PM: "Triumphs of Oriana" — music for voices (Oratorio Society) and viols (**Jane Johnson, Hazelle Miloradovitch, Herbert Myers, Lois Nisbet and Dalton Cantey**), directed by Gregory Wait. \$6.00 (Seniors/students \$4.00).

December 9: Pacifica Chapter meeting will be at Dominican College, San Rafael. Thanks to **Lyn Elder**: Lyn's group, The Consort of Voyces, will be in attendance for a voice/viol jam in the afternoon. More information next month.

Congratulations to SFEMS, MusicSources, and John Dornenburg for a successful launching of the viol consort portion of Early Music Night School, which began on October 4. (415 843-2119).

Gamba/Violin Summer School

The 1990 Irish Viola da Gamba and Baroque Violin Summer School will take place at Townley Hall in Drogheda (about 30 miles north of Dublin), August 19—26, tutored by José Vazquez, Gamba professor at the Vienna Hochschule, who taught at Oberlin this summer. Fees are \$215, covering tuition, board and lodging. Accommodation is 'spartan' but food is excellent and the house is a Georgian gem with large rooms for playing. The course is preceded immediately by a larger one-week course at Termonfechin (15 miles away): the Anglo-Irish Recorder and

Viola da Gamba Summer School, with many tutors, including Philip Thorby of London as principal viol tutor. (similar fees). For further information or reservations write (soon, as enrolments are limited) to:

Andrew Robinson, 35 Marlborough Road, Dublin 4, Ireland (Drogheda course):
Patricia Flanagan, 110 Kincora Avenue, Dublin 3, Ireland (Termonfechin course):
Caroline Wood, 56 Hunters Way, Dringhouses, Yorkshire YO2 2JJ, England (United Kingdom courses). Thanks to Lois Nisbet for the above information!

I might add that while in London in September I heard several very fine (and very young!) English gambists during a week-long festival of early music; I also visited the biennial Early Music Exhibition which included a number of viol builders.

VdGS/WEST News

Those of you who are also members of our sister chapter to the south already know that, even if the meetings are far away, their newsletter is always full of useful and interesting information: you can join by sending \$15.00 (full) or \$5.00 (newsletter only) membership fee to their treasurer, Bruce Tomlinson, 7181 Orchard Street, Riverside, CA 92504-3928. Which brings us to....

Dues are Due!

If your copy of this newsletter is printed on red paper, it means we have not received your subscription for fiscal 1990 (\$5.00 for the newsletter only, \$15.00 for full membership). It also means you cannot make legible photocopies of it either! To continue receiving white or pastel newsletters, please send your dues payment to Dalton Cantey, 10462 Noel Avenue, Cupertino, CA 95014. Don't forget, your full membership will save you at least \$10.00 on workshop fees this fiscal year.

Treasurer's Report

Our treasurer, Dalton Cantey, having analyzed the financial history of our fledgling chapter, has prepared a budget for the 1990 fiscal year:

Description	Actual	Budget
INCOME/EXPENSE		
INCOME		
Annual Dues	560.00	635.00
Donation Income	0.00	0.00
Newsletter Ads.	0.00	25.00
Workshop Fees	0.00	300.00
TOTAL INCOME	560.00	960.00
EXPENSES		
Bank Charge	0.00	60.00
Meeting Facilities	50.00	200.00
Meeting Misc.	13.43	75.00
Newsletter	100.42	250.00
Workshop Facilities	0.00	200.00
Workshop Instruction	0.00	400.00
Workshop Misc.	0.00	45.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	163.85	1230.00
TOTAL INCOME/EXP.	396.15	(270.00)
F.Y. 89 Carryover		599.95
Current Balance		307.95

Assumptions: Sett of Vyalls and Fresno events will make no profit or loss.

Dalton also reports that our current paid-up membership stands at 56, with 35 full members and 21 newsletter only members.

November Meeting MAP

Marais as Teacher

In his talk at our October meeting, John Dornenburg made, and later repeated, the important point that Marais, in his prefaces, intended his music for all levels of capability on the viol — there are easy, as well as difficult pieces. Marais was obviously very concerned with how people were interpreting his music, as shown by his meticulous use of signs to indicate the effects he wanted, signs which he continued to supplement in later volumes of his treatise, perhaps because he realized that there were still some interpretive loopholes to be blocked. Having devised these signs, and published them in a table¹, he then *used* them in his music, unlike Simpson, who describes a number of special ornaments and effects, gives their signs², but then apparently forgets about them in his pieces, although he presumably used them in performance, as we should too, even in English music of the period.

With regard to the hands, Marais states that the left should be held naturally curved, not allowed to cave in; whereas Simpson directs the thumb to be placed behind the first finger (probably because of a strong lute tradition), Marais prefers it to be placed behind the second finger, which is now the common practice. He says that the right wrist should be 'flexible' — that's all. Fortunately we know more than this rather curt prescription because Antoine Forqueray recorded three important teachings: (1) the right arm must be loose from the shoulder to the wrist, both for push and pull bow strokes, (2) the bow must remain parallel to the bridge at all times and (3) stay on the same place on the string. The hand and wrist play, not the arm, which should be as if suspended and very relaxed. If departures from (2) and (3) are made, they should be done to achieve specific tone color effects, and not because of inattention. Marais, in Book I (1686) states that the third finger should be held on the bow hair, with the first joint hooked over the hair. This helps keep the bow from rising too far from the bridge and reduces tension in the wrist and arm. The thumb is placed *gently* on the wood of the bow, without undue squeezing.

Example 3A requires third finger pressure on the bow hair to achieve the articulation

prescribed by the dots under a slur. In example 3B, without the slur, the dots mean that the notes should be played *égales*. Marais says that allemandes don't need these dots, because they are played with the notes (especially eighths) equal anyway, and that this articulation is "greatly in use with foreigners", thereby justifying it when playing Locke or Lawes, for example. In 3C, the small note heads represent grace notes, that can be omitted — another example of Marais' consideration for "intermediates". A similar principle underlies example 3D, where the note heads indicate unplayed notes which are to be fingered during the rapid bow skips, so that the extraneous sounds produced by a less skilled player if his/her bow accidentally touches intermediate strings, will be consonant rather than discordant — a piquant example of concern for his music at the hands of future performers. In example 4, Marais is forced to use words, rather than signs, to demand that the performer play gently: this brings up the point that rarely, if ever, does a writer of the period refer approvingly to the "big sound" of a contemporary performer.

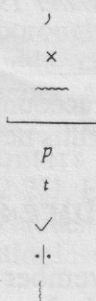
In his third treatise (1711) Marais feels it necessary to introduce two new signs; the first, the lower case *e* (*enflé*) indicates a swell in volume of sound. Marais is very careful about the placement of this sign, often using it in what at first seem to be contra-intuitive places, such as near the end of phrases or notes (example 5A), or even after a very long two finger vibrato note (5C), as well as in more conventional locations (5B). Simpson concurs in these uses of the swell, too. The second new sign is the "/" indicating that the chord is to be arpeggiated (example 6).

In Book IV, Marais encourages the player to add unisons "with discretion", in order to increase the volume of a single note without much change in bow velocity, pressure, etc., by sounding an adjacent open string. This can be used in consort playing, sonatas or chamber music, to emphasize an entry amid the texture. Finally, in Book V, words such as *trainé* (more legato), *sec* (staccato), *louré* (smooth, perhaps *inégal*) and *animé* (with more movement) are introduced (examples 7A,B). In 7C, *en plein* requires adding an additional finger to the bow hair to obtain more sound.

Illustrations to John Dornenburg's Talk on Marais

Example 1 M. Marais Book I, 1686

Tremblement
Battement
Pincé ou flatement
Tenüe
Poussé d'archet
Tiré d'archet
Coulé de doigt
Doigt couché
La plainte



Trill
Mordent
Two-finger vibrato
Finger holds
Push bow
Pull bow
Finger slide
Finger bar
Fourth finger vibrato

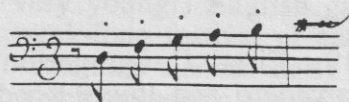
Example 2 C. Simpson (1659-65)



Example 3A M. Marais Book II (1701) (Prélude)



Example 3B Book II (Folies)



Example 3C Book II (Caprice)



Example 3D Book II (Caprice)



Example 3E Book II (Bourasque)



.. = II string, ... = III, etc.

Example 4 M. Marais Book II (S. Colombe)



petits coups d'arches

Example 5A M. Marais Book III, 1711 (Allemande)



Example 5B Book III (Prélude)



Example 5C Book III (Fantaisie)



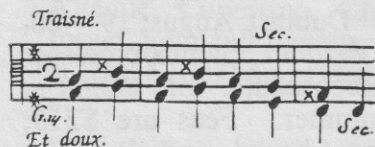
Example 6 Book III (La Guitare 107)



Example 7B Book V (La Bagatelle)



Example 7A Book V, 1725 (La Simplicité Paysanne 94)



Et doux.

Example 7C Book V (L'Operation)



L'aspect de l'appareil.

** L'encm.!*

** En plein*

Example 8A Book IV, 1717 (Allemande)



Example 8B

