


Gamba News



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

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March Meeting

The March meeting will be held March 16, 9:30 AM at Zion Lutheran Church, Montclair. Please send in your return cards promptly: because of all kinds of other activity, this newsletter has been delayed. It also contains the brochure and registration form for the North-South Viol Meet in Fresno, April 19-21, thereby saving a second mailing.

February Meeting

Our annual workshop, coached by **John Dornenburg**, was held at Braun Music Centre, Stanford University, on February 17. It was attended by about 20 devotees, who played consort music in the morning, some in pre-formed consorts. After lunch, in a new departure for this workshop, various groups and individuals performed prepared consorts, duets, solos with harpsichord. John gave his usual good-humored but well-honed appraisals of the performances, after which playing resumed in consorts planned by **Julie Jeffrey**, who also made sure that John's coaching talents were fairly distributed among the groups.

Florida Workshop

Carol Herman, who will be one of our two coaches at the Fresno North-South Meet in April (together with **Hazelle Miloradovitch**), made her first visit to the Sunshine State the weekend of March 1. After a Friday deluge that matched or exceeded those we have been experiencing here, the weather brightened to approximately Northern California temperature and humidity, permitting a good deal of well-tuned viol playing. Linda and John Shortridge were the gracious hosts for this, the fifth annual Florida Workshop, directed by Jay Bernfeld. The other faculty were Harriet Risk Woldt and Martha Bishop. Apart from the usual consort groupings, there were master classes by Jay, who was featured in a stimulating concert on the Sunday. Sometimes joined by Carol and Martha (in a ricercar by Ortiz, where they were kept on their toes by his idiosyncratic tempo changes and attacks), or in a sonata by Marcello (originally for cellos, but convincing as a gamba duo with Martha, and with John Shortridge's able accompaniment on the harpsichord); and in the

other pieces, by Hume, Ganassi, and Abel (a sonata played in a Bach-like style that brought out to the full its expressive qualities), as soloist. Jay has been extending his scope to the English consort literature, always with continental (especially Italian) styles in mind. This yielded a, for me, inspiring approach to one of the Dering 5-part fantasias, in which the uniform 'fantasia tempo' approach was demonstrably inferior to Jay's suggested rhetorical tempo and dynamic changes, which de-emphasized the obvious, but superficial rapid subjects, and brought out the powerful chaconne-like themes disguised as bland whole-notes in the texture. Altogether an unusual and invigorating gamba experience.

Bass Viol, Anyone?

David Fahrner e-mailed me asking if anyone has a student quality bass viol, in the \$1,000 to \$2000 price range, for sale. Please contact him at 651 Filmore, Monterey, CA 93940 (or e-mail at D Fahrner@aol.com).

Scholarship, Anyone?

Natalie Sera tells me of a young cello student in honor orchestra, 13 years old, who now also plays viol with the Reno contingent, and who would benefit from the musical atmosphere at our North-South Meet in Fresno. Her family could not support the expense of the tuition, board and meals there. If you would like to help this worthy cause, please consider adding a donation to your check for the Fresno weekend when you send in your registration.

Activities

Don't forget the Headlands Workshop, May 17—19; and the Berkeley Festival of Early Music, June 2—9!

Please send me information on your concert activities by the 1st of the month for the Newsletter which precedes the month of the concert. Next Newsletters: May, June.

ACTING PRESIDENT: Julie Jeffrey
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