

# THE SOUNDPOST

Newsletter of the Pacific Northwest Viols – A chapter of the Viola da Gamba Society of America  
On the web: WWW.PNVIOLS.ORG

## President's Message

Lee Inman

### Play Day Schedule

- 9:00 am - Check in, sign up for consorts, tune
- 10:00 am - Grand Consort Presentation
- 11:30 am - Annual Meeting
- 12:00 noon - Lunch
- 1:00 pm - First Consort Session
- 2:30 pm - Second Consort Session
- 4:00 pm - Clean up

\$20 Fee per participant  
A = 415

### Sept. 21<sup>st</sup> Play Day Location

#### Pastoral Outreach Center

907 Columbia  
Seattle, Washington

Parking available in O'Dea High School lot (free) and in the Parkade at Boren and Marion Streets (\$)

I don't always go to Conclave, but when I do – I go to Forest Grove.

OK, OK – all flippancy aside: this year's Conclave was simply chock-full of delights. It was a special treat for me to have several mini-reunions with old friends and former colleagues, and – as is fairly typical, I suppose – the conversations (including the musical ones) with these wonderful people continued as if they had never been interrupted.

I also very much enjoyed seeing the passion, dedication and artistry of the younger generation of viol players on full and frequent display. The future of our instrument is in very good hands, indeed. And I was at last convinced by many fine performances that contemporary music for viols can be edgy, experimental, full of strange and exotic beauty – and clearly intended only for the viol, sounding best on the viol, and difficult to imagine being played on any instrument except the viol. That's a lot of fresh intelligence for one person to take away from such an event, and I hope any of you who attended came home equally enlightened and invigorated.

So, what are we to do with all of that education and energy we absorbed at Conclave and other workshops this summer? Why, come to a full season of our Play Days, of course! On September 21, our presenter will be Margriet Tindemans, whose morning program is guaranteed to keep us all on our toes. The board is still working on filling in the roster for the rest of the season, but your program committee members (Vicki, Jon and Noreen) are all very skilled at assembling a challenging year for us. As always, if any of you has any ideas about a presenter you'd like to visit us, please let any of those folks know. And perhaps drop a 'thank you' into their ear for the excellent work they continue to do for us.

As you know, the annual membership year for Pacific Northwest Viols runs from July to June, so membership renewals are now in order. There is a renewal form included with this newsletter or you can easily go to our website and download one. Either mail it to Olga, or bring it to the first Play Day with your membership fee to get recorded onto the rolls. Also, if you know of someone whose membership has lapsed, or perhaps a new viol player who has yet to become a member, please encourage them to join the merry band of viol players that we are, and share our camaraderie.

Finally, the chapter is always looking for willing hands. So, this year, I'd urge you to consider writing an article for the newsletter, or schlepping the library from and back into storage, or monitoring the door. We're particularly eager to speak with you if you can volunteer to perform with your regular consort at any of Saint James' sponsored venues: Horizon House, Chancery Place, among others. Any help you offer is always appreciated.

**See you September 21!**

## Margriet Tindemans Opens Play Day Season

*Swiped from the Cornish Music Faculty Website*



We are thrilled to open our season with Margriet Tindemans. She has performed, recorded, and taught early music on four continents. A 2005 Grammy nominee, she has been called a rare combination of charismatic performing and inspiring teaching, a scholar with a profound knowledge of music, poetry and art of the Middle Ages. Tindemans was a founding member of the German ensemble Sequentia and the Huelgas Ensemble of Belgium. As a player of early stringed instruments, such as medieval fiddle, rebec, and harp, she performs and records with Medieval Strings. On viola da gamba she performs as a soloist, is a member of the Gallery Baroque Players, and is a frequently invited guest with the Folger Consort of Washington,

D.C., the Newberry Consort of Chicago and other leading early music ensembles in North America and Europe. On Renaissance and Baroque viola she performs and records with the King's Noyse and with the Seattle Baroque Orchestra. She directs the Medieval Women's Choir of Seattle. In addition she has been a much sought after teacher at many workshops including the Port Townsend Early Music Workshop, the Pacific Northwest Viols Workshop, the Seattle Medieval Workshop, Viols West, and the Accademia d'Amore.

## A Thank You Note from Cabrini Senior Housing

*Note to Lee Inman from Cynthia Danielson – Resident Services Coordinator*

Hey, folks, read on to see what a gift your music can be. We are eager for Pacific Northwest Viols to organize outreach projects this fall. Contact Liisa Peterson ([liisapeterson@gmail.com](mailto:liisapeterson@gmail.com)) or Vicki Hoffman ([mikeandvicki@q.com](mailto:mikeandvicki@q.com)) to share what you can do.

*June 2013*

*Mr. Inman:*

*All of us at Cabrini Senior Housing want you to know how much we enjoyed the performance of the Pacific Northwest Viols ensemble. So many residents came to me (and still are) to say how appreciative they are. It wasn't just the music, although they loved that, too, but the information about the instruments, the music of the period and the general time period proved quite a stimulus for conversation. One of the residents even came up with an analogy about the melodies blending and creating harmony - much like they would like to see here at Cabrini.*

*Thank each and every one of the musicians. You cannot begin to know how much joy you brought.*

## Play Day with Josh Lee

*Olga Hauptman*



Josh Lee is very funny, very alert, and very serious, which makes for excellent teaching, and an interesting session. Right off the bat he noticed someone having a hard time tuning, and he offered the advice that this was best done with strong, sustained tones, at playing volume. No tickling the strings!

His focus for the day was “active versus passive muscle”, and he applied it first to the bow mechanism. The temptation to get more sound by digging into the string often causes us to ‘actively’ press. A more sonorous result is gained when we ‘passively’ allow our shoulder to be heavy and relaxed. In this way the instrument resonates more--the other way, the sound is compressed. When the shoulder relaxes, the elbow hangs down, and you can imagine something pulling on it, as though there were a puppeteer operating it from behind. And of course, rule number one is to KEEP BREATHING!

Applying the ‘active/passive’ concept to the left hand was very interesting. In short, don’t bang the fingers, or even think of it as pressing them down. Instead, feel that the arm is pulling the left hand towards your chest (again that marionette operator behind you!). When I tried this, I got a very different feeling that I knew was good! First of all I noticed that my thumb stayed loose, which Josh reminded us is very important. And it seemed to me that there was much less tendency for me to rigidify the smaller joints that affect flexibility. One of my teachers way back said that you hear the quality of the playing in the **connections**: the bow changes, the shifts, the up and down of the fingers, etc. Flexibility is key to these connections.

A note about the ‘passive’ approach to playing: you need often to temper the dead weight. Think about how the push bow is supposed to be (and we practiced this) heavier than the pull. Still, the concept is extremely useful as an approach to greater comfort AND a fuller, more beautiful sound. Practice to make this feeling second nature.

Josh recommended practicing two-octave scales, starting with whole notes, and he considers it very important to keep a steady beat, so use a metronome. Don’t get too close to the bridge, but keep the bow in the ‘ice-cream zone’, which you find by listening to yourself. And then, using a mirror, not so much that you go crazy but enough to inform yourself of what your problem might be. The mirror (and the metronome) help keep mindfulness in our practice.

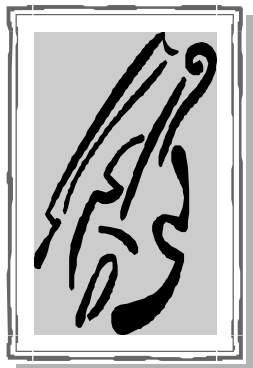
We exercised with slow scales (the metronome set at 60 or slower) and played repeated quarter notes, then in a variety of quarters and eighths, and then slurring the eighths. You can invent any number of combinations. Doing scales affords the opportunity to focus on the purely physical aspects of the practice. (Remember the mirror and the metronome, but don’t obsess!)

There was enough time for Josh to play a bit for us (lovely!) and to answer a question about string crossings. The upshot of that answer was that string crossings (the fast ones in particular) are easiest in the middle of the bow.

Josh uses instruments made by Montreal luthier, Francis Beaulieu, and he highly recommends the maker’s work, both for sound and for visual beauty.

**Pacific Northwest Viols**  
10056 NE Knight Rd  
Bainbridge Island WA 98110

**ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED**



### **Pacific Northwest Viols 2013-2014 Season**

#### **PNV Play Day Dates**

- ❖ **September 21, 2013—Pastoral Outreach Center led by Margriet Tindemans**
- ❖ November 2, 2013—Cathedral Place
- ❖ January 18, 2014—Cathedral Place
- ❖ March 15, 2014—Cathedral Place
- ❖ *May 10, 2014—Cathedral Place*

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#### **Play Day Location for September 21st Pastoral Outreach Center**

907 Columbia  
Seattle, Washington

*Parking available in O'Dea High School lot (free) and in the Parkade at Boren and Marion Streets (\$)*

### **Pacific Northwest Viols, Board Members 2013 – 2014**

- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| ❖ Lee Inman, President               | ❖ Chris Briden, Member at Large                                  |
| ❖ Jon Brenner, Secretary, Programs   | ❖ Michael King, Member at Large                                  |
| ❖ Bill Warren, St. James Coordinator | ❖ Vicki Hoffman, Programs  |
| ❖ Michael LaGaly, Treasurer          | ❖ Olga Hauptman, Instrument Rental & Membership Roster Custodian |
| ❖ Lee Talner, Outreach               | ❖ Liisa Peterson, Communications                                 |

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*The **Soundpost** welcomes reader contributions of any kind: articles, commentary, personal stories, event reportage. E-Mail is preferred, but postal mail or napkin scribbblings are all gladly received, as well.  
Email: [liisapeterson@gmail.com](mailto:liisapeterson@gmail.com).*