

THE SOUNDPOST

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

The President's Message

Lee Inman

Once again, I'm moved today – at the cusp between the year past and the year ahead – to consider all that our chapter and members experienced and accomplished.

In Play Day meetings in 2013, we sharpened our expressive bowing technique with Joanna Blendulf, and got better acquainted with Isabella d'Este, thanks to Margriet Tindemans. In the spring, Josh Lee arrived to encourage us all to 'listen' better to what our bodies tell us when we play, and Margriet returned to us in the fall to lead us in an exploration of contemporary music for the viol. Not an unimpressive body of knowledge to connect to in a mere year, I'm sure you'll all agree.

And that was just in our Play Day sessions. In the summer, many of us also spirited ourselves off to Oregon for a week of Conclave, where the learning curve steepened sharply, and the joy curve went off the charts. Many a new viol player was 'born' at that meeting, and we hope they'll look to PNV for further inspiration in the year to come. At Roosevelt High School, Ellen Seibert, Lee Talner and Chris Briden wrought another successful year. It's always a delight to hear of the students' enthusiasm for the viol, and we trust the organizers of the Roosevelt program will find an eager audience in 2014, as well.

Saint James Cathedral has also made it much easier for our chapter to provide musical services in fulfillment of our annual obligation by identifying a liaison person, John Simpson, to help us handle the details of scheduling our performances. Chris Briden is John's counterpart within PNV, so please contact Chris when your group has a program ready and he and John will work together to find a suitable venue and date for your appearance. We greatly appreciate all that Saint James does in support of our chapter, and look forward to another constructive year of partnership in 2014.

I'm sure there'll be at least as much to experience and accomplish in the new year. Our list of Play Day presenters at future events includes John Dornenburg, and our old friend Ray Nurse. In addition, Margriet and the board are hard at work planning the Bastyr Workshop for next July. Look for details about faculty and class offerings in the near future, and start making your plans to attend.

Two final items: First, if anyone has ideas for additions to the chapter's music library, please let anyone on the board know. We do have a budget for music each year, and it often goes unspent. Second, if you have ideas about future presenters or programs, please share them with us for incorporation into planning for the 2014-2015 season.

So, until we meet in January for John's presentation, let me offer my best wishes to everyone for a joyous, prosperous, healthy, and music-filled year. It is the greatest of honors for me to make music with all of you.

See you January 18th at St. James!

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

November 2 Play Day Location

Cathedral Place at St. James

803 Terry Avenue
Seattle, Washington

Parking available in O'Dea High School lot
(free) and in the lot

Parkade at Boren and Marion Streets (\$)

John Dornenburg Leads on January 18th Play Day

Swiped and Edited from UC Berkeley Dept. of Music Website



John Dornenburg has performed as viola da gamba soloist in Europe, Turkey, Australia, New Zealand and across the U.S.A.

His solo appearances include the Istanbul Festival, Krakow Festival (Poland), York Early Music Festival (U.K.), Kilkenny Festival (Ireland), Warwick Festival (U.K.), Melbourne International Festival (Australia), Monadnock Festival, Oregon and Carmel Bach Festivals, San Francisco Symphony, and Aston Magna. He has made solo recordings of viola da gamba music by J.S. Bach, C.P.E. Bach, Marais, Telemann, Abel, Hume, Simpson, Sainte-Colombe, Kühnel, and Handel, and can be heard on over 30 cds on the Centaur, Meridian, Koch, Dorian, Musica Omnia, Music and Arts, and Musical Heritage Society record labels.

He has directed performances of Monteverdi's Vespers of 1610 and Purcell's Dido and Aeneas, and in 2005 he conducted four fully-staged productions of Monteverdi's L'incoronazione di Poppea at CSU, Sacramento. He is the director of the Sex Chordæ Consort of Viols, co-director of Archetti Baroque String Ensemble, and founder of the Baroque ensemble Music's Recreation.

In the San Francisco Bay Area he can also be heard regularly playing viol and violone with Magnificat, and occasionally with American Bach Soloists and Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra. He was awarded the Soloist's Diploma for viola da gamba from the Royal Conservatory in The Hague, Holland, where his teacher was Wieland Kuijken.

John has studied baroque performance practice with Nikolaus Harnoncourt at the Mozarteum in Salzburg, Austria. He has contributed reviews and articles to the Journal of Seventeenth Century Music and Early Music America. He has been Lecturer in Viola da gamba at Stanford University since 1988, and is Lecturer Emeritus in music history at CSU, Sacramento.

Music as a Memorial Gift

Liisa Peterson and Noreen Jacky

I was really touched by a phone conversation that I had with Noreen in November. She shared some of the wonderful musical connections that were made as friends and family gathered to memorialize the life of her dear sister. Noreen told me that she planned to return to the hospital to play music as tribute. Here she gives us a glimpse of that beautiful event:

On December 6 I traveled to Victoria British Columbia to mark what would have been my sister's birthday. (She died in October). Martin Bonham - of Victoria, Pat Unruh - of Vancouver and my husband, Jon Jacky, were kind enough to join me playing holiday music for viols and recorder at the small beautiful chapel at Royal Jubilee Hospital in Victoria. I am grateful to Pat for introducing me to 'The Huron Carol'. Twelve patients and aides were also able to attend and seemed very appreciative.

I really want to say a public thank you to both Martin and Pat for volunteering time - especially at such a busy time of year! I do hope to have some music at the same hospital in Victoria next year.

Play Day with Nancy Zylstra

Toni Seales

Nancy Zystra showed up and I was probably not the only one wondering what a singer would do with (to!) us hapless viol players. Playing in a sackbut and cornetto group that uses madrigal facsimiles, I knew it would be completely relevant and vowed to pay attention. She passed out three short scores. We started with "Rest, Sweet Nymphs."

"Prima la parola". First, there was the Word. Rhetoric. She recommends Judy Tarling's book "Weapons of Rhetoric". Everything that applies to text applies to musical gestures. We often play music that was originally sung, or even a poem that was set much later. So the purpose of the music was to enhance the text (not the other way around!). So we might consider trying to derive the meaning of the text, its meter, the emotional landscape of that story, and support and enhance that with the nuances we and our magical bows can give the notes. A good musician can, with great phrasing, convey the entire story clearly to the listener without words.

Lulled into a feeling of safety, we turned to "Si, ch'io vorrei morire" by Monteverdi. She strongly suggested going through the story thoroughly; reading it completely and aloud with the correct strong and weak syllables. Translations and even early dictionaries are much easier to find now, often online. Where did the story happen--in a bucolic glade or a hall; when--in the past, or as a memory? We don't "interpret" as much as decode the clues the composer left for us.

First revelation: She caught me scraping away the last syllable of a line. Buh, buht, it's a string crossing going to the fourth string (whimper)... Nary a drop of pity dampened her steely brow. It's our job to figure out how to wrangle the idiosyncrasies of the instrument to work with the phrase; not re-meter the text for our ease of playing.

Often there are bits of a sentence that are repeated once or a few times. I always thought they were to be phrased as meaning something by that repetition, but Nancy pointed out that often the original text did not have that repeated phrase at all; that it was added by the music composer to fulfill a musical line. Thus, the full phrase goes from the first iteration to the new words and the small repetitions should reflect that. Which reminds me of a pet peeve she shared (my ears burned a little...): the performer so delighting in a repeated small figure that she shapes and articulates the pahooey out of it thus creating a tedious line of separate small gestures that completely destroys any possible beauty or intended meaning possible from the complete, longer line.

Second revelation: In day-to-day writing, we break words down between consonants. "ex-cel-sis" So I should phrase as if there are two consonants to every vowel, right? She pointed out that you can't sing a consonant, but you can sing a vowel beautifully. 'EEEEK' is a lot prettier than eeKKK.

We enjoyed Nancy so much, there was a unanimous decision to keep working on this and the last madrigal, *Lasciento Morire*, as large groups with a couple of small groups going off. My only regret during the day was not getting to hear her sing, especially after getting a whole new perspective on singing (playing) *The Word*.

Christmas Music at The University Bookstore

Noreen Jacky

On December 17 members of Pacific Northwest Viols performed at the University Bookstore. Nancy Wright, Anne Dennis, Noreen Jacky, Olga Hauptman, Joe Bichsel and Titan Rodick all performed.

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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 led by Nancy Zylstra
- ❖ **January 18, 2014--Cathedral Place led by John Dornenburg**
- ❖ March 15, 2014--Cathedral Place led by Lee Inman
- ❖ May 10, 2014—Cathedral Place led by Ray Nurse

*\$20 Fee per participant
A = 415*

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

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| ❖ Lee Inman, President | ❖ Chris Briden, Outreach |
| ❖ 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 |

Find Pacific Northwest Viols on the web: www.pnviols.org and on Facebook

*The **Soundpost** welcomes reader contributions of any kind: articles, commentary, personal stories, event reportage. E-Mail is preferred, but postal mail or napkin scribbles are all gladly received, as well.*

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