

# THE SOUNDPOST

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

## President's Message

*Lee Inman*

The crisp air and cheerful foliage of the fall season seem already to be giving way to steady rains and grey skies. Though, while autumn is my own favorite season, winter runs a very close second.

### 2009-2010 Season

#### Play Day Dates and Presenters

- ❖ October 3 - Joanna Blendulf
- ❖ **December 12 - August Denhard**  
*(Meet at the Pastoral Outreach Center of St. James.)*
- ❖ **January 23 Margriet Tindemans**
- ❖ **March 20 - TBA**
- ❖ **May 15 – Marie Dalby**

#### Play Day Schedule –

- ❖ 9:30 AM: Check in, signup for consorts, and tuning
- ❖ 10:00 AM: Grand Consort, Presentation
- ❖ 11:30 AM: **Lunch break**
- ❖ 1:00 PM: First session: Informal Consorts and technique class
- ❖ 2:30 PM: Second session: Informal consorts and a coached consort
- ❖ 4:00 PM: Cleanup

*\$15 Fee per participant  
A = 415*

**December Play Day Location –  
Pastoral Outreach Center at St. James  
Just across Columbia from St. James  
Cathedral**

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

For one thing, the chill and damp provide a fine incentive for viol players to retreat to their music, either to solitary practice or to consort get-togethers with good friends. Nothing drives away gloom like a hot cup of tea, and a hearty helping of Gibbons or Ward, I always say.

For another, the winter season also brings a wealth of fine performances by local and visiting early music groups. As residents of the Pacific Northwest, we are blessed in many ways by the talents and hard work of these musicians, who always program rich banquets of tasty morsels for our entertainment and education. I'd urge everyone who loves this repertory to encourage these artists by attending as many of the seasonal concerts as they possibly can.

And, of course, December brings our next Play Day. Our own PNV season had a grand kickoff in October with Joanna Blendulf's fascinating presentation on cadential formulae. It has occurred to me that her focus on what at first might have appeared to be a rather abstruse topic was actually a compliment to the membership of our local chapter. That is to say, many of our local players are experienced enough as students and viol players to appreciate and employ some of the fine points she covered in her presentation. Experience levels aside, I think everyone benefitted from the chance to think more deeply about a problem that confronts us all fairly frequently – about every 8 measures or so!

**In December, our presenter will be Gus Denhard**, Executive Director of the Seattle Early Music Guild, as well as a fine musician and teacher. Lee Talner and I met informally with Gus early in the fall to discuss how better to coordinate activities between EMG and PNV. During our discussion, it readily became apparent that a considerable gap in understanding exists between the two organizations, especially

as regards organizational missions, resources and priorities. Now that we know about that gap, closing it will likely be an ongoing task for everyone concerned. However, when Gus incidentally noted that he'd never had an opportunity to present at a PNV Play Day, and would enjoy doing so, we were able to correct that oversight immediately.

Keep dry everyone, play lots of music, and we'll see you on December 12. **Do bear in mind that this Play Day event will happen in St. James' Pastoral Outreach Center, on the corner of 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Columbia Street.** Saint James is a busy place, and weekends are even busier. **On December 12, Play Day attendees will have to contend for parking spots with another large event, which starts at 10:00 AM. So, my advice would be to arrive as early as you can.** But if you find parking scarce, or arrive late, you may need to pay to park in the parkade on the corner of Boren and Marion streets.

## August Denhard Leads the December 12 Play Day

As a performer on lute, theorbo and Baroque guitar, August Denhard has appeared Baroque Northwest, Seattle Baroque, the Concord Ensemble, Chicago Music of the Baroque, the Indianapolis Baroque Orchestra, Camarata Pacifica Baroque, and many other ensembles specializing in early music. Denhard has given numerous solo recitals and is in demand as an accompanist of 17<sup>th</sup> century vocal music. He performs regularly in a lute song duo with tenor Eric Mentzel.

Starting in 1995 he had a leadership role in the Bloomington Early Music Festival, working first as education director, then as opera producer and assistant director of the festival. He was appointed executive director of the Early Music Guild of Seattle, Washington, in 2000, and was instrumental in the founding of the Guild's baroque opera program, producing and/or performing in *The Monteverdi Chamber Operas* (2002), John Blow's *Venus and Adonis* (2005), Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea* (2007), and Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo* (2009).

Mr. Denhard has taught early music at St. Xavier University in Chicago, the Interlochen Summer Music Camp, the Indiana University Summer Recorder Academy, and has lectured at the Lute Society of America Seminar. With baroque harpist Bill McJohn he directs the Early Music Guild's Continuo Ensemble, a community ensemble devoted to the study and performance of 17<sup>th</sup>-century vocal music.

He holds degrees from Peabody Conservatory and Northwestern University, and completed his Doctor of Music degree in May of 2006. His dissertation, *Lute Realizations for the English Cavalier Songs (1630-1670): A Guide for Performers*, has been published on line by the Lute Society of America.

## Kismet

*Liisa Peterson - from a phone conversation with Stephen Stubbs*

Something very exciting is stirring in Seattle. Cornish College of the Arts has launched an Early Music Program. Music Department Chair, Kent Devereau and program director, Stephen Stubbs, have gathered an impressive faculty of familiar local artists: "*pianist and harpsichordist Byron Schenkman, harpsichordist Jillon Stoppels Dupree, violinists Ingrid Matthews and Tekla Cunningham, flutist Janet See, harpist Maxine Eilander, viola da gambist Margriet Tindemans, coloratura soprano Cyndia Sieden, soprano Nancy Zylstra, and tenor Ross Hauck*" (Cornish College of the Arts website).

Mr. Devereau came in 2008 with the goal of raising the profile of the music department. Stephen Stubbs met with him and as they talked Stephen realized there could be a synergy between Cornish and the Seattle area early music community. Cornish had the energy and vision of Kent Devereau and Seattle had a potential instant world-class faculty.

The Cornish Early Music Program is set in motion. It will be a thrill to watch its evolution. There is a nice article about the new program at:

[http://www.cornish.edu/news/article/cornish\\_announces\\_early\\_music\\_program](http://www.cornish.edu/news/article/cornish_announces_early_music_program).

And to see the many ways that Cornish is expanding, or to find an arts event check out the Cornish website: [www.cornish.edu](http://www.cornish.edu).

## Play Day October 3, 2009 with Joanna Blendulf

Janet Loy

Joanna Blendulf's presentation posed a variety of interesting questions and solutions about cadences and suspensions. She observed that these appear in our consort literature, and often we do nothing with them. Her suggestion that we treat them with some loving attention was followed by some very specific ways of doing so.

Some examples of cadences were studied where ways of bowing - such as full bows contrasting with less bow, bow speed, and bow direction - helped activate the suspensions. A slight articulation before the suspended note proved very effective. Often the suspended note is treated to a little division. We experimented with ways of relaxing, and making them seem effortless. Using less bow, using finger movement of the bow, and remembering the tiny space before the suspended note all were useful.

A Byrd pavan for 5 was explored to find examples of lovable cadences and suspensions. The imitation between the parts gave everyone a chance to practice making meaningful expressions. Sometimes these patterns didn't really function as cadential moments or technically even suspensions, but the shapes could be greatly improved by thinking of them as such. After some time working with these ideas within a dependable tactus a beautifully rendered execution of this Byrd pavan was realized.

It was fun to zero in on some of these often-neglected details, and Joanna's warm friendly approach was wonderfully precise, comfortable and encouraging.



*Summer Workshop*

*at*

*Bastyr University*

*July 11 – 17, 2010*

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