

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, and tuning
- ❖ 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: Cleanup

*\$20 Fee per participant
A = 415*

Play Day Location for May 7 Pastoral Outreach Center

907 Columbia
Seattle, Washington

As this 2010-11 'season' winds down, it occurs to me that this has been an exceptional year for viol players in the Pacific Northwest in many respects. Of course, there was the usual roster of excellent Play Day presenters – Shanon Zusman, Nathan Whitaker, and our favorite virtuoso Margriet Tindemans. But we were also treated to memorable performances by the incomparable Paolo Pandolfo and the Portland Viol Consort. The season will end with a bang, as well, when Julie Jeffrey travels from Berkeley, California, on May 7 with what promises to be an excellent morning presentation. Do bear in mind that **the final Play Day this year will again be in the Pastoral Outreach Center**, so be certain to knock on the correct door!

I'm also pleased to announce that **several PNV groups quickly volunteered for performances in late April and mid May at Horizon House and Chancery Place**. My thanks to all of you who did so, and I know you'll enjoy the experience of performing for the residents as much as the residents will enjoy hearing you.

The annual PNV members' meeting will convene at the May 7 Play Day, as well. This important event offers a prime opportunity for direct feedback from the membership to the board, to elect board members, and to ensure that your ideas and inspirations can be considered as the PNV board plans the next Play Day Season. As usual, we'll schedule the meeting immediately after the morning presentation, but before lunch, so please plan to attend. If any of you are thinking of being a candidate for a board position, or of being on a committee as a non-board member, the meeting is a good time to let us know!

This year, two long-standing board members are retiring: Sandy Haas, and Charlie Nagel. Sandy has served as PNV Secretary for several years, and Charlie as PNV's liaison to Dr. Savage and St. James, and as President of the board. They've been steadfast supporters of our organization's goals and mission for a long time, and their astute input at board meetings will be missed. Please remember to thank them for their contributions and their steady enthusiasm in making PNV successful.

New candidates have already stepped forward to run for board positions this year, to whom I say a sincere and heartfelt "Thanks!" We're all very much looking forward to working with you in the coming seasons. Michael LaGaly is also standing for re-election. He's done a yeoman's job in the past year as our Treasurer, and we'll all be eager to welcome him back for another 3-year term!

Finally: even though our local season is drawing to a close for the year, there is a rich banquet of workshops ahead to consider for the Summer, in addition to the 2011 VdGSA Conclave in the Chicago area. I was pleased to see that Sarah Mead has thoroughly revamped the 'Self-Rating Guide', which is now available on the VdGSA website for everyone's review. This new version is, in my opinion, far more useful in determining for our own purposes what Conclave classes we would find most useful. If you're planning to attend Conclave, you might want to take a spin through the new Guide as you fill out your application.

Julie Jeffrey Leads May 7th Play Day

Text and photo lifted from Terra Nova Consort website.



Julie Jeffrey began her career in early music performance while pursuing graduate studies in Musicology at the University of Chicago. Now based in the San Francisco Bay Area, she freelances locally and abroad, appearing with such ensembles as Magnificat Baroque and American Bach Soloists, the Newberry Consort in Chicago, the Catacoustic Consort in Cincinnati, Scaramella in Toronto, and has toured domestically and abroad with the Terra Nova Consort. She has performed at the Carmel Bach Festival, the California Shakespeare Festival, the San Francisco Early Music Festival, the Regensburg Tage Alter Musik, the Melbourne Autumn Music Festival, and the Festival Internacional Cervantino in Guanajuato, Mexico.

Ms. Jeffrey is a member of Sex Chordae Consort of Viols, is the founder and creative mastermind of the acclaimed trio Wildcat Viols, and is half of Halifax & Jeffrey, a viol duo specializing in French Baroque music. Devoted to promoting all aspects of interest in her instrument, Ms. Jeffrey is a frequent instructor at early music workshops across the country, has served as president and music-coordinator of the Viola da Gamba Society, Pacifica Chapter, and serves on the board of directors of the Viola da Gamba Society of America.

I'm very much looking forward to joining Pacific Northwest Viols for the May 7 Play Day. On this occasion, I would like to share the fruits of my current obsession with Matthew Locke. Too often glossed over as a stepping stone on the way to Purcell's fantasies, Locke's viol music deserves serious attention in its own right.

For the morning's Grand Consort, I plan to present a brief overview of Locke's viol output and what's in it for us -- but really the best way to discover the delights of his music is to jump right in and play it, so we'll spend most of our timesampling this amazing repertoire as a group.

In the afternoon, I'd be delighted to work on some Locke in a coached consort (doubled or one-on-a-part) if anyone is interested. I will have 3- and 4-part music on hand, just in case. Oh, and there are Locke's lovely bass duos too...

Horizon House and Chancery Place Concerts Set

Liisa Peterson

Our annual performances for the Horizon House and Chancery Place are coming right up.

Horizon House - 3:30 pm - April 29th
Chancery Place - 1:30 pm - May 13th

This year PNV groups and soloists will fill the program with music from their repertoires. And the same program will be repeated at both venues. Many thanks to Vicki Hoffman and Noreen Jacky for organizing these lovely and popular events.

PNV holds Paolo Pandolfo Masterclass at Cornish College

Lee Talner text and photos

At times, masterclasses can be tedious for auditors. This was most certainly not the case for Paolo Pandolfo's masterclass sponsored by Pacific Northwest Viols at Cornish College on March 7, 2011. His three subjects, Sarah Poon and Pat Unruh from Vancouver, and our own Lee Inman, took in and carried away valuable playing pearls, while the audience of 25 or so auditors was continuously engaged, entertained, and enlightened. I'll cite a few of the highlights that stood out for me.

Sarah began the proceedings with several movements from a Marais suite, including a minuet. After listening to Sarah play the minuet, Paolo asked, "Have you ever danced a minuet?" Sarah had not, so he asked her to play it again while he reflected her playing by moving around the stage in a dancelike fashion. Initially he lumbered and plodded to illustrate (exaggerated of course) that the music needed more 'lift'. Over the next fifteen minutes, as he worked with Sarah on this element, her playing of the minuet came alive and became danceable, bringing smiles to Paolo's remarkably expressive face. Being a bit of a 'ham' worked wonders in putting across his teaching points.



Pat Unruh played 'Tocata del signor Oratio Bassani' (in the collection: Francesco Maria Bassani). The piece has many rapid scale passages to which Paolo zeroed in right away. He soon asked Pat to play some rapid scales, up and down, in various octaves, watching her technique carefully. At that point he worked with Pat to pare down her arm movements and use what amounts to an extraordinarily rapid 'tremolo' arm motion to articulate each note in the scale passage. He emphasized the point that even though the notes come along very fast, the bow actually travels from right to left very little and rather slowly, compared to the bowing of a typical held note. Gradually Pat got the hang of it as Paolo reinforced the teaching points by having Pat hold his arm while performing the 'tremolo' Pat and the audience

were amazed at how incredibly rapid and controlled was his tremolo.

Afterwards, Pat shared the following: "What a humbling and amazing experience to play for Paolo Pandolfo! With grace and wit he pushed each of us to better our playing, and in the face of his excellence, we strove to do just that. Paolo was not afraid to push at our weakest points, but his way of doing this - for which I am grateful - left us feeling encouraged rather than exposed. Thank you, to the master, and thank you PNV! I learned so much!" She added as an afterthought, "One of the chief thrills was a by-product of my playing basso-continuo for Sarah: I got to play along when Paolo demonstrated the melody - what a stimulating experience - AND then learned even more when Paolo played that same bass-line - with improvised chords and all. A triple learning experience, then, for me!"

Lee brought coals to Newcastle by playing for Paolo two movements (an Adagio and a Minuet) by Carl Friedrich Abel from the Drexel manuscript. (Note: Paolo has a marvelous CD of Abel pieces from the Drexel Manuscript, a must listen!). Early on in the piece there is an arpeggio, and Paolo set to work immediately working with Lee to pare down his bow travel, illustrating again how the forward (right to left) travel of the bow during the arpeggio can be very relaxed and slow, requiring much less arm movement than one would think. After solving that issue, Paolo noticed that Lee could improve his core sound by bowing more parallel to the bridge on the higher strings. To make his point, Paolo had Lee aim his bow tip toward a sheet of paper placed on

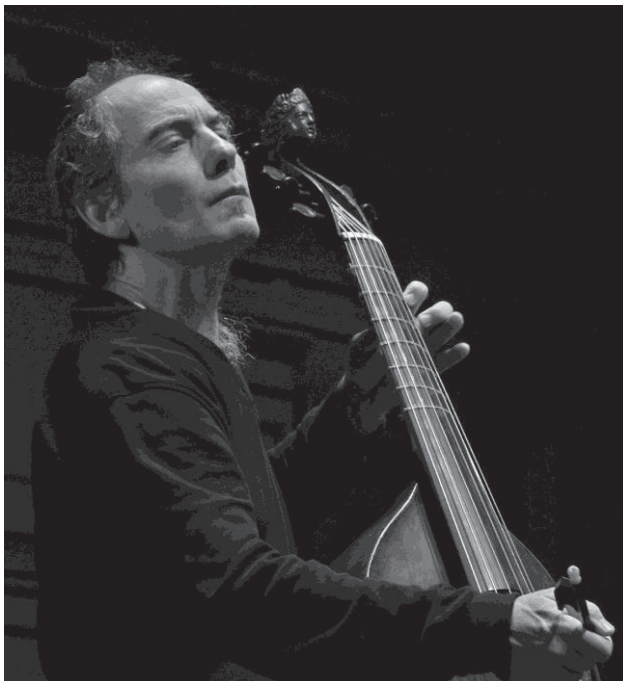


the floor about 15 feet away during push bow, and had him aim the frog towards an 'Exit' sign in the audience during the pull bow.

I asked Lee to sum up his impression of his experience with Paolo during the masterclass. Lee put it succinctly: "Pandolfo has the uncanny ability to zero in on a student's main issues, whether technical or interpretational. And then to devise an approach on the spot to deal with the problem - the key attribute of a master teacher."

Thanks, Lee Talner!

Lee Talner worked *months and months* ahead with the Pandolfo machine to arrange the master classes while the master was in town.



"I was especially happy with the photo of Paolo taken during his warm-up before the Town Hall concert on March 5." Lee Talner

Confessions of a Well-Meaning Incompetent

Liisa Peterson

Let me cut to the chase, folks. ***I have done a pathetic job of managing our membership list this year.*** Nothing has been lost but my timing is way off. I was late getting the initial forms out to you all. Here it is getting to be time to sign up or renew memberships and I have yet to mail out the 2010/2011 member list! Please accept my apology and rejoice with me that someone competent will be managing the list for the next round. Thank you, Olga H., for taking on the task. And thanks, yet again, to Sharon Young who managed our membership and money and whatever else for so many years. I am in awe.

Our membership year goes from July 1 through June 30th (July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012). Membership forms will be available after the May 7 Play Day. They will be mailed to members and available to download on our website: <http://www.pnviols.org>.



Nathan Whitaker Focused on the Art of Accompaniment

Noreen Jacky

Photos by Liisa Peterson

Cellist Nathan Whitaker was the presenter at the March 5 Play Day. He brought his beautiful cello and spoke about how we might accompany each other in effective ways. Some of the points that I remember –

- The importance of listening... Nathan repeated that he was told at Interlocken to learn his own part at home and to learn everyone else's at rehearsal.
- The way that our music has evolved is speech like. He talked about the relationship between music and text and how it is important to understand this. If the music does not have text it can be a good exercise to make words for a piece.
- Keep a steady tempo...
- You don't create rhythm you hook onto it. The quickest way to upset a soloist is to follow them.
- Chords are to the gamba what the sun is to Tuscany.

I enjoyed some of the anecdotes that were repeated. I never knew that Boccherini traveled with a violinist...or that Tartini traveled with a cellist.

For musical examples Nathan drew from 1770 Baumgartner. He passed out some photocopies with musical examples. There was a page on cadences, a handout on chords, and a facsimile of one of the madrigals.

We played a two-part madrigal 'Il Lamento D'Arianna' where the bass players accompanied the treble players. After we tried playing this piece we had a chance to hear the piece with only two players. Nathan played the bass line and accompanied Lee Inman who played the treble line. We then tried the four-part madrigal 'Il Lamento d'Arianna' by Claudio Monteverdi. Nathan commented periodically about phrasing and ways to improve the performance.

During the last part of the session Nathan demonstrated a bit with his cello. I enjoyed when he illustrated musically what he was telling us. It was an interesting talk, and I will think of some of Nathan's points the next time I accompany someone.



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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



Pacific Northwest Viols 2010-2011 Season

Play Day Dates

- ❖ October 2, 2010—Cathedral Place; Led by Shanon Zusman
- ❖ **December 4, 2010--Pastoral Outreach Center.** January 15, 2011--Cathedral Place; Led by Margriet Tindemans
- ❖ March 5, 2011--Cathedral Place; Led by Nathan Whittaker
- ❖ **May 7, 2011--Pastoral Outreach Center located just across Columbia from Cathedral Place;**
Led by Julie Jeffrey

*\$20 Fee per participant
A = 415*

Play Day Location for May 7
Pastoral Outreach Center
907 Columbia
Seattle, Washington

Pacific Northwest Viols, Board Members 2010 – 2011

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|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ❖ Lee Inman, President | ❖ Bill Warren |
| ❖ Charlie Nagel, Vice President | ❖ Noreen Jacky, Programs |
| ❖ Sandra Haas, Secretary | ❖ Jon Brenner, Programs |
| ❖ Michael LaGaly, Treasurer | ❖ Olga Hauptman, Instrument Rental |
| ❖ Lee Talner, Outreach | ❖ Liisa Peterson, Communications |

*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:** liisapetereson@gmail.com.*