

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

November 19, 2011

Trinity Episcopal Cathedral
147 Northwest 19th Avenue
Portland, OR 97209-1901

- ❖ 9:30 AM: Check in, signup for consorts, tuning, announcements
- ❖ 10:00 AM: Grand Consort, Presentation
- ❖ 11:30 AM: Lunch break
- ❖ 1:00 PM: Session I: Informal Consorts or Coached Consort
- ❖ 2:30 PM: Session II: Informal consorts or Coached Consort
- ❖ 4:00 PM: Clean up

As I sat down in my music room to practice this morning, I glanced outside, and couldn't help but notice that the yellow-orange leaves on the Sumac tree almost exactly matched the colors of the varnish on my bass. Autumn, I reflected, is a perfect time to get some serious practicing accomplished. The distractions and temptations of summer are gone, and only the occasional warm, sunny day remains to lure us outside. Even our foundling cat, Shadow, felt drawn into the music, as she tiptoed through the music room's door, then jumped up to her current favorite napping spot on the chair in the corner. Here in the music room – with softly muted light streaming through the windows, and a cup of hot coffee on a nearby table – I can feel both cozy and productive. May all of you have equally inviting spots in which to enhance your skill on this instrument we all cherish.

As many of you know, **our November 19 Play Day is in Portland.** I hope many of you are planning to make the trip southwards to get better acquainted with our Oregon colleagues and to enjoy a day of making music with them. If you plan on driving, I encourage you to car-pool, too.

The presenter for the day is Tim Scott, an old friend of mine, and a well-known cellist, gambist and teacher in Portland. His focus for the morning will be on the music of Palestrina, an appropriate topic for a season in which we've already begun to explore very early music and the congruence of literature for voice and viol. Tim has also offered to coach during both afternoon sessions, and I'm certain he'll have some valuable insights for everyone who participates.

Some specifics: The Play Day will take place at **Trinity Episcopal Cathedral** in downtown Portland, a beautiful building with excellent facilities for our event. The address is **147 Northwest 19th Avenue**. There is ample parking across the street from the church. I plan to be there at 9:00 AM, as usual, to ensure the building is open, and to guide attendees to the Grand Consort room. The schedule for the day is the same as it would be, were the Play Day at our usual venue in Seattle. Tim has promised to have a list of good spots nearby for our lunch break, as well.

The Play Day fee remains the same, as does the ensemble enrollment process. Bob Loy has kindly offered his library for our use that day, but if anyone has a favorite composer or set of pieces, please consider bringing the music with you to share with your afternoon consort partners.

My hope is that this event will be a catalyst for making Pacific Northwest Viols a truly 'northwestern' organization. To that end, I've already had some inquiries from friends in Vancouver, asking when we plan to take a Play Day northwards. If our Portland experience is a success – and I have every confidence it will be – perhaps we can start thinking seriously about Canadian prospects, too.

See you in Portland!

Tim Scott Leads November Portland Play Day

Tim Scott was born in Brooklyn, NYC on July 4th 1950. After attending the High School of Music and Art, the Juilliard School of Music and Sarah Lawrence College, Tim became a popular cellist touring with Harry Chapin for two years. Since 1971 he has been a member of the cello section of the Oregon Symphony. He has played viola da gamba since 1980, performing with the Portland Baroque Orchestra, the Oregon Bach Festival and as soloist in the Bach Passions. Tim teaches viola da gamba at Reed College and has given viol workshops in Eugene, Portland, and Seattle. He is a member of the Portland Viol Consort, with Lee Inman, Max Fuller and Joanna BelIndulf.

"I have been enjoying studying and listening to Palestrina, which should work very well on viol. There are now very good parts, in good clefs, with no page turns, (yay) available. We will be playing some sections of Palestrina's most famous work, the Pope Marcellus Mass, as well as the 4 part motet Alma Redemptoris Mater, and 8 part O Bone Jesu. If there is time we will play a few Palestrina madrigals showing a lighter less polyphonic style. Please come and expand your repertoire."

Internet Resources for Viol Music

Charlie Nagel

One of the great gifts of the ever-expanding internet is the ready availability of music that may be freely downloaded, printed, and played. As is the case with any system, the quality varies with the contributors. Nevertheless, there are some wonderful treasures out there.

For viol music, two stand out as exceptional. My first preference is the International Music Score Library Project, imslp.org. This is a mixed bag of modern editions, digital images of older editions now in Public Domain, and digital images of original publications. Recent additions include all twelve of the lovely four-part fantasias by Richard Mico. If your group prefers playing from old notation, you might enjoy downloading images of the original set of part books for Arcadelt's "Primo Libro..." published in 1581. Typing in "viols" in the search box yields an amazing array of options.

The Werner Icking website (icking-music-archive.org) contains a huge number of original modern editions for various combinations of instruments. I personally find the site less easy to browse, but if you have an idea of what you are looking for, there's a wealth of fine material.

The Chorale Public Domain Library, cpdl.org, contains another enormous variety of music. Although it is, as the name suggests, devoted to choral music, there are many pieces there that are playable on viols. One of my groups particularly enjoyed playing a setting of "Linden Lea" by Rafe Vaughn Williams discovered on that site...

On the website managed by Steven Hendricks, dance music of all types may be found. It appears to be oriented toward Society for Creative Anachronisms events, but Hendricks has created clear and pleasing settings of what appears to be every one of the Playford dances, and many from other sources. They're essentially recorder editions and in the wrong clefs for viols, but the music is easy enough to mitigate the possibility of an attack of "dysclefsia" in the tenor section.

Year Four of the Viol Program at Roosevelt High School

Lee Talner & Ellen Seibert



Photo of class with Ellen Seibert and Lee Talner: Margaret Olwell, Eddie Lawrence, Max Horowitz, Jessica Yanling Zhu, Natalie Spitters, Mitchell Tokuoka

As we reported in the September 2010 issue of *The Soundpost*, last year's intensive 6 week viol course was required for all 10 students in orchestra director Anna Edwards' advanced chamber music class, with Anna also participating as a student. We truly had a 'captive' group with Anna's full support. This year, the viol class was an elective for less experienced string players. Ellen and I had no idea how many students would be interested, so when 6 students showed up at our first meeting, we were pleasantly surprised. When asked why they chose viols, several remarked that it was 'so cool' seeing and hearing last year's ensemble perform at the Spring concert (<http://vdgsa.org/pgs/olc-news.html>) that they decided to try it themselves.

All six students were violinists. We put two each on treble, tenor and bass viols and worked with them over 16 sessions, during 5th period from early April until early June. As in previous years, having two teachers for most sessions was optimal, allowing one of us to more or less run the session while the other circulated, adjusting posture, bow position, bow grip, tuning, etc. Ellen and I traded off these roles.

What these students lacked in experience as string players, they more than compensated for with unwavering enthusiasm and pride as they made progress. Early on, it was mainly finding notes and making a core sound; later we were able to work on phrasing. We were especially proud of our two tenor players, who not only learned their way around alto clef (an adventure) but also were eager to perform solo the two tenor lines in the 4 part piece, *Rendez à Dieu* by Loys Bourgeois, in John Mark Rozendaal's *Viola da Gamba Dojo Book 1*. The trebles and basses doubled their parts and were happy to have company.

In late May, our class participated in a student chamber music evening that included performances by student string quartets, piano trios, woodwind ensembles, and more. We joined our students in performing three pieces: *Ode to Joy* in unison and then with harmony; the Tallis canon; and *Rendez à Dieu*, plucked then bowed. Happily, we seized the opportunity to tell the assembled students, parents and friends how viols differ from the violin family, give a bit of history, and answer questions.

At our last class session, the kids presented us with cards expressing their appreciation, and one of our students, Margaret Olwell, brought us two loaves of ribbon wrapped home baked bread! Margaret wrote about her experience: "Having the chance to experience the viol has been very special to me. Coming from a classical violin and folk harp background, early music has not played much of a role in my studies. Being able to play the Viola de Gamba I feel that my grasp of music has become more well rounded. I have been able to enjoy the raw beauty of its tones and stylization of its melodies, expanding my musical horizons. Learning the viol has reminded me of the importance of the basics--scales, notes, and fingerings--while diversifying my musical repertoire and interests. I feel honored, after this experience, knowing that I have done something few know about, and fewer have dared."

One more item worth mentioning: A talented sophomore cellist in the RHS orchestra, Nick Loucks, already owns a 7 string viol and a baroque cello! Ellen worked with Nick a bit last year, and Lee met with him several times after school this year to play duos. In June, Nick attended Oberlin Baroque Performance Institute with great enthusiasm. ***This is our future!***

VIOLS IN MANTUA

Richard Vernier, Photos Liisa Peterson



On September 17, Ray Nurse led PNV members in a journey to the Renaissance court of Isabella d'Este. The accomplished and strong-willed Marchesa of Mantua, upon hearing of some Spaniards in then distant Rome playing large viols, had commissioned three of those from a (possibly perplexed) maker in Brescia, and thus was formed the first consort of viols made in Italy. Not to be undone, her brother Duke Alfonso of Ferrara, ordered a set of five "...in all possible sizes," of which he intended to play one at his forthcoming wedding with the Pope's daughter, the beautiful and much maligned Lucrezia Borgia. Isabella may

well have brought her own viol, and of course upstaged everyone. ¹ If Mantegna's murals are a clue, it must also have been a feast for the eyes...

But more than what we know or can surmise of sibling rivalries, misdemeanors (such as Lucrezia's long liaison with Francesco Gonzaga -- Isabella's husband) and political manoeuvres, it is the newness of both instruments and music that makes those times so exciting for viol players. Ray led us first to speculate on the hybrid genealogy of the viol as we know it -- an instrument that owed its shape to the medieval fiddle, the underhand bowing and the *da gamba* posture to the rebab of Moorish Spain, the number and tuning of its strings, as well as a good deal of its repertoire, to the lute. Indeed, as viols began to proliferate in a variety of sizes and voices with little or no common standard, to the court lutenists fell the task of providing players with music as they were learning to cope with their new instruments.

With perhaps less courtly decorum than Quattrocento nobles, but no less enthusiasm, we then played some of that music: one of several *canzone* by Johannes Martini aptly titled *Martinella*, and Ockeghem's motet *Prenez sur moy vostre exemple*, which Isabella prized enough to have it written as a frieze around her private music room. After these three-parts examples of composition still rooted in medieval tradition, we moved on to the 'modern' and specifically Italian *frottola*, a very popular forerunner of the madrigal, with a much more relaxed or episodic use of polyphony than in earlier times. We played *frottole* by Bartolomeo Tromboncino and Marchetto Cara, both active at the Gonzaga court. Although written in four parts, these are scored at pitches that make it possible to omit one or even two voices. Also notable is the subtle disparity of technical demands among the parts: Ray suggested that professional musicians may have played the more sophisticated lines, while aristocratic amateurs could display in the simpler parts the apparently effortless grace expected of them according to Castiglione's *Book of the Courtier*.

The afternoon consorts coached by Ray Nurse continued the exploration of *frottole*, and for a finale a century leap to Elizabethan England, where Peter Philips' Pavane and Galiard *Dolorosa* gave us a measure of the evolution of the viol, from a novelty in search of a repertoire to the well-established recipient of the best composers' offerings.

¹ See Ray Nurse's article in *The Soundpost*, Vol 9 No.1 (September 2011)

**2011 Horizon House and
Chancery Place Concerts
Wanted: Players and Program
Ideas for 2012**

Noreen Jacky

On April 29 2011 at 3:30 PM Pacific Northwest Viols performed at Horizon House in their lovely performance space. Several groups who play regularly together volunteered their services. Mary Ann Hagan, Nancy Wright and Ellen Seibert opened the program. They had some interesting trios to share with the audience. The Gero Chansons were new to me and I enjoyed listening to them. Noreen Jacky and Joe Bichsel played two duets. They played a division by Christopher Simpson followed by a Boismortier Sonata - Gravement, Gayement, Doucement, and Gavotte. Our last group featured Lee Inman, Vicki Hoffman, and Linda Schmid playing English music for three viols by Lawes, East, Jenkins Ward and Holmes. The audience was appreciative and asked about the music and instruments after the performance.

For the concert at Chancery Place on May 13, 2011, Lee Talner joined Ellen, Mary Ann, and Nancy in a program of four-part music by Gibbons, Cantone, Mortaro, and Guami. Steve Jackson, Linda and Vicki repeated the program of English music for viols previously performed at Horizon House. The audience was very enthusiastic and treated the players to a lovely lunch.

PNV will be playing for the residents of Horizon House and Chancery Place again in 2012. We are aiming for dates in March. If your group is interested in entertaining or making its mark, or you would like to join a group for an outreach event, contact either Noreen Jacky, at Jackynoreenbj@gmail.com, or Vicki Hoffman at mikeandvicki@q.com.

In addition to playing - if you have an idea for a program make yourself known.

**Want to Carpool to Portland for the
November Play Day?**

Contact Liisa Peterson: Phone 206 780 8403;
email: liisapeterson@gmail.com.

**PNV Gig Book (Coming Soon)
Wanted: Repertoire Ideas**

Jon Brenner

Greetings everyone! The board is putting together a "gig book" of repertoire. This book will be available for free and will be available as a bound copy or digital download. But first, we would like to know from all of you what repertoire you would like to see in it. Any and all suggestions are welcome!

Thank you,
-Jon

**Save the Dates!
Awesome Opportunities**

Margriet Tindemans

**One-day Workshop at St. James Cathedral:
March 10, 2012:**

Come for a mini-workshop with John Dornenburg, David Morris, Marie Dalby Szuts and Margriet Tindemans, director. Consort and topic classes.

**Bastyr 2012!
July 8 - 14, 2012**

We will be back at Bastyr University in Kenmore for our bi-annual PNV Summer Workshop! Margriet Tindemans, director, and Joanna Blendulf, Ros Morley, David Morris and others will teach on the lovely grounds of Bastyr University.

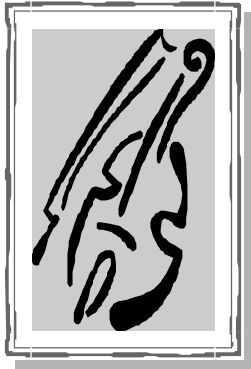
Viol for Sale

I have a 6 string bass viola da gamba that I purchased from Charlie Ogle in 2004 for \$1600. I am offering the viol, bow, soft case, and viol stand for \$1200. I am located in Portland, Oregon. My email address is franjuniper@gmail.com. My cell #: [541-350-3917](tel:541-350-3917).

Thank you,
Fran Rapport

Pacific Northwest Viols
10056 NE Knight Rd
Bainbridge Island WA 98110

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



Pacific Northwest Viols 2011-2012 Season

Play Day Dates

- ❖ September 17, 2011 — Cathedral Place; Led by Ray Nurse
- ❖ **November 19, 2011 — Portland, Oregon; Led by Tim Scott**
- ❖ January 14, 2012— Pastoral Outreach Center; Led by Shulamit Kleinerman
- ❖ March 10, 2012 — Cathedral Place; Workshop led by Margriet Tindemans, et al.
- ❖ May 12, 2012 — Cathedral Place; Led by Elizabeth Reed

*\$20 Fee per participant
A = 415*

Play Day Location for November 19
Trinity Episcopal Cathedral
147 Northwest 19th Avenue
Portland, OR

Pacific Northwest Viols, Board Members 2011 – 2012

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ❖ Lee Inman, President | ❖ Bill Warren, Cathedral Liason |
| ❖ Jon Brenner, Secretary, Programs | ❖ Noreen Jacky, Programs |
| ❖ Michael LaGaly, Treasurer | ❖ Vicki Hoffman, Programs |
| ❖ Lee Talner, Outreach | ❖ Olga Hauptman, Instrument Rental |
| | ❖ 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 scribblings are all gladly received, as well. **Email:** liisapetereson@gmail.com.*