

The Soundpost

Newsletter of Pacific Northwest Viols—A chapter of the Viola da Gamba Society of America



Cornelis De Heem, *Vanitas Still-Life with Musical Instruments*

2020–2021 PNV PLAY DAYS

September 26, 2020 | Ros Morley
 November 7, 2020 | Caroline Nicolas
 January 16, 2021 | Arnie Tanimoto
March 6, 2021 | Julie Elhard
 May 8, 2021 | Lisa Terry

Free for members, \$10 for non-members
 A = 415

Saturday Play Days will be held virtually
 via Zoom for the 2020-2021 Season

The President's Message

by **Bill Warren**

Julie Elhard will be our presenter for Pacific Northwest Viols' March 6th Virtual Play Day which will again be held via Zoom.

Julie is an excellent teacher who was enthusiastically endorsed by our members who attended her Nonclave class in July 2020. She will be focusing on bowing techniques to express the lamenting theme of John Dowland's "Flow My Tears" with a program entitled "Lachrimae Antiquae". Julie has supplied music and recordings for all viols for your practice ahead of time. I am looking forward to this interesting session with Julie.

Access to our virtual Play Days is a continuing benefit of your membership at no

additional cost, so be sure to take advantage of the opportunities to attend all of our Play Days.

Michael King has sent out a link for access to the Zoom session, and we are encouraging everyone to get online at 9:30 a.m., 30 minutes before the start time of 10 a.m., in order to shake out any technical difficulties as well as to have some chat time with other members. Feel free to also "linger longer" after the session to continue chatting.

Ros Morley was available Friday and Saturday February 19th and 20th for virtual lessons and will be available again sometime in mid-April. We'll email instructions on how to sign-up

early in the month, so you can plan ahead for an individual lesson or one with your consort. Online lessons with Ros alternate months with our Play Days so that there is a PNViols activity every month January–May 2021. I hope that you will take advantage of the opportunity for lessons with Ros. I have found that online lessons with her have worked really well.

If you aren't already a member, please join us on Pacific Northwest Viols [Facebook page](#) which provides all of us a great way to keep in touch and to share information relevant to other PNViols members. Looking ahead, I am pleased to announce that Lisa Terry, former president of VdGSA, will be our May 8th Virtual Play Day presenter. Also be sure to check out the [PNViols website](#) where you will find links to viola da gamba sheet music and resources.

A reminder also that recordings of the music for our September, November, and January Play Days were previously sent to members so that you can continue to practice that music using the music-minus-one format. This includes Byrd's Fantasia No. 1 which we didn't have time to cover on Arnie's recent Play Day.

The PNViols Board has made a decision to offer a free viola da gamba lesson with our own Caroline Nicolas for new members. I hope you will encourage your friends to join and take advantage of this opportunity. Caroline is also available for private lessons for you. Contact her at carolinenicolas35@gmail.com if you would like to schedule a lesson.

A vibrant and successful viola da gamba chapter depends on membership participation in our Play Days and also willingness to volunteer to be on the PNViols Board. We are fortunate to have seven committed people serving right now. I am pleased to announce that Mary Anne Pultz has agreed to join the PNViols board. Thanks to Mary Anne! Contact me at info@pnviols.org if you would also be willing to join the board.

I am looking forward to seeing all of you online this Saturday!

Bill Warren

President, Pacific Northwest Viols



Write-up of our January 16th Play Day with Arnie Tanimoto

by [Martin Bonham](#)

I had always dismissed the easier Abel sonatas as pieces designed for dilettantes, not worth a great deal of practice. In today's class, Arnie Tanimoto showed, through detailed explanations of phrasing, harmony and structure how the charming subtleties of Abel's music, even in the pieces written for less advanced players than Arnie, deserve careful attention. I arrived slightly late for the beginning of his talk on the Sonata in C, (K 175), just as he was finishing his initial explanation of how he approaches these seemingly simple sonatas. He recommends reducing the melodies to their main notes, then looking for clues to expression and meaning.

To begin with, he extracted the harmony notes, leaving out passing notes, neighboring notes and divisions. The simplified melody consisted mainly of half notes, quarter notes and an occasional eighth note. In spite of omitting most non-harmonic notes, he did allow some appoggiaturas, especially long ones on strong beats to be considered as main notes.

He took us through the piece, note by note, showing how to play the music in a way that does not obscure the simplified melody but, rather, enhances it. Some of his pieces of advice included clues that Abel has given us. For instance, the slurs that Abel wrote imply a diminuendo over the duration of the slur.



Some basic rules of melodic playing also apply. Higher notes are usually louder than lower. Notes on main beats and longer notes are usually more important. Adjacent notes usually have a strong-weak relationship as do adjacent bars. Stepwise notes are likely to be more connected than skips of a third or more. Larger skips are more dramatic than smaller.

In the first bar, Arnie demonstrated how the various factors interact. The main notes rise by a step to the middle of the bar and descend to the end of the second bar, implying, melodically, a slight swell ending softer than the beginning. The slur across the first 2 beats of the bar indicates a diminuendo. The shape of the first note should, somehow, go in both directions, which Arnie demonstrated beautifully with a swell that backed off just in time for the two sixteenths at the end of the slur. Then, the two eighth notes that begin the second half of the bar are slurred together,

implying another diminuendo, followed by two separate but still stepwise notes which lead to a long appoggiatura on the down beat of bar two. Arnie showed how the final eighth notes of bar one should have the characteristic strong-weak relationship with a slight lift before the expressive appoggiatura on the down beat of bar two. Similarly, he took us carefully through the third and fourth bars, commenting on the surprising interval of a rising sixth to F on the second beat of bar three falling back to the home note of C at the beginning of bar four. Then, Arnie drew our attention to the bass line which illuminates, comments on and often leads the melody. The first two C's establish the key and the tempo and should be clear. The next notes descend in thirds, therefore should also be slightly separated, leading through the subdominant to the dominant harmony of the beginning of bar 2. His performance of the bass line was so infectious and convincing that even without all of his detailed explanation of how to play the melody, I was instinctively drawn toward an expressive and colorful interpretation of it when he asked us to try playing the melody while he played the bass line.

Arnie went bar by bar through bars four and five where the slurs make us present the notes in pairs for a few beats then, when the slurs disappear in the last half of bar five, we should show the skips of a third and finally, the stepwise G and F leading us to an E at the beginning of bar six. Sometimes, Abel fills in large skips, for instance, going from bar 6 to bar 7. Arnie's simplified melody makes that clear and so should we as players. The interval of a minor 10th from the down beat of bar 6 to the down beat of bar 7 should register as dramatic. Arnie took care in that bar to show

that while the scale going from the lower main note to the higher at the beginning of bar 7 implies a crescendo, the scale is not the melody, only a decoration. It should lead from one bar to the other, not draw attention to itself. The notes should be paired strong-weak-strong-weak especially in the case of the last eighth note of the bar which, according to the strong-weak principle, should be weak. That way, the top of the scale at the beginning of the next bar will sound all the stronger. Furthermore, the E at the beginning of bar six, which looks the same length as all the other notes, is a main note and therefore should be longer than, as well as slightly separated from, the notes of the subsequent scale in order to be heard as a main note.

Arnie was able to guide us through the entire sonata. He had only time to give us an overview of the last movement because his explanations of the first and second movements were so thorough and rich. For me, he turned what I had regarded as a charming, but lightweight, piece of music into music that is as interesting as any of the great masterpieces.

Sonata in C Major (K 175)

Abel

Measures 1-5 of the Sonata in C Major (K 175) by Christian Abel. The score is in 4/4 time and C major. The first system consists of three staves: two treble clefs and one bass clef. The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some slurs and ties.

Measures 6-11 of the Sonata in C Major (K 175) by Christian Abel. The second system continues the piece, featuring a triplet of eighth notes in measure 10 and a triplet of eighth notes in measure 11. The notation includes slurs and ties.

Measures 12-15 of the Sonata in C Major (K 175) by Christian Abel. The third system concludes the piece, featuring a triplet of eighth notes in measure 13 and a triplet of eighth notes in measure 14. The notation includes slurs and ties, ending with a double bar line.

Editor's Note: This is an example of the reduction to main notes that Arnie advocated as recalled by Martin.

Join Us for our March 6th Play Day with Julie Elhard: *Lachrimae Antiquae*

by **Julie Elhard**

We will explore how the bow can express the crying and gasping elements of the lamenting theme of “Flow My Teares.” I’ve created some bowing studies that will illuminate the intricate rhythmic themes in Dowland’s *Lachrimae* setting, which will show how the bow can create the words and expression built into the music.

All five voices of this piece have been transcribed for treble, tenor and bass viols, so that everyone can experience playing all the parts and could switch sizes of viols as we play together. In addition, a [music-minus-one recording](#) is available on my website.

Tuning: 1/6 comma, A=415,
Half Note = 50 bpm

Simply choose which part you want to play, and click the red button to download the music for that part. (You’ll notice that some parts have two versions on the page, one with a G-clef and one with a C-clef.) When you’re ready to play, click the black arrow below the button to listen to the recording. You’ll hear all the parts except yours. At the beginning, you’ll hear four clicks representing one measure of half notes to get you started. Then just join in and have fun.

At the bottom of the page is a full score and recording with all five parts together.



Julie Elhard appears regularly as a soloist and chamber musician and has made several appearances with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, including the St. Matthew Passion by Bach under the direction of Nicholas McGegan. Ms. Elhard received a Performing Artist Certificate from the Royal Conservatory of Music in The Hague, Netherlands, and has taught at workshops in North America and as part of the Viola da Gamba Society of America. She teaches viola da gamba at St. Olaf and Macalester colleges and at the St. Paul Conservatory of Music, and has published several method books for beginners and young people called the Passamezzo Method. She began a position as Music Director for the Viola da Gamba Society of America in Fall 2020.

Online Play Days? Online Dues via PayPal now an option! (or continue to pay via check and snail mail)

by Michael LaGaly & Michael King



Since coronavirus protocols are going to prevent us from meeting in-person for at least the next few months, the board has decided to go to a virtual Play Day format. For these online Play Days, we have decided that for paid members, attendance will be free-of-charge. Dues are, as last year, \$20.00. For those not wishing to pay membership dues, you are welcome to attend any of our Play Days for a \$10.00 guest fee.

We will be accepting dues via both PayPal and traditional check/membership form. For PayPal, please send the payment to our treasurer, Michael LaGaly, by doing the following:

1. Log into PayPal
2. Click on “Send”
3. Enter mlagaly@gmail.com
4. Enter the amount to be sent, such as \$20.00
5. Add a note for tracking purposes, such as “PNV 2020 Dues” or “PNV Play Day”
6. Click on Continue
7. When asked “What is this payment for,” click on “Sending to a friend”
8. Choose the method you will use to pay—note, there is no fee for using your linked bank account, but there are small fees for using credit cards.

If you would prefer to send your membership dues in via check and the mail, please use the attached membership form and submit to our membership coordinator, Amy Warren, at the address on the form. Looking forward to seeing you online at our next Play Day!

Do you have a viol collecting dust?

by **Michael King**

PNV currently has nearly our entire inventory of instruments out for rent! While this is outstanding, it means we may not have instruments for new renters!. If you have a spare viol or two that are collecting some dust, perhaps you could see them becoming a part of our rental instrument fleet – either on an individual case or a sustained basis? Options would include making your instrument available for a period of time for rental (loaning to PNV), permanently (donating instrument to PNV), or on an individual case basis (we've identified a particular need and you have an instrument that might be the right fit—say for an advanced student or someone needing to work on entrance to a conservatory program).

Please reach out to our rental coordinator, Olga Hauptman at rentals@pnviols.org and let her know if you can help!



Always looking for Play Day Presenter Hosts

by **Michael King**

We are hopeful that we may be able to conduct in-person Play Days in the not-too-distant future. We are still in need of volunteers to help host our Play Day presenters who visit us from out of town! This can be the full-service package including transportation to and from airport, meals, and even providing a space

for lessons, or a lightweight version such as providing a place to sleep and a ride to and from Play Day. Fairly typical is an arrival on a Thursday or Friday, with a Play Day on Saturday and a departure on Sunday or Monday. If you are in a position to be able to assist, please reach out to Michael King at soundpost@pnviols.org to discuss.

PNV Classifieds

Bass Viol for Sale

Bass Viol for Sale by Larry Higgins of Higgins & Sons, San Francisco, 1975. Includes cloth gig bag.

Asking \$850.

Please contact:

Doug Knutson

(206) 527-1428

douknu@msn.com



Treble Viol for Sale

Treble Viol by William Ure of Santa Barbara, 2001. 15 ½” or 39cm scale length. Included: Conrad Gotz bow and a hard case by Kingham.

Asking \$1200.

Please contact:

Barbara Logen

360-454-6004

pjnbarb789@gmail.com



Please let us know if you would like to place a classified ad for our membership. Viols and related instruments, bows, cases, etc. are always welcome. Email soundpost@pnyiols.org, and include picture(s), description, price, and contact information for the ad, or a description of what you are looking to buy if you are in the market.

Pacific Northwest Viols Membership Form

Membership period is for one year, from July 1—June 30.

As a member you will receive the newsletter by e-mail, have library privileges, have a vote at business meetings, be eligible to join the PNV Board, and have the satisfaction of supporting viol playing in the Pacific Northwest.

I am (check one):

- Renewing my membership
- Joining as a new member
- Not interested in membership at this time but would like to subscribe to the Soundpost newsletter.

Please enter your contact information below.
Renewing members: If your address, phone, and email information are unchanged, please enter only your name.

Name:

Address:

E-mail:

Phone:

How did you learn about PNV?

PNV sends an electronic copy of the current membership to all members via e-mail.

Check this box if you do NOT wish PNV to share your information with other members.

PNV occasionally shares information from our mailing list with various concert and workshop sponsoring organizations.

Check this box if you do NOT wish PNV to share your information outside the PNV membership.

I volunteer to help discharge PNV's residency obligation by participating in outreach performances scheduled by the chapter.

I would be interested in hosting a visiting (out-of-town) presenter.

Payments may be submitted either by check (payable to "PNV") to the address listed below, or by cash or check to the PNV Treasurer at the Play Day registration desk. Please indicate your desired payment category below:

\$20 for full annual membership (includes Sound Post subscription, which is delivered by e-mail)

\$10 for full student annual membership (includes Sound Post subscription, which is delivered by e-mail) \$5 for Sound Post subscription only (Canadians may remit in either US or Canadian funds.)

I want to further support PNV, a non-profit 501c3 organization. I would like to make a tax-deductible donation in the amount of \$.

Please mail all checks (Payable to "PNV") to:
Amy Warren, 1851 S. Brandon Place, Seattle,
WA 98108-2376. Thank you!

Pacific Northwest Viols 2020–2021 Board

Bill Warren, President
Chu-Lan Chiong, Secretary
Michael LaGaly, Treasurer
Amy Warren, Membership Coordinator & Librarian
Caroline Nicolas, Beginner Coach & Play Day Presenter Coordinator
Michael King & Jenny Wilkson, Communications
TBD: Programs & Play Day Location Coordinator

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

soundpost@pnviols.org