

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 18, 2021 | Mary Springfels

December 11, 2021 | David Morris

January 15, 2022 | Steve Creswell

March 12, 2022 | Adaiha MacAdam-Somer

May 7, 2022 | John Lenti

\$20 fee per participant

A = 415

Vaccination & masks are mandatory at this time

Maple Leaf Lutheran Church
10032 31st Ave NE, Seattle 98125

The President's Message

by **Bill Warren**

First of all, we are lucky to have David Morris as our 2nd Play Day presenter of the season, and are pleased that we were able to work with him to find a date that works for both PNV and Pacific MusicWorks. We were shooting for December 4th, but due to an unforeseen scheduling issue, had to reschedule to the 11th.

Our venue will be Maple Leaf Lutheran Church at 10005 32nd Ave NE, Seattle 98125. It is much easier to get to than our previous venue at Queen Anne Christian Church. Google Maps will easily get you to the church, but detailed directions from both the north and south are included below to assist you getting to the church. We will be meeting

upstairs in the Sanctuary for the morning general session as the downstairs Community Hall will be occupied in the morning. In order to accommodate David's performance schedule, the lunch break will be from 12-12:30 with a tutti session with David from 12:30-2:15, which will be downstairs in the Community Hall. He will not be available for the second session so we will have make-your-own consorts from 2:30-3:45. Plan to arrive a bit early, since parking will be limited that day as several events are happening at the church throughout the day.

Please be aware that the PNViols Board made a decision that all participants must be fully vaccinated and wear a mask to attend the Play

Day. We want to ensure that everyone is safe during this ongoing pandemic.

PNViols has been approved by VdGSA for the Circuit Rider Program for 2022, and we have arranged with Mary Springfels to be our Circuit Rider! Here are the dates for her visits: February 11-13, March 25-27, August 19-21, and September 16-18. Individual and consort lessons continue to be at a bargain rate of \$50/hour per VdGSA guidelines, so this will be a great opportunity to plan a series of lessons for you and your consort during 2022 with one of the very best viol teachers.

Dates for upcoming Play Days with some excellent music coaches are as follows: January 15 with Steve Creswell from Seattle Baroque Orchestra, March 12 with Adaiha MacAdam-Somer from Cascadia Viols in Portland, and May 7 with John Lenti, who is the new director of the New Baroque Orchestra, a community collegium of Early Music Seattle. Some of these musicians may be unfamiliar to you, but they all come highly recommended by many PNViols members. We look forward to an exciting winter and spring session of Play Days with them.

Member write-ups of that include your observations and learnings from our coached presentations at Play Day for submission to our newsletter are appreciated. We would like to have multiple submissions, so think ahead and plan to do a write-up about our December 11th Play Day with David Morris. Submissions from other workshops such as the Cascadia Viols virtual workshop with Ros Morley on November 19 are also welcome.

I would like to welcome Lindsey Strand-Polyak as the newest member of the Board of PNViols! Lindsey is a professional baroque violinist, violist, and teacher with a very impressive resume. We look forward to helping Lindsey with and learning from her on her journey with the viol and to her participation on the board.

I look forward to seeing you for our in-person Play Day on Saturday, December 11th with David Morris at Maple Leaf Lutheran Church!

Bill Warren

President, Pacific Northwest Viols





December 11th Play Day with David Morris: *Back in the Saddle*

by **David Morris, with Michael King** (*Photo and biography courtesy of David Morris*)

I'm so looking forward to seeing all of my Seattle-area friends again. To my mind, getting back into group playing after such a long period of isolation is a little like getting an idled locomotive train up to speed... best done gently, gradually and with some good planning and direction! To that end, I've chosen two pieces which should respectively help us refresh our "standard consort" skills and also remember how to become "singing instrumentalists":

- a six-part consort by the little-known 17th-c. English composer Simon Ives (1600-1662)

- a "classic" 5-part Marenzio madrigal, *Dolorosi martir*.

We'll spend the better part of an hour on each of these, discussing basics and well as the finer points of style, technique and interpretation. That ought to give us a solid grounding for the afternoon small-group sessions.

There is a conflict for use of the downstairs Community Hall in the morning, so we will have the morning session upstairs in the Sanctuary, followed by the afternoon tutti session downstairs in the Community Hall.

Here is the plan for the December 11th Play Day:

- 9:30—gather as usual to sign in and pay Play Day fee—upstairs in the Sanctuary
- 10-12—General session with David
- 12-2:30—short break for lunch—bring your own lunch/snack
- 12:30-2:15—tutti play-along session with David for everyone—downstairs in the Community Hall
- 2:00-3:45—make your own consort—in the Community Hall and the Library if there are two consorts
- 3:45-4:00—clean up and leave

A heads-up about parking. Waldorf School will be using the parking lot for their WinterFaire all day. The Lions Club will be using the parking lot in the morning for the Boy Scout Christmas Food Basket preparation. So, be prepared to come a bit early and expect that you may have to use street parking.

Here are directions in case you have yet to travel to our new location at Maple Leaf Lutheran Church:

Directions to Maple Leaf Lutheran Church:

From I-5 South

1. At Exit 171, head right on the ramp for WA-522 toward Bothell (1.9 mi)
2. Bear right onto NE 98th St (499 ft)
3. Bear left onto Ravenna Ave NE (486 ft)
4. Bear right onto NE 100th St (0.3 mi)
5. Turn left onto 32nd Ave N

From I-5 North

1. At Exit 173, head right on the ramp for Northgate Way toward 1st Ave NE (0.3 mi)
2. Keep straight to get onto NE Northgate Way
3. Turn left onto NE Northgate Way (1.3 mi)
4. Turn right onto 24th Ave NE (0.3 mi)
5. Turn right onto WA-522 / Lake City Way NE (0.3 mi)
6. Turn left onto NE 98th St (500 feet)
7. Bear left onto Ravenna Ave NE (486 ft)
8. Bear right onto NE 100th St (0.3 mi)
9. Turn left onto 32nd Ave NE

DAVID MORRIS has performed across the U.S., Canada, and Europe on Baroque violoncello, viola da gamba, lirone, and bass violin. He has been a continuo player for the Boston Early Music Festival's opera productions since 2013 and is a member of Quicksilver, the Galax Quartet and the Bertamo Trio. He is a frequent guest performer on the New York State Early Music Association and Pegasus Early Music series and has performed with Tafelmusik, the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Seattle's Pacific MusicWorks and the Mark Morris Dance Group. He has produced operas for the Berkeley Early Music Festival and the SF Early Music Society series and has been a guest instructor in early music performance-practice at Cornell University, Amherst College, Oberlin College, the University of Colorado at Boulder, UC Berkeley and the SF Conservatory of Music. He has recorded for Harmonia Mundi, New Albion, Dorian, Drag City Records, CBC/Radio-Canada, and New Line Cinema.

PNV Board Picks: Gifts for Musicians

by [The Pacific Northwest Viols Board](#)

Useful products for the viol enthusiast, recommended by your friendly PNV board. These would make thoughtful holiday gifts!



Kootek Stand Light

These rechargeable [stand lights](#) are so bright and sturdy! They're ideal for rehearsals or performances, or anywhere where the room lighting is sub par. —Amy Warren



Bluetooth Speaker

I like the [Oontz Angle 3](#) Bluetooth speaker. It connects with my phone or computer and has good sound. It's a nice way to listen to downloaded music. —Abbie Crane



Melos Rosin

Treat yourself (or your favorite gambist) to [Melos Rosin](#)! Melos is one of the few companies that formulates rosin for baroque instruments and gut strings, with a little extra tooth and grip to make your strings sound clearly. They have different rosins for Treble/Tenor and Bass— they work GREAT for violin and arm viola as well. And relatively inexpensive too! —Lindsey Strand-Polyak



Snark Tuner

If you play in an orchestra where it's hard to tune because of the noise, this [tuner](#) is handy. It clips on to your instrument while you tune. —Abbie Crane

Quakehold

A little pinch of this [putty](#) on your bridge just below the top string will smooth out the tone if it's getting a little harsh. —Amy Warren



Real Chamois

Nice to put across your lap when playing treble—comfortable and just the right amount of friction. These [sheepskin chamois](#) come in a pack of two, so could put one on each leg for a bit more friction for larger instruments.

—Mary Anne Pultz

Airpods

These Apple wireless Bluetooth [earbuds](#) are a splurge, but they really are perfect to use when listening to music or trying to record your own playing at the same time you are listening to a track. No cords to get in your way while you play! —Abbie Crane



Magnetic Pencil Holder

I love [these](#) for keeping a pencil underneath the lip of your music stand where it doesn't interfere with page turns! —Michael King

4-page Stand Extender

Are pages falling off your stand? [This folder](#) is the best solution I have found. Don't forget to flip up the bottom edge when it is stretched out so that you also have an extended tray.

—Chu-Lan Chiong





September 18th Play Day with Mary Springfels

by [Ellen Seibert](#)

On September 18, 2021, Pacific Northwest Viols held its first gathering in eighteen months with a Play Day celebrating our return to in-person playing of viols together. Our last Play Day gathering before the COVID pandemic closed all meetings down was in March 2020 at Queen Anne Christian Church. Now, we could come to our new home, Maple Leaf Lutheran Church at 10005 32nd Ave NE in Seattle on a sunny and warm fall day. We were required to be vaccinated against COVID and wear masks all day while inside the sanctuary and classrooms of the church. The program committee had chosen Mary Springfels from

Santa Fe as our morning presenter and afternoon coach. She was also available the next two days for lessons.

Mary needed little introduction to the group as she has been a valued teacher at many of our Play Days and in many of our workshops over the years. She is a brilliant viol professional and has thrilled us with performances in concerts.

Our morning session began with our president, Bill Warren, welcoming us. As a member of the church, Bill was able to tell us about the church spaces, mindful of the

homeless population which was still using the lower level until October. Bill has worked mightily with the church and the PNV Board to make all this come together and deserves our grateful thanks.

Before we began playing music, Board Member Amy Warren described how the PNV music library is being stored in the Maple Leaf Church, at least 9 big boxes of music. Amy has indexed all this music and merged it with music so kindly donated to PNV by Chris Briden and Lee Inman, to whom it was bequeathed by Margriet Tindemans. Amy is to be thanked profusely for her collating and data entry work.

I first met Mary Springfels in the 1980's about the time she came to teach in our Port Townsend Early Music Workshops at Ft Worden. So when I went to my first VdGSA Conclave in 1988 at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, I took Mary's class in rhetoric and music. I have never forgotten how spellbinding she was and although I am not skilled at describing rhetoric I will always remember her coaching us in the Thomas Weelkes 6-part Madrigal/Fantasia, *Thule, the Period of Cosmography*. Mary continues to use rhetoric as a guiding force in understanding musical intention, themes, and compositional construction since the composers of these English viol pieces were well aware of the practice. She chose two fantasias of five parts, both by Giovanni Coprario (c.1575-1626), an English composer who loved the Italian musical styles so much he changed his name from John Cooper. He was extremely popular and was employed to teach the future King Charles I at court. It is said that he also taught William Lawes.

The first fantasia we played has a madrigal title, *O voi che sospirate*, a piece for treble, altus, tenor, tenor and bass, so rather low sounding and beginning with long notes and rich harmony in an opening statement (VdGS#48). The second Coprario was a fantasia titled *Illicita cosa* for the same low scoring of parts (VdGSA #13). This piece oozed with Gesualdo-like dissonances, giving it a most unusual harmonic structure for this English music. The exordium, the opening statement, pulsed with tritones becoming ever more mysterious with overlapping themes, always in opposite directions, but ending wonderfully with lovely harmony, a final peroration, "I've said it and I am done."

I came across a review from a Fretwork concert in New York in 2012 in which this piece was played. I quote what the reviewer wrote about *Illicita cosa*:

"Coprario's Fantasia for Five Viols, 'Illicita cosa,' might have been a prototype for Mozart's 'Dissonance' quartet, with its alarming harmonies and leaning suspensions. The unexpected ending left audience members uncertain whether to applaud..." —Amanda Keil (in bachtrack.com)

I finish with two new words that Mary taught me over the course of the sessions. One is "congeries", when there is an explosion of activity in the music, a coming together or a pile up. The other is the rhetorical word "hypotyposis", a vivid description or hyper image. These words aptly describe much of Coprario's viol music.

CD Review: Georg Philipp Telemann Fantasias for Viola da Gamba Solo, Featuring John Dornenburg

by **Richard Rastall**, The Viol No 64 Autumn 2021

Until the present century only one work by Telemann (1681-1767) for solo viola da gamba was known, the Sonata senza cembalo of the late 1720s. Telemann advertised a set of twelve multimovement solo fantasias in 1733, and these were published in 1736. The print run was presumably small, the market for virtuoso solo gamba works being effectively limited to the private entertainment of a patron or employer, and until fairly recently no copy was known to survive. A single copy is now known—fortunately in good condition—and a modern edition was published in 2016. Gamba- players generally have not been quick to take up these pieces: but John Dornenburg did well to make the present recording in 2020.

The listing of these twelve fantasias immediately shows a great variety among them. True, all but the two-movement C minor piece are in three movements, and of these eleven, eight are in a quick-slow-quick disposition. But they are far from being in a set pattern, as the varied movement-headings demonstrate. The variety of movement-types is paralleled by the keys involved, none of which appears more than once: C major and minor, D major and minor, E major and minor, G major and minor, A major, F major, B-flat major and E-flat major. This is, then, a carefully-constructed series of works that make up a useful repertory for a professional gamba-player.



But ‘useful’ is not relevant to the listener. From start to finish these fantasias need to be listened to attentively and with concentration, preferably one at a time. One can, of course, use them as background music, but that is to misuse works that deserve much better. These are virtuoso works that will repay study and performance by professional performers, their virtues and beauties being equally apparent to the listener. To say that they are engaging (which is true) hardly does them justice: they are civilised and controlled, as one would expect of Telemann, but they are also wonderfully inventive and humorous. On the basis of this music (as, indeed, of other works by the composer) Telemann would be a strong contender for one’s choice of dinner guests, if only it were possible.

John Dornenburg plays a six-string instrument by David Rubio (1985) based on a Richard Meares gamba of c.1700. His performance is excellent, a thoughtful and accomplished presentation in which all the musical features of Telemann's work are carefully and lovingly brought out, never overshadowed by the technical virtuosity, which is carried lightly and very successfully. The playing is clean, textures, dynamics and tone beautifully controlled and presented. One could not reasonably ask for more.

Something must also be said here about the recording itself. One does not often feel moved to comment on technical matters, but the fact is that the musical success of this recording could not have been achieved without first-rate sound engineering. The clarity of sound is excellent, partly because the recording is close, but there is no extraneous sound. A well-deserved bouquet,

therefore, for the excellent work of the sound engineer, Adrian Hunter. Solo gamba works are not often thought of as music of choice for the listener, though perhaps most of us would make an exception for Bach's great suites and now, perhaps, for some of the lyra-viol repertory. Without setting up any rivalries between composers, I hope that this wonderful set of works will soon place Telemann among those exceptions. Dornenburg is certainly a persuasive advocate for them.

Amy Warren has John Dornenburg's Telemann CDs available for purchase for \$15 each. She will have them at Play Days, but is also happy to mail or hand deliver them to those who are unable to attend. Please email Amy directly for more information at nurturedmother@yahoo.com.

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.

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@pnaviols.org and let her know if you can help!



PNV Classifieds and Other Musings

by **Michael King**

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@pnaviols.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
Mary Anne Pultz
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