



NEWSLETTER

Viola da Gamba Society--New England

December 2019



President's Letter

Welcome to the Winter Newsletter, dear Gamba community!

Thinking about the extraordinary energy, resilience, warmth and generosity of our members, I wonder whether it is the people who choose the viola da gamba who are this way, or whether playing the viola da gamba makes us this way... Sustaining those struggling with health issues, aging or hardship, and lifting up spirits in consorts of fiercely individual voices that yet harmonize and belong together, the sounds of our viols do more than entertain us. There may be a magical quality in the resonance of the viol, which attracts the good witches and wizards, and invites them to the alchemy of transformation through music, which in turn strengthens our bodies and our bonds.

Such warmth and generosity is evident in the outpouring of good memories of our board member Joan Boorstein, who passed away in June, which you will find in the special supplement to this newsletter. We grieve the fact that it could have happened without a chance for us to say good bye and thank her for many years of dedicated service to the VdGS-NE and the larger early music community. Stay posted for a special concert dedicated to her.

Our Fall Workshop at Mount Holyoke College was a resounding success. We hoped that changing to a location more central to our membership area would benefit members who might not have made a trip to Boston because of distance, and it did. We were happy to welcome people from the Albany area, Vermont,

Connecticut and Western Massachusetts. Moreover, we welcomed a handful of dedicated viol students from the 5 colleges to the VdGS-NE, who were thus introduced to the society and contributed their talents as musicians and hosts. We are so grateful to Mount Holyoke College for allowing us the use of the fine facility, to Bob Eisenstein and Jane Hershey for directing an excellent workshop on Mostly Maximillian (the music of which turned out to be Mostly Senfl!), and thank them along with faculty members Alice Robbins, Anne Legêne, Laurie Rabut, Hannah Davidson and Meg Pash. Also many thanks to Junko Oba for coordinating the workshop. And, of course, our ongoing and everlasting thanks to board members Martha Davidson (flyer), Annette Somers (food serving supplies) and Sybil Keyv (registrar, treasurer) who work so hard every time to make it all happen. And a big thank you to all the volunteers who helped with the clean-up!

For our January 25 workshop we will be back at Brandeis University. The workshop is directed by James Williamson, and you can read all about it in the workshop flyer. We are looking forward to the music of English composers abroad.

We are so lucky to be able to escape the realities of the harsh outer world in the comfort of playing viols together. Our impact on that outer world, as we play our viols, consists mostly of positive vibrations. However, we cannot escape the fact that in this dire time of climate crisis, we need to do all we can to reduce our carbon footprint. In the past weeks I have received many great suggestions for

greening our workshops, and the board will be discussing these and making changes. I know you all care and will embrace these changes with all the warmth, generosity and can-do attitude you are known for.

Give your viol a few (bow) strokes for me!

Happy Holidays,

Anne Legêne

*TO ENSURE WELL ORGANIZED
WORKSHOPS ALL PARTICIPANTS ARE
REMINDED TO RESPECT THE DEADLINE
FOR REGISTRATION. LATE
REGISTRATIONS MAY BE DECLINED*

HOLIDAY PARTIES

You are invited...

Consort party
Saturday December 28,
drop in between 2:00 – 7:00PM
Anne Legêne's house, Great Barrington, MA
Soup and bread served.
Bring finger food/drinks, instrument, music
stand.
RSVP and info: alegene@simons-rock.edu

Consort party
Featuring Morales, Guerrero, Victoria
Saturday December 14, drop in between
10:00AM – 3:00PM
Tom and Kathy Kurz
56 West Hill Ave, Melrose MA
RSVP
RSVP and info: kathyandtomk@verizon.net

Adventures of Our Coaches

Just like the musicians of 500 years ago, today's viol players and teachers rely on patronage in order to make their varied careers possible. Although court and church no longer take on that role, many of us are fortunate to receive help and support from the institutions we're involved with. In my case, being on the faculty at Brandeis University and the generous programs sponsored by the VdGSA have made it possible to continue to grow as a player and a teacher. One of the most important ways they have done so is in the form of travel grants.

Over the years grants from my University have made it possible for me to accept invitations from viola da gamba societies, universities, and conservatories overseas; their travel allowances have made it possible for me to teach and play in the UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Japan, and for three years to be a part of the annual Encontro of the new VdG of Brasil. My lyra viol has traveled with me for concerts in many of these countries, where I have performed solo and in consort with colleagues I would not otherwise have met.

Within the US, our own VdGSA supports professional travel in a number of ways, including for Conclave weeks and Professional Development weekends, as well as sending teachers around the country as part of the Circuit Rider program. For four years I traveled every few months to work with the viol community in Houston, TX, and this year I got to spend four extended weekends with the wonderful players of Seattle, WA. I look forward to traveling to Tucson for more teaching this coming year. All of these areas applied to the Circuit Rider program and received funds to bring a teacher to their community four times a year.

A survey of my calendar for 2019 shows the number of places outside of Massachusetts I

have traveled with a viol since January: Seattle, WA (four times, as a Circuit Rider); Bloomington, IN (for an intensive spate of research and playing with Wendy Gillespie & Mary Springfels); Litchfield, CT (for the Amherst Memorial Day Workshop); Boscawen, NH (Avaloch Farm Music Institute with Emily Walhout, for our duo *Heart's Ease*); Tacoma, WA (for the Port Townsend Early Music Workshop); Brunswick, ME (with Ensemble Origo, for their Lasso program); and most recently to Montréal, PQ, to pick up my new alto viol from Francis Beaulieu (and where I got to catch up with our own James Williamson for some afternoon consorting.) For the first time in several years, the viol didn't take me outside of North America in 2019, but it did give me the chance to teach and play with people around the country, in living-rooms and concert halls, large college spaces and a "tiny house" in the woods.

With the viol as an ambassador, Brandeis as a patron, and the VdGSA as my extended family, my life as a musician continues to be rich and full, with new opportunities to learn around every corner.

Sarah Mead

This is the first of an occasional series of reports from the field

Concert Announcements

“La Cetra”

Music of the Italian Baroque, performed by **Aldo Abreu**, recorder, with **Duo Maresienne**: **Carol Lewis**, viola da gamba; **Olav Chris Henriksen**, lute, theorbo & baroque guitar; with sonatas, diminutions & dances by Frescobaldi, Legrenzi, Selma, Castrucci, Vitali, Brescianello & others.

Saturday, January 11, 2020 at 8:00 pm in Lindsay Chapel, First Church in Cambridge,

Congregational, 11 Garden St. (entrance on Mason St.), Cambridge, MA. For information, call (617)776-0692 or go to www.duomaresienne.com

Sunday, January 12, 2020 at 3:00 pm at the Somerville Museum, Central St. at Westwood Road (entrance on Westwood Road), Somerville, MA. For information, call (617)666-9810 or go to www.somervillemuseum.org

“Grand Ballet de Cour”

French renaissance music from the court of Louis XIII, including dances, variations, court airs & fantasies by Moulinié, Boesset, Mesangeau Guédron & du Caurroy, performed by **El Dorado Ensemble**: **Carol Lewis, Karen Burciaga, Hannah Davidson, Mai-Lan Broekman & Alice Mroszczyk**, viols; **Olav Chris Henriksen**, lutes.

Two performances:

Friday, March 6, 2020 at 8:00 pm in Lindsay Chapel, First Church in Cambridge, Congregational, 11 Garden St. (entrance on Mason St.), Cambridge, MA. For information, call (617)776-0692 or go to www.duomaresienne.com

Sunday, March 8, 2020 at 3:00 pm at the Somerville Museum, Central St. at Westwood Road (entrance on Westwood Road), Somerville, MA. For information, call (617)666-9810 or go to www.somervillemuseum.org

Sufficient Grounds: Wellsprings of the Renaissance

This program explores the many guises of the ground bass from “Greensleeves” to “La Follia” and beyond. As the Renaissance era gave way to the early Baroque, music from English consorts and Italian dances to Spanish divisions and broadside ballads all relied on grounds—repeating bass lines—as a common currency in a time of dramatic musical change. You’ll hear favorite pieces from this beloved genre, ranging from traditional grounds such as the rustic bergamasca, the lively ciaccona, and the mournful passacaglia, to the complex and elevated ground-bass writing of Henry Purcell. We’ll touch along the way on works by Monteverdi, Lawes, Marini, Ortiz, selections from the *The Division Violin* and *The English Dancing Master*, and original arrangements by Chicago-based violinist David Douglass.

Seven Times Salt: Karen Burciaga, violin, guitar, voice; Dan Meyers, recorder, flute, percussion, voice; David H. Miller, bass viol, voice; Matthew Wright, lute, bandora, voice; with guest ensemble In Stile Moderno: Agnes Coakley Cox, soprano, percussion; Nathaniel Cox, cornetto, theorbo

Sunday, February 23 at 5:00pm

Brattleboro Music Center, 72 Blanche Moyse Way, Brattleboro, VT
\$20/\$10 suggested donation

Monday, February 24 at 7:30pm

Church of the Good Shepherd, [9 Russell Ave. Watertown, MA](#)
\$20 suggested donation

www.seventimesalt.com

www.instilemoderno.com

Arcadia Viols

Sunday, February 23, 2020, 3:00PM
Wesley United Methodist Church, Hadley, MA

Arcadia Viols will return to grace the stage of Wesley Church, known for its viol-friendly acoustic. They will bring tenor Daniel Carberg and baritone Matthew Leese from Keene, NH to enliven songs from the 16th-century courts of Henry VIII, Isabella d’Este, and Maximilian I.

VdGS-NE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Anne Legêne, President
Rosalind Brooks Stowe, Vice President
Sybil Lea Kevy, Treasurer
Martha Davidson, Corresponding Secretary
Hannah Davidson, Newsletter Editor and Recording Secretary
Sarah Mead, Brandeis Liaison
James Williamson, Webmaster
Mai-Lan Broekman
Karen Burciaga
Alexandra Hawley
Jane Hershey
Glen Legere
June Matthews
Annette Somers