

Cascadia Viols

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Cascadia Viols is the quarterly newsletter of the Viola da Gamba Society ~ Cascadia, a chapter of the Viola da Gamba Society of America.



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VdGSC is grateful to:

- ◆ Knuckleheads for website development and maintenance
- ◆ Trinity Cathedral for hosting our events
- ◆ Boulder Early Music Shop for the material in our lending library

Message From the President

Tim Scott



The best part of Cascadia Viols, for me, is meeting all the interesting people who play the viol. At our inaugural workshop in May, I met people from Salem, Eugene, and Seattle. I got to spend time with people I had not met before, and several I had not seen in years. We are quite an accomplished group of people, some on viols, some harpsichord builders, viol makers, recorder or harpsichord performers. We are in pretty good shape financially, and plans are coming along very well for the upcoming season. Our website should be up within a few weeks. It will still need some adjusting, so be patient, and feel free to make suggestions as to what we should include on it.

Our first workshop of the season, in September, will feature the always popular and excellent Joanna Blendulf. Cascadia Viols will sponsor the event, and this time there will be coaches for the afternoon sessions, a very welcome development. Thanks to Connie Newman for all her work on this. In October, the current conclave director of the VdGSA, Sarah Mead, will present a workshop enticingly titled "Moods and Modes." Sarah is one of the most knowledgeable viol players in the country, with special expertise in very early music for viols. We are very pleased to have Josh Lee here in January for a workshop and solo house concert. Josh is one of our most exciting young players, and very popular as a coach.

There will be two more workshops in the spring, one featuring the music of Dowland, led by the always genial and enthusiastic Lee Inman, and one on the music of Byrd and Tallis, by Kerry McCarthy, Portland resident, one of the leading Byrd scholars of our time. She does not play viol, but is a fine singer and conductor, and a most entertaining speaker, as those of you who have attended the Portland Byrd Festival already know. All our workshops will include a short presentation by Bill Monical. You'll find workshop details in the following calendar of events.

And to help pay the afternoon coaches at our workshops next season, we just received a grant of \$500 from the Viola da Gamba Society of America.

Vice President Anthony Allen and I are planning some informal consort concerts at the Cup and Bar, the coffee shop run by the people doing our website. One will be this summer or early fall, and another one around the holiday season. If you have a group ready to perform in public, this could be a good opportunity for you. I have a few other interesting performances this summer; see the calendar of events for details.

I hope all of you have wonderful summers, including some satisfying viol playing.

Tim Scott

Calendar of Events

- ◆ August 19 and 27: **Tim Scott performs** with the Green Show in Ashland.
- ◆ August 26: **Tim Scott and Lee Inman play** a concert for two viols. Music festival at Marylhurst University.
- ◆ September 19: **VdGSC workshop with Joanna Blendulf.** Eugene.
- ◆ October 17: **VdGSC workshop with Sarah Mead, joined by Mack Ramsey.** Trinity Cathedral, Portland.
- ◆ January 8: **House concert, Josh Lee.** At the home of Tim Scott in Portland.
- ◆ January 9: **VdGSC workshop with Josh Lee.** Trinity Cathedral in Portland.
- ◆ Spring 2016: **VdGSC workshop with Lee Inman.**
- ◆ Spring 2016: **VdGSC workshop with Kerry McCarthy.**
- ◆ Several members of our chapter will be coaching afternoon sessions at our workshops, including Anthony Allen and Tim Scott.
- ◆ Tim and Anthony will be offering a few stand-alone, size-specific coaching sessions, dates and locations to be announced.

Cascadia Viols has Gala Weekend

Dan Rouslin

On May 1 and 2 the newly formed Oregon Chapter of the VdGSA, Cascadia Viols, celebrated its launch with two stellar events. The first was a wonderful concert on Friday evening at Grace Memorial Episcopal Church by the Portland Viol Consort, who were joined by special guest Wendy Gillespie. Ms. Gillespie, one of the country's truly celebrated viola da gambists, traveled to Portland from Indiana University, where she is the chair of the Historical Performance Institute at the Jacobs School of Music. The concert featured music of English masters 1550-1650, and included works by Tallis, Picforth, Parsons, Tye, Ward, Lupo, Gibbons, Ward, Lawes, Holborne, and Byrd.

The workshop on Saturday was held at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, which provided the chapter with low-cost access to its facilities. Following a coffee-fruit-and-donut social gathering, Wendy led a stimulating morning session involving the entire group. This began with a warm-up that outlined the circle of fifths and was followed by a polyrhythmic, five-part *In Nomine* by Picforth. The latter was a great way to sharpen both our

subdividing skills and ensemble awareness. The morning session concluded with several readings of *La Spagna* by that well-known English Renaissance composer, A. Nonny Mouse.

Following a box lunch provided by the church, two afternoon sessions called for dividing the participants into four smaller consorts coached respectively by Wendy, chapter president Tim Scott, and two other members of the Portland Viol Consort, Joanna Blendulf and Lee Inman. The musical high point of the day for this writer was a polychoral canzona by Hans Leo Hassler, composed very much in the style of Giovanni Gabrieli. Joanna, our coach, worked on this inspiring piece with us until I could almost imagine playing with my "chorus" of four gambists up in one of the choir lofts of San Marcos Basilica, tossing phrases back and forth across the spaces to the other "chorus" of four in a different loft.

The chapter is grateful to Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, the board, and the thirty participants, all of whom helped make this workshop a rousing success. ◆

An Evening with the Portland Viol Consort: Comments from an Enthusiastic Audience

◆ There's a saying that viol consorts are more fun to play than to listen to. The Portland Viol Consort concert on May 1 did not support that notion. The audience really responded to the music, and it was a treat to have guest artist Wendy Gillespie, who performed with Fretwork for many years, join the consort. The program was made up primarily of well known pieces by well known English composers, with the exception of Parsons and Picforth, about whom little is known. . . . Among my favorites was the five-part Gibbons "In Nomine." If there is a wish for a rousing and exciting challenge, try that piece with its very active inner parts. The tenors get a workout. . . . Lee Inman's program notes were excellent. ~ *Bob Loy*

◆ The Portland Viol Consort put on a great concert! All viols. All English. Boring? Not at all; there was a lot of musical variety in the program's pieces. Sitting in the second row, I enjoyed watching the bow arms fly—when I wasn't closing my eyes to get enveloped by the soundscape and following the themes and variations. ~ *Gloria Jacobs*

◆ I really enjoyed the Portland Viol Consort's "English Masters" concert. . . . The event was enthusiastically

received by the audience, and the program incorporated some personal favorites including Tallis' "A Solfing Song," a textless piece meant for solemnization practice, and Tye's "In Nomine: Crye," which has a repeated note motif in imitation of a street vendor's cry. ~ *Phil Neuman*

Cascadia Viols Lending Library Now Open!

Anthony Allen

Do you have a guest coming to join your regular consort? Would you like to know the level of Byrd's consort music before purchasing? Are you new to the viol and don't know much about its literature? These are just a few reasons to be excited about our chapter's lending library. Until our website is up and running (very soon) and equipped to offer members' requests via the Web, we ask that you contact info@cascadiaviols.org for a current list of materials via e-mail and for requests.

What is the Cascadia Viols Lending Library?

The Cascadia Viols Lending Library is a service for Viola da Gamba Society ~ Cascadia members that loans printed music through the U.S. mail. Members in the chapter can borrow from the library without leaving their home.

What does the lending library collection include?

The collection includes solos, duos, and consort music for 3–12 players.

Who may borrow from the library?

The service is available to Viola da Gamba Society ~ Cascadia members. Membership must be current a minimum of 30 days past the due date of borrowed items.

For how long may I keep the music?

The loan period for music is up to four books for 30 days. There are no renewals of the same materials within a 12-month period. Of course this does not prevent a member from borrowing other items throughout the year.

In the event that a Cascadia Viols workshop presenter or instructor needs to use an item that happens to be on loan to a member, we would ask that you return the item. After the workshop we would re-send the item to the member for the remainder of the 30-day loan period.

How much does it cost to borrow?

The library uses a fixed fee to cover shipping and incidental expenses—one item: \$3; two to four items: \$7. This charge covers costs of one-way postage and packing materials. The borrower is responsible for

return postage. We recommend opening packages carefully and re-using packing materials. All music should be returned in the condition in which it was received. Very rarely a book's size is large enough to warrant a slightly larger shipping cost.

Members should make no marking whatsoever on any music. In the event that a part or parts are lost or very damaged, it is the responsibility of the borrower to replace the music.

Photocopying is absolutely forbidden. Though we are thrilled to offer a lending library to our members, we strongly encourage anyone to ultimately purchase music they enjoy. Not only does this allow one to more fully enjoy this music, but it allows publishers and sellers of music to continue to add music to the rich offering presently available. All of our library music is available for purchase from other sources. For a comprehensive selection of music for viols, go to www.boulderearlymusicshop.com, www.vonhuene.com, or any of several other online stores. ♦

Cascadia Viols Interview: Eileen Flory, Seal Rock, Oregon

Cascadia Viols: Tell us about your earliest musical experiences as a child and student.



I started out on violin in grade school, and my parents made sure that I attended my share of concerts at the University of Oregon's music school down the street. I took viola lessons and music classes at the U. of O., even though Romance languages won out as a major. This set me up for decades of playing in university and community orchestras.

CV: What brought you to the viola da gamba?

I ran into neck problems and, having briefly explored the one viol the U. of O. owned back when I was a student, it seemed natural about 14 years ago to make the change to a vertical instrument.

CV: Please tell us about some of your best classes and teachers.

In Margriet's improvisation class, after she asked us to compose improvisations over the *passmezzo antico*, I could hardly sleep, my mind was churning out so many of them. I always learn from Frances Blaker and Tish Berlin at the Winds and Waves recorder workshops here on the coast, where I have been welcomed as a viol player. Perhaps most important: A lifetime of rubbing

hair of horse over gut of sheep took me quite a ways on the viol by myself, but after ten or so lessons with Joanna Blendulf, I almost feel like a proper viol player.

CV: What opportunities do you have to play with others?

I play the viol every week with the Oregon Coast Recorder Society. My greatest joy is playing in a trio drawn from OCRS; our current practicing repertoire includes several pieces from the *Odhecaton* (we've memorized two), three Gibbons fantasias, some of the Lawes pieces that Mark Davenport produced, Isaac's "Der hund," some contemporary pieces for recorder, and Turlough O'Carolan pieces (I've learned what "planxty" means). As much as I like playing with recorders, attending the occasional viol workshop is a real treat.

CV: Tell us about your most memorable performance experience, either playing or listening.

Sitting in a thatched, one-room, earthen-floored house, a four-hour hike from the end of the road in Mexico, taking copious notes and recording violin and guitar music through an all-night healing ceremony. The musicians that night were as knowledgeable and hard-working as the healer himself, and the event could not have taken place without them.

CV: Do you have any books, articles, websites, recordings, or videos to recommend to viol players?

I love to watch the viol consort Parthenia on YouTube. Beverly Au fairly *drapes* herself over her instrument—an inspiration for those of us who are trying to relax as we play.

CV: What other kinds of music do you like to play or listen to?

A few favorites on my iPod: Mozart's "Ave Verum Corpus," Chanticleer singing "Loch Lomond," Tony Bennett and k.d. lang singing "Blue Velvet," Harry Belafonte singing "These Are the Times," and Violeta Parra singing her own "Gracias a la vida."

CV: What kinds of work have you done over your career?

Advanced degrees in anthropology and ethnomusicology; museum lab work, education, exhibit development, and management; writing and editing; scientific illustration.

CV: Say you have an unexpected two hours of free time later today. What would you do?

I would bring out the clay things and make some little boxes; my September show will be here soon!

CV: Is there anything else you'd like to share?

I play music for the intellectual and technical challenges, but the real reward comes at those times we all know but can't quite put into words—when the everyday world flips into another realm where there are no boundaries and we *are* the music. ♦

Volunteer Help Wanted

The board of Cascadia Viols needs three kinds of volunteers to help with

- grant writing (we are of course a nonprofit organization);
- publicity for workshops and concerts; and
- social media, such as Facebook.

To all members: please help get the word out about Cascadia Viols, as there are surely people out there who do not know about us yet.

Houses wanted: Do you have, or know of, a house or apartment that might be a good venue for house concerts?

Please let any board member know if you can help with any of the above.

The Viol Curmudgeon: Renewing "Slippery" Bow Hair

Bill Monical

At our May Cascadia Viols Workshop, Sarah Peck, a viol and Baroque violin restorer in Berkeley, California, led an interesting discussion and demonstration with Joanna Blendulf to illustrate musical problems caused by excessive rosin, its solution, and the benefits of minimal rosin application. Here is the text of the accompanying handout from that presentation:

Chiff, and a "skating" effect in bowing is often caused by excessive rosin build-up on the hair. The impression can also be that the bow is "slippery" on the strings in articulations, etc.

To renew the "grip" of the hair:

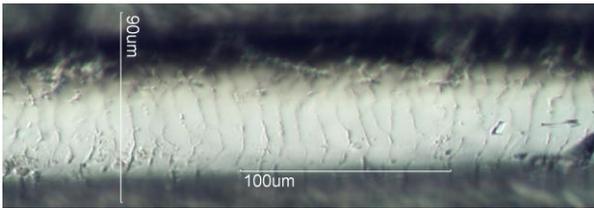
Tighten the bow to normal playing tension. Using a clean, stiff, small brush (or toothbrush), "comb" the hair in its length back and forth from frog to head several times to scrape away granulated rosin, and "flick" the hair with a fingernail until dust is gone. You should not see any "cloud" of white rosin dust coming from the hair.

Repeat the combing until all encrusted rosin is combed from the bow hair.

Next, with a sharp paring knife held at a right angle above the hair, slide it up and down the length of the bow like a scraper with the blade edge “scraping” and giving new “key” or grip, by re-exposing the omnidirectional textured plate growth of the hair keratin; then flick the hair again to remove any rosin dust.

You can now apply a high quality *dark* rosin like inexpensive Kaplan Art Craft rosin, using just *one* slow stroke over the hair in each direction. The bow is now ready for use. Do only use the *dark* rosin *very* sparingly, perhaps one stroke in each direction every three or four weeks, and only if the bow seems lacking in adhesion. Please be in touch if any questions come to mind.

All the best for marvelous music making!



Photomicrograph of horse hair, showing scale-like textured plate growth. From microlabgallery.com.

The Practical Viol Player: A Good Grip on the Bow Screw

Eileen Flory

Base-of-the-thumb inflammation got you down when you tighten or loosen your bow? Try trimming a foam pencil grip to the right length and slipping it over the screw. Even better, fatten that arrangement with a few wraps of that rubber material we use on our knees, secured with a rubber band.

Do you have a practical idea to make a viol player's life easier? Please send it to the editor!

Practice Pointer: Using What You Have, or Making It Up

Tim Scott

When I sit to down to practice, I like to take anything I am working on, whether it is a Gibbons fantasy, Simpson division, Marais suite, or a bass line such as the

one below, and use the music, the notes, as raw material for interesting practice.

For example, I notice that many etudes change the notes every measure, but the bowing pattern remains the same. For a change, take one measure of the left hand pattern, and practice it with many different bowings. Or, you can take most any passage and play it fast or slowly, on different strings, with different rhythms, two or three bows for each note, to make a real life exercise. If there is a difficult string crossing, practice it on other strings, with other notes. Do fast passages slowly, and slow passages fast. Every time I have a trill I practice it slowly and fast and again with different rhythms. I also will take easy passages and ornament them with passage work, adding 16th notes to 8th-note passages and putting in bowed trills where I can. Fun.

With the above in mind, I offer the “Allegro” bass line from Bach’s *Flute Sonata in C Major* as an excellent piece to use for practicing different bowings and holding fingers down.

Editor’s note: The bass line Tim mentions above can be found at the end of this newsletter, after the Holborne pages. It’s well worth waiting for!

Additional tips from Karen Bartlett:

The continuo line sent by Tim, or any other Alberti-bass type line, also offers a great opportunity to practice bow alignment and placement—so crucial for good tone—since it involves so many string crossings and yet repeats the pattern many times. I practice using a mirror, and find that since the broken chord pattern is so repetitive and predictable, I can spend most of my time observing my bowing without having to look at the music much. I start by playing very slowly, watching for a straight bow on each new string I go to, and also watching for placement of the bow on the string. Does the frog tend to go up too much on a pull bow? Is the bow wandering up and down the string?

To give myself even more time to correct errors on a given string, I may play each note three times (playing each note any number of uneven times puts you correctly on a pull bow for every other note). If I don’t have much time, or get bored with this pattern, I will pick and choose certain measures, as some string crossings are wider and more difficult than others. Spending longer on one note by repeating it also gives me time to think ahead: to remember to relax my arm in preparation for a wide string crossing (see Joanna Blendulf’s teaching video on the VdGSA website); to

move a finger to another string in preparation for the next note (while still playing the last G in bar 1, start moving the third finger down two strings for the first B in bar 2, so your finger is already on the B before the bow gets to the G string); to hold down a finger on a note which gets played again soon, or at least hover over it, for economy of motion (the Gs in the first three bars, the B in the second bar, etc.). Although the importance of emphasizing resonance by a holding finger down after a note has been played is not so important for a continuo line like this, it still makes an effective exercise as training for pieces like Marais where he asks that certain fingers be held down while continuing on to the next note. So, for example, holding down that first B in bar 2 until it is used again on the third beat is not just for efficiency, but can help with resonance as well.

Once I am comfortable with all this and am satisfied that my bowing is straight and sounding point is good, then I can play it as written and gradually increase the tempo, always watching in the mirror. Or, as Tim suggests above, increase the challenges and make up other patterns: a dotted rhythmic pattern to each pair of notes, for example, or each pair of notes to one bow. If you haven't done this kind of inventive "thinking-up-exercises" before, give it a try. The more you do it, the easier it gets and the more quickly you are able to think of variations. You might be surprised at how much you can learn, and at your own creativity.

Happy practicing! ♦

25 Viol Excuses

1. This chair is too low. 2. I'm not used to playing at 440. 3. My "A" string is false. 4. My peg is stuck. 5. My pants are slippery. 6. This Xerox is too faint. 7. The light is bad. 8. I don't read alto clef. 9. I didn't know there was a page two. 10. I skipped a line. 11. I ran out of bow. 12. Oh, were we repeating? 13. My leg is asleep. 14. Where were we starting? 15. Double whole notes? I thought they were rests. 16. I sound better at home. 17. It was an ornament. 18. The pages were in the wrong order. 19. I couldn't find the double bar. 20. The measure numbers are wrong. 21. I can really play better but I never do. 22. I need rosin. 23. I'm used to a different edition. 24. My feet slipped. 25. I can't play when I'm hungry.

From a New York Consort of Viols T-shirt

Summer is icumen in

Summer is here, and that means workshop and festival time. To learn all about this summer's offerings, both near and far, go to <http://vdgsa.org/pgs/events.html>. ♦



Classified Ads

Do you have an instrument, music, or music-related item to sell (or give away), or are you looking for something? We will be happy to include your ad in the classified section of the newsletter. Please send your ad to the editor.

- ♦ For sale: Tenor viola da gamba. A tenor bow might be available, too. Contact Bob Loy, (503) 292-0990.
- ♦ For sale: 6-string bass viola da gamba. Based on 1713 Barak Norman instrument, made in 1988 by Sidney Greenstein, former Metropolitan Museum musical instrument restorer and maker. String length 66.5 cm, highly flamed maple and quarter-sawn spruce, bridge custom-made after design by Monical, PegHeds. Clear, pleasing tone, excellent condition. Comes with Jaeger hard case, pernambuco Mettal bow, and set of blueprints of original instrument in Boston Museum of Fine Art. Photos available. Located in Salem. \$4900. Contact Karen Bartlett, dagamba@ucsbalum.net.

Sheet Music for Four: Anthony Holborne, Pavan "The Funerals" and Galliard

A continuing series of five-part music reduced for four-person consorts by Jeanne Collins

Anthony Holborne (ca. 1545-1602) was an English composer during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, described by himself as a "Gentleman and Servant to her most excellent Maiesti." One of his most famous works, *Pavans, Galliards, Almains and Other Short Aeirs*, was a collection of 65 pieces written for five voices and first published in 1599. According to the title page the intended instrumentation was for "viols, violins, or other musically wind instruments." Most of the pieces were in the form of pavan-galliard pairs, and the pavan and galliard presented here represent one such pair. The pavan, entitled "The Funerals," was written for his patron the Countess of Pembroke Mary Sidney, and is an instrumental elegy on the deaths of her father, mother and brother, all in the year 1586.

Pavans, Galliards, Almains and Other Short Aeirs (1599)

Pavan: The Funerals

Anthony Holborne

(1545-1602)

(adapted for four viols by Jeanne Collins)

The first system of the musical score consists of four staves. The top two staves are in treble clef, and the bottom two are in bass clef. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is common time (C). The music features a mix of quarter, eighth, and sixteenth notes, with some rests and ties.

The second system of the musical score consists of four staves. It begins with a measure number '4' in a small box at the top left. The notation continues with various rhythmic patterns and rests across the four staves.

The third system of the musical score consists of four staves. It begins with a measure number '7' in a small box at the top left. The notation continues with various rhythmic patterns and rests across the four staves.

The fourth system of the musical score consists of four staves. It begins with a measure number '11' in a small box at the top left. The notation continues with various rhythmic patterns and rests across the four staves.

(adapted for four viols by Jeanne Collins)

15

Musical score for measures 15-18. The score is in 3/4 time and B-flat major. It features four staves: two treble clefs and two bass clefs. The melody in the first treble staff begins with a half note B-flat, followed by quarter notes G, A, B-flat, and C. The bass line in the first bass staff starts with a half note B-flat, followed by quarter notes G, A, and B-flat. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

19

Musical score for measures 19-22. The score is in 3/4 time and B-flat major. It features four staves: two treble clefs and two bass clefs. The melody in the first treble staff begins with a half note B-flat, followed by quarter notes G, A, and B-flat. The bass line in the first bass staff starts with a half note B-flat, followed by quarter notes G, A, and B-flat. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

23

Musical score for measures 23-26. The score is in 3/4 time and B-flat major. It features four staves: two treble clefs and two bass clefs. The melody in the first treble staff begins with a half note B-flat, followed by quarter notes G, A, B-flat, and C. The bass line in the first bass staff starts with a half note B-flat, followed by quarter notes G, A, and B-flat. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Galliard

28

Musical score for measures 28-33. The score is written for four staves: two treble clefs and two bass clefs. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The time signature is 3/4. The music consists of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some rests. A repeat sign is present at the end of measure 33.

34

Musical score for measures 34-39. The score is written for four staves: two treble clefs and two bass clefs. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The time signature is 3/4. The music consists of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some rests. A repeat sign is present at the end of measure 39.

40

Musical score for measures 40-45. The score is written for four staves: two treble clefs and two bass clefs. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The time signature is 3/4. The music consists of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some rests. A repeat sign is present at the end of measure 45.

46

Musical score for measures 46-51. The score is written for four staves: two treble clefs and two bass clefs. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The time signature is 3/4. The music consists of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some rests. A repeat sign is present at the end of measure 51.

Sonate

C major

J.S. BACH
BWV 1033

Allegro (Second movement)

Bass

