

# Australian Viola da Gamba Society Newsletter

## Summer 2015

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### WELCOME!

A warm welcome to all members of the Australian Viola da Gamba Society to the Summer 2015 edition of the newsletter. Thanks to contributors to this edition.

The newsletter is a joint effort. John is responsible for editing and layout and Rhona for collecting the news items that feature in it. It is with sadness that we inform readers that Rhona is laying aside this critical job. Society members who have enjoyed the newsletter owe her a vote of thanks.

The Committee is now seeking a replacement for Rhona. The job is an important one, but need not take up a huge amount of anyone's time, as the newsletter appears just three times a year. If any Society member thinks that he or she can fill this role, please contact John (details on the last page of this newsletter).

—John Weretka and Rhona Lever

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### THE EMERALD LEOPARD CD REVIEW

*The Emerald Leopard* (TP233: duration 78 minutes) is a collection of works for voice and viols chosen from recent performances by Josie and the Emeralds and guest artists. It is a thing of beauty both visually and aurally. The music is a fascinating juxtaposition of old and new, with songs by Morley, Dowland and Gibbons together with new music arranged or composed by Brooke Green.

The CD comes with an informative booklet with the texts of the songs and explanations about the music which I found very helpful and illuminating.

The first four tracks are settings by Brooke Green of poems by Dorothy Porter, taken from *Crete* (1996).

The first opens with an immediately arresting combination of bowed and plucked strings, and I was particularly struck with the entry of the voice matching the timbre of the viols. Each setting has different effects and textures in the accompaniment which set the mood for the texts. The second poem, *The Emerald Leopard*, mysterious and shimmering, gives its name to the CD. I particularly enjoyed the wit and panache of the last setting, *Hot Date*.

Another similar arrangement by Brooke which works very well is of the 'Eliza Aria' from *Wild Swans*, the song originally by Elena Kats-Chernin.

We are on more familiar territory for me with five songs by Gibbons from 1612, followed by the lively Elizabethan piece, 'Sing we and chant it', by Morley. These are all beautifully executed with sensitive viol playing and expressive singing.

The most affecting song on the CD is an arrangement of a song by Andrea Pandolfo. This is set in a lower register and is a moving lament, from the perspective of a refugee mother whose child dies in the sinking of a boat between Albania and Italy, and is dedicated to boat people everywhere.

Following this are similarly sombre songs by the ever melancholy Dowland. I particularly enjoyed these expressive performances of the sad songs by Dowland, and then the delightfully lively cross rhythms in 'Can she excuse my wrongs'.

Two more compositions by Brooke are both very interesting. *Travelling to the Question* is a combination of chant and inspirations from Nick Cave, Hildegard of Bingen and Martin Heidegger. *This Body is Not Me* combines a twentieth-century text with thirteenth-century melody.

The CD also includes some purely instrumental music arranged or composed by Brooke Green. There are four miniatures arranged from piano pieces by Ross Edwards that are all delightful. *Shades of Presence Past* is a suite of four contrasting movements, using modern musical idioms but referencing shades from renaissance or baroque music. The third movement is a setting of 'My mind to me a kingdom is' by Sir Edward Dyer.

After spending time with this CD I find myself just emerald green with envy looking across the Tasman to Australia where so many talented and professional performers on the viol perform regularly and can produce a CD of this quality and interest. Josie and the Emeralds comprises Josie Ryan (soprano) with *The Emerald City Viols* (Brooke Green, Laura Moore, Catherine Upex and Fiona Ziegler). Guest artists on this recording are Belinda Montgomery (soprano), Margo Adelson, Anthea Cottee, Elizabeth Rumsey and Laura Vaughan (viols), and Jacques Emery playing double bass and percussion on one track. The musical director is Brooke Green who also arranged or composed all the new music.

More information about Josie and the Emeralds can be found at <http://josieandtheemeralds.com>, including many recordings from their concerts. This CD was produced with financial assistance from Pozible donors, released in 2014, and is distributed to retailers in Australia by Tall Poppies and also available to order online at [www.tallpoppies.net](http://www.tallpoppies.net)

— Rhona Lever

## NEW BASS VIOL ON THE WAY

I started to play the viol in the beginners' class at the Easter Viol School at which the Australian Viola da Gamba Society was founded. That now seems a long time ago and many bowstrokes have flowed under the bridge since then (just to mix metaphors).

In that time, I have owned several viols. My first bass was a very small 1960s East German instrument that was formerly the property of the Early Music Society of Victoria. I subsequently owned a Chinese-made but hand-finished Hoffmann-style viol. Both of these have gone on to loving hands. And I currently own two very good Lu-Mi instruments, a large tenor and a large treble.

What I haven't owned until this point is an instrument that was made just for me. When I sold my Hoffmann viol, I promised myself that I would commission a bass for myself. A couple of years later, that dream is finally coming to fruition.

As those of you who have done it before will know, commissioning an instrument is no easy matter. First you have to be sure about what you really want and need, and this will often lead you directly to the conclusion that, in order to play all the repertoire you love, one viol is never enough. I have enough interested in the French repertoire to think that a seven-string viol is appropriate for me but, notwithstanding large hands, I've always really hated playing in extension on larger viols. My 'dream' viol was thus a seven-string bass only large enough to support the seventh string — really, I hoped for something about the size of my old East German viol (a six-stringed instrument), or the size of a *really* large tenor. My original thought was to investigate whether six-string viols had ever been converted to seven strings in a process similar to that which occurred in the world of the harpsichord, where it is called *grand ravalement*. Six-string viols were indeed subject to this process, by the way, but the results were rarely satisfactory.

Secondly, you have to find a maker whose instruments suit you. This can be very hard in Australia where, some makers notwithstanding, it can be difficult to form an appreciation of the type of craftsman a particular maker is based on the small number of examples you're likely to encounter of his or her work in Australia. That's why it's key to seek permission to try any viol you come across,

especially when you're at Conclave or one of the English summer schools.

My bass viol is being made by Marco Ternovec, upon whom I first came as a string maker — he is the owner of Universale strings, on which I have now been playing for years.

I was fortunate enough to be able to play two of his viols on a visit to Rome some years ago. They were very different instruments, one French, one English, but marked by an authenticity I found compelling. The French instrument was the right size and had a lovely dark intensity.

Marco and I have now been thrashing out the details of this instrument for some time. It's to be a copy of a 1683 Colichon instrument of a string length of 70cm. As this is the only instrument I can see myself commissioning the short to medium term, I'm going all out with decoration — carved head and pegbox, rosette and so forth. It should be a real feast for the eyes.

The instrument is now well under construction, and I thought it might be nice to share a few pictures with Society members. My original choice for a head was something modelled on the head of Charles I from the Van Dyck triple portrait, but Marco said that the beard would break off in no time at all... We've opted for something a little more generic, but wonderful all the same.

— John Weretka



## **COURSES AND EVENTS FOR TRAVELLERS OVERSEAS**

Please note that this is only a selection of courses which include classes for viol players. You can find more information at <http://vdgsa.org/> and <http://www.vdgs.org.uk/>

### **15-17 May**

Voices and Viols

Tutors: Alison Crum and Peter Syrus

Information: Benslow Music (<http://benslowmusic.org>)

### **6-7 June**

Music for Marguerite of Austria—Workshop for Renaissance Viols

As regent of the Low Countries Marguerite kept court at Mechelen with a lavish musical establishment. She commissioned two important collections: the Chansonier, MS. 11239, and the Album, MS. 228, both in Brussels, Koninklijke Bibliotheek. Most of the 'Chanson des Regretz' from our March weekend came from these collections. This weekend we are going to study the sacred music.

Where: Berlin, Germany, at the Dominican Monastery St. Paulus, 9:00am to 5:00pm

Tutors: Richard Sutcliffe and Michael Dollendorf

Information: [renaissanceworkshop.org](http://renaissanceworkshop.org)

### **5-12 July**

Amherst Early Music Festival

Music of Italy and Spain, includes viol classes with Paolo Pandolfo

### **12-17 July**

The International Viol Summer School

Tutors: Alison Crum, Ibi Aziz, Roy Marks and Peter Wendland

Information: Benslow Music (<http://benslowmusic.org>)

### **26 July-August 2**

VdGSA Conclave 2015

Where: Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia, United States

Information: [vdgsa.org](http://vdgsa.org) in late winter

### **1-8 August**

NORVIS XLV

Classes for recorder, viol, lute, harpsichord, solo singing, and Baroque strings for students of all ages and experience. Classes for recorder, viol, lute, harpsichord, solo singing, and Baroque strings for students of all ages and experience.

Where: Durham, England

Information: [enquiries@norvis.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@norvis.org.uk); Jane Beeson 01652 678230; [www.norvis.org.uk](http://www.norvis.org.uk)

### **2-9 August**

Cambridge Early Music Summer School: Baroque Week

Bach's Library

Where: Sidney Sussex College, University of Cambridge

Tutors: Parley of Instruments

Information: [www.cambridgeearlymusic.org](http://www.cambridgeearlymusic.org)

### **9-15 August**

Cambridge Early Music Summer School: Baroque Week

Italia Mia

Where: Sidney Sussex College, University of Cambridge



Tutors: Philip Thorby, Linda Sayce, Emma Murphy, David Hatcher, Frances Eustace  
Information: [www.cambridgeearlymusic.org](http://www.cambridgeearlymusic.org)

### **15-22 August**

Irish Recorder and Viol Course

A course designed for players of recorders, viols and other early instruments, covering a wide repertoire from ancient to modern. Sessions include one-to-a-part groups, workshops, technique classes, consort songs, trio sonatas, choir, large and small ensembles.

Where: An Grianán, Termonfechin, Ireland. A

Tutors: Ibi Aziz, Marion Doherty, Pamela Flanagan, Emma Murphy, Marion Scott, Philip Thorby

Information: Mrs. Patricia Flanagan, 110 Kincora Avenue, Clontarf, Dublin 3, Ireland. Tel: 00 353 85 2880389  
[info@irishrecorderandviolcourse.org](mailto:info@irishrecorderandviolcourse.org). [www.irishrecorderandviolcourse.org](http://www.irishrecorderandviolcourse.org).

### **16-22 August**

Renaissance Music Summer School—Consort Week

Doulce Memoire - Anchor che coll partire - Vestiva i colli - Susanne Ung Jour. A week with the most famous Renaissance melodies in a lovely setting in Northern Germany.

Where: Cloppenburg-Stapelfeld, Germany, Catholic Akademy

Tutors: Joëlle Morton—Renaissance Viol Consort, Richard Sutcliffe—Renaissance Viol Consort, Milo Machover—Vocal Consort, Randall Wong—Vocal Consort, Michael Dollendorf—Recorder Consort and Double Reeds, Sam Goble—Cornett & Sackbut Ensemble, Gösta Funck—Harpsichord & Organ Continuo, Knut Trautvetter—Chitarrone, Lute & Early Guitar Continuo

Information: [renaissanceworkshop.org](http://renaissanceworkshop.org)

### **20-22 November**

Consorting viols (2-night option)

Tutors: Alison Crum, Roy Marks, Ibi Aziz, Peter Wendland

Information: Benslow Music, <http://benslowmusic.org>

### **20-23 November**

Consorting viols (3-night option)

Tutors: Alison Crum, Roy Marks, Ibi Aziz, Peter Wendland

Information: Benslow Music, <http://benslowmusic.org>

## CONCERT DIARY

### *Sydney*

11 April 2015

Josie and the Emeralds — benefit concert for refugees

Venue and time to be announced

30 May 2015, 1930

Marais Project — Smorgasbord

The Independent, 269 Miller Street, North Sydney

Tickets: \$38/\$34/\$25 (students)/\$100 (family)

Information: 02 9955 3000; theindependent.org.au

16 August 2015, 1500

Marais Project — Marais and the Operatic Muse

Recital Hall West, Sydney Conservatorium, Macquarie Street, Sydney

Tickets: \$35/\$20/\$90 (family)

Information: 02 989 5185; classikon.com

### *Melbourne*

15 March 2015, 1830

The Choir of Queen's College and the Queen's Viollas

Queen's College Chapel, Queen's College, University of Melbourne

Sunday Chapel service includes a performance of Buxtehude's *Vulnerasti cor meum* and works for viol consort (Coprario, *Fantasia à 6* and Coleman, *Fantasia à 6*)

Free

29 March 2015, 1830

The Choir of Queen's College and the Queen's Viollas with Ruth Wilkinson (violone), Brock Imison (bassoon) and Kailen Cresp (oboe)

Queen's College Chapel, Queen's College, University of Melbourne

Sunday Chapel service includes the Australian premiere performance of Pachelbel's cantata, *Meine Sünde betrüben mich* and works for instrumental consort (Schmelzer, *Sonata à 7* and Tunder, *Sonata à 7*)

Free

### *New Zealand*

The Choir of Newman College and the Affetto Players tour New Zealand — Monteverdi's *Vespers of 1610*

7 April 2015, 1930: St Peter's Cathedral, Hamilton

8 April 2015, 1930: St Matthew-in-the-City, Auckland

10 April 2015, 1930: St Paul's Cathedral, Dunedin

11 April 2015, 1230: St Patrick's Basilica, Oamaru

12 April 2015, 1400: St Mary's Pro Cathedral, Christchurch

Information: [eventfinder.co.nz/tour/2015/claudio-monteverdi](http://eventfinder.co.nz/tour/2015/claudio-monteverdi)

9 April 2015, 1930

La Chappelle du Roy with David McFarlane (harpsichord) and Polly Sussex (viola da gamba) — *Les Ombres Silencieuses*

St Paul's Cathedral, Dunedin

Marc-Antoine Charpentier's *Le reniement de Saint-Pierre* and *Méditations pour la Carême*; Marais' *Tombeau pour Monsieur de Lully*

Tickets: \$20

## MUSIC REVIEW

### Telemann: Sonata in G major, arranged for bass viol and keyboard by Patrice Connelly Saraband Music SM80

Georg Philipp Telemann was one of the greatest composers of the Baroque era and produced a prodigious number of compositions across all major Baroque genres. While he was possibly the most highly regarded composer in Europe during his lifetime, more popular than both his contemporaries Bach and Handel, over the last century or two his music has not always enjoyed the esteem which it deserves. Fortunately, in more recent decades his genius is being more widely recognised.

The sonata under review was originally written for recorder and continuo and was published by Telemann in his periodical *Der Getreue Musik-Meister*, a serial publication put out fortnightly which included much high quality music written for ostensibly instructional purposes by Telemann and some of his contemporaries. As many of the works from this serial were originally notated in such a way that they could be played from the same score by many different instruments (e.g. by flute or oboe or viola da gamba) through the clever use of multiple clefs and key signatures, Telemann would likely have approved of this arrangement of his recorder sonata for viola da gamba.

Telemann seemed to be rather fond of the viola da gamba, writing quite a lot of works involving the it including

about eight of his cantatas, a number of chamber trios, a concerto, viola da gamba duos, the 'Paris' quartets, an unaccompanied sonata several for viola da gamba and continuo. He also composed twelve solo fantasies for viola da gamba, which have tragically been lost. This arrangement of the F major recorder sonata is a welcome addition to the existing sonatas for viola da gamba and continuo and would make an excellent point of entry into the music of Telemann for many intermediate players. It is technically less difficult than Telemann's other gamba sonatas, with just a couple of tricky but very playable bars in the final movement. It is musically accessible with a jovial *Vivace*, tuneful *Largo* in E minor and sprightly *Allegro* to finish. The viola da gamba part has been transposed down an octave and a seventh so that it fits within the fretted range of the bass viol. While this makes it sit in a generally lower tessitura than Telemann's sonatas composed specifically for gamba, it still works well.

The edition includes a preface with some general information about the composer and work in question. There is no critical commentary but as *Der Getreue Musik-Meister* is relatively free from errors this is likely not necessary anyway. The music is presented both full score and a part for the viola da gamba. The score includes the figured bass line plus a realised right hand for those who may wish to use it and is laid out very sensibly in terms of page turns so with an extra copy could also be used by the gamba player too so they can see what the keyboard is doing. As is usual for Saraband Music publications, the typesetting is clear and uncluttered, with

### Patrice has been busy lately ...

*A whole bunch of new viol editions are available now:*

SM94: Gibbons: 6 Fantasias for 2 treble viols; SM94a, same for 2 bass viols

SM95: Morley: Fantasias and Canzonets for 2 treble viols

SM96: Duets for treble viols: The English Renaissance

SM99: Italian Duets for Treble and Tenor viols

*And don't forget these from late last year ...*

SM93 - Renaissance duets for treble viols. Canons, Carminas and songs by Anon, Asola, de Turnhout, Lemlin and Brumel

SM97 - Roger L'Estrange: Divisions for solo bass viol. 4 Virtuositic sets!

SM98 - Edward Blankes: 6 Fantasias for TrTrT viols. Very Morley-esque! The first was for TrTB but is transposed so all 6 can be played by the one combination.

Score and parts for all above. Call today or see the website for more info

### The New Saraband Book!!!

A Tempest in a Glass of Water. Gordon J. Kinney's translations of French Renaissance & Baroque viol treatises. Kinney died in 1981, leaving an enormous body of work, particularly translations of De Machy, Danoville, DuBuisson, Jambe de Fer, Trichet, Loulie, M & R Marais and more. One of Kinney's articles included. \$33



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the original recorder ornaments and articulation retained, both of which work perfectly well on the gamba. Overall, it is a very charming addition to the available repertoire for viola da gamba.

— *Laura Vaughan*

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### **NEWS FROM SARABAND MUSIC**

I've been busy lately, preparing more editions. As most of you know, it's Saraband Music's twentieth anniversary year, and after nineteenth years of publishing, I'm just finishing off SM100. My first edition was *Duets for Tenor Viols*, Volume 1. This one is similar: it's the Michael East bass viol duets, transposed for tenor viols, so yet another collection of duets to well and truly replete the repertoire. But I am also working on some other interesting and larger editions which will be available soon – before Easter, I hope, including two items edited by John Weretka.

I'm flying down to Hobart very soon to sell music at an early music workshop there. Directed by Julia Fredersdorf, and with viols looked after by Brett Rutherford, they have 26 people enrolled. I'm told it's a pilot workshop to see if they can get it going annually, and a number of people are going from Melbourne as well as plenty of locals. It's on for three days from 6-8 March.

Also for the Early Music Society of Queensland, I'll be running a workshop in Brisbane on 17 May, alongside lutenist Andrew Byrne, who will be visiting. He's doing a lute workshop in the morning, followed by an all-in recorders and more at A440 for the afternoon. I'm doing viol tryouts/refreshers in the morning, and a Dowland *Lachrimae* A415 big group in the afternoon.

I look forward to seeing you all at Easter in Canberra. If you want me to bring down specific items, please contact me in good time the week before.

— *Patrice Connelly*  
Saraband Music

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