



# NOTES

[www.washingtonrecordersociety.org](http://www.washingtonrecordersociety.org)

August 2019

## President's Column

Welcome to the 2019–2020 season of the Washington Recorder Society! I am excited at the many opportunities that we are offering this year for Washington area recorder enthusiasts like you to rehearse, perform, and socialize with other like-minded folks; explore a wide range of music; and enhance your technique and musicianship.

**Our biweekly “Antiqua” and “Nova” meetings.** Our season begins on Monday, September 16, and continues through June 6, 2020. We meet twice a month—on the first and third Mondays of the month, except for an adjustment in January. The year’s schedule is enclosed with this newsletter and posted on our web page, [www.washingtonrecordersociety.org](http://www.washingtonrecordersociety.org).

At our Antiqua meetings, we begin with a short concert by a local recorder ensemble or other music group, and then split into two groups to explore and rehearse different types of music. The Antiqua large group usually has several players per part, and is open to anyone who can play at least one type of recorder (alto, tenor, bass, or soprano). This group is led by **David McGown**, an outstanding musician with extensive knowledge of music history, and by **Adéla Gardavská-Balima**, a professional-level, conservatory-trained recorder player from the Czech Republic. The Antiqua small group is open to players who can play all four standard recorders (soprano, alto, tenor and bass), are comfortable reading alto up an octave, and are comfortable playing one instrument to a part. That group is coordinated by long-time member and former WRS President Jayme Sokolow.

At our Nova meetings, we all play together in one large group, as a kind of “recorder orchestra.” David McGown leads the Nova playing sessions.

**Leo Angulo**, who has led the larger Antiqua group the past 2 years, is taking a temporary leave of absence from WRS this year. We look forward to welcoming him back in the future!

At our first Antiqua meeting on September 16, we will enjoy a short concert by David McGown and area lutenist Michael Stover. We have a number of exciting local recorder and other groups lined up for future meetings as well.

**Other events.** On Monday, December 16, we will all get together for our **annual holiday party**—playing holiday music and enjoying refreshments and each other’s company.

One of the highlights of the year is our annual **spring recital**, which will be on Saturday, June 6. At this event, our different WRS ensembles perform for our members and their friends and families, and there are opportunities for members and other local recorder players to perform: solos, duets, trios, or in other small ensembles.

**Workshops.** We are excited this year to offer two all-day Saturday workshops, led by famous musicians and excellent recorder teachers: **Gwyn Roberts** on November 2 and **Shelley Gruskin** on March 7. Both Gwyn and Shelley are outstanding musicians and highly regarded teachers. More information about Gwyn Roberts’ workshop is in this newsletter; information about Shelley’s workshop will be forthcoming in future months.

**Amherst Early Music (AEM) weekend workshop in Washington—March 21–22, 2020.** We are particularly excited that on March 21st and 22nd, AEM will be offering a weekend workshop once again for recorder, lute, and viol players on the campus of George Washington University. The 2-day workshop this past March was attended by many WRS members and received enthusiastic reviews. For more information, see the following article on AEM.

**Renew your membership for 2019–2020 or become a new member today.** Membership gives you discounts to our workshops and access to the members-only portion of our online music library. Even more important, it gives you the satisfaction of supporting our activities and the pleasure of associating with other recorder lovers and lovers of early music. **We are asking that you pay your 2019–2020 dues by November 1.**

**We also gratefully accept donations!** If you are able to do so, please also consider a tax-deductible contribution to WRS. We greatly appreciate every donation in any amount!

I look forward to seeing you on September 16!

*Daniel Bruner*



### **Which Antiqua Group Should I Play With?**

To help members decide which of the two Antiqua groups they would like to play with, we offer the following suggestions:

Both groups survey a wide range of music from different historical periods, and both select a couple of pieces to work on for our spring recital, which this coming year will be on Saturday, June 6. However, if for some reason you can't make the June 6 recital, you are still welcome in either ensemble!

**The Antiqua large group** usually has several players per part, and is open to anyone who can play at least one type of recorder (alto, tenor, bass, or soprano). This group is led by David McGown, and Adéla Gardavská-Balima, both of whom are outstanding musicians dedicated to helping others develop their skills and hone their musicianship.

**The Antiqua small group** is open to players who can play all four standard recorders (soprano, alto, tenor and bass) and can bring them to rehearsals; are comfortable reading alto up an octave; and are comfortable playing one instrument to a part. Jayme Sokolow serves as the group's coordinator, but the group is self-directed, so members should be at ease in a group that plays together without the assistance of a conductor.

### **Gwyn Roberts To Offer Another Exciting Workshop on November 2!**

WRS is delighted to bring Gwyn Roberts back to Washington to direct our fall workshop once again.

Gwyn is well known to WRS members. Based in Philadelphia, she is world-class recorder and traverso virtuoso and a highly acclaimed teacher. She is on the faculty at the University of Pennsylvania and Peabody Conservatory, and is founder and co-director of the Tempesta di Mare Baroque Orchestra. She teaches a number of Washington area recorder players and has taught WRS workshops for many years.

Gwyn is an extremely engaging and motivating teacher. She is humorous and kind, while also being rigorous and insightful. She also is quite knowledgeable about music history and early music performance practice. Those of us who have taken her past workshops learn something new each time.

The workshop will be held on Saturday, November 2, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Church of the Atonement, 10613 Georgia Ave, Silver Spring, MD. Participants should bring their own lunches, but drinks, desserts, and morning and afternoon snacks will be provided.

Registration will open in September. In the meantime, reserve November 2 for a thoroughly enjoyable and enlightening experience!

### **Plan on Attending Amherst Early Music's Washington, DC, Weekend, March 21–22, 2020!**

We are thrilled to tell you that Amherst Early Music (AEM)—the largest presenter in the country of early music workshops for recorder players, other instrumentalists, and singers—will once again offer a 2-day weekend workshop in Washington, DC, next March. For many years, AEM has offered two week-long festivals in New London, Connecticut; a Memorial Day weekend workshop in Litchfield, Connecticut; an MLK weekend workshop in Philadelphia; and a City Recorder weekend workshop in New York City. More information about AEM and its programs is at <https://www.amherstearlymusic.org>.

AEM's "Spring Break" workshop in Washington, DC, will be Saturday and Sunday, March 21–22. This will be their third year in our city. The past two workshops have been attended by a number of WRS members and received rave reviews.

This 2-day weekend is an ideal introduction to AEM for those who have not yet experienced it. It will be an opportunity to explore early music, as well as advanced technique and musicianship, more intensively than is possible in a 1-day workshop. It will also be a chance to learn from new and different teachers; to meet other recorder players from the mid-Atlantic region; and to meet, hear, and play with lutenists and viol players.

More information about the Washington, DC, weekend, and opportunities to help for those who are interested, will be forthcoming soon. In the meantime, reserve the dates!

### **Capitol Early Music's 2019–2020 Concert and Workshop Schedule**

Capitol Early Music is presenting concerts, as well as workshops for instrumentalists and singers, by excellent ensembles this fall, winter, and spring.



The outstanding New World Recorder Group will perform a concert on Friday evening, October 11, of Henry Purcell's Fantazias. The next day, October 12, they will offer a workshop for recorder players based on the Fantazias. The New World Recorder Group consists of four outstanding musicians and teachers: Gwyn Roberts and Héloïse Degrugillier—well known to WRS members—and Priscilla Herreid and Rainer Beckmann.

On February 1 and 2, Gentil Galant, a versatile ensemble of voice, plucked and bowed strings, and winds, will offer a concert and workshop of Franco–Flemish music from the 14th and early 15th centuries.

On April 24–25, the Medici Ensemble, which includes noted recorder and Baroque flute teacher Michael Lynn of Oberlin College Conservatory, will present a concert of Baroque chamber music and offer a workshop on Baroque performance.

All concerts and workshops will be at St. George's Episcopal Church, 915 N. Oakland Street, Arlington, Virginia.

For more information, to purchase tickets for concerts, and to register for workshops, visit [www.capitolearlymusic.org](http://www.capitolearlymusic.org).

### **Upcoming Early Music Concerts**

#### **Washington Bach Consort**

##### ***The Director's Series***

September 22, 4:00 p.m.—**A Royal Occasion:** Handel's coronation anthems, Bach's Trauerode, National Presbyterian Church, Washington, DC.

December 22, 4:00 p.m.—**A Christmas Story:** Bach's epic Christmas oratorio.

##### ***The Chamber Series***

November 8 and 9, 7:00 p.m.—**At Home With Bach:** Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 6, Telemann, and Stölzel.

December 6 and 7, 7:00 p.m.—**The Tudors:** Sacred motets of Tallis, Sheppard, Byrd, and others.

##### ***Noontime Cantata Series***

September 30, 12:10 p.m., St. Peter's on Capitol Hill, and October 1, 12:10 p.m., Church of the Epiphany—**Ich glaube, lieber Herr, hilf meinem Unglauben, BWV 109.**

For tickets and other information, go to <https://bachconsort.org/upcoming-concerts/>.

#### **Other**

September 5, 7:30 p.m.—**Going for Baroque,** Washington National Cathedral.

### **Book Review—*Thoughts on the Recorder* by Geert Van Gele**

Geert Van Gele (the "G" is pronounced like "H" as in "here") is a Belgian recorder artist and teacher who co-founded the Flanders Recorder Quartet, playing with them for 10 years; he has since pursued a solo career. The book is a reflection of his four decades of recorder playing and teaching, targeted toward serious students of the recorder, from beginner to conservatory level.

The book is organized in four chapters. The first chapter covers how to choose and care for a recorder, with recommendations on the type of instrument one should choose according to playing level, how to properly oil the instrument, declog the windway, do emergency repairs, and for the adventuresome, perform tuning adjustments. This in itself is a valuable guide, since it pulls together information and advice from a number of hard-to-find sources, including renowned recorder maker Adrian Brown.

The second chapter deals with technique. The author maintains that contrary to the perception that the recorder is an easy instrument to play, it is actually quite difficult and demanding to play well. The chapter is centered on the basic elements such as posture, breathing, articulation, and fingering, with a focus toward achieving a beautiful sound. He covers advanced topics such as double tonguing, alternate fingerings (and how to use them), vibrato, and resonance. He provides very clear examples and exercises to address each issue.

The third chapter covers interpretation, both in general musicality such as how to tell a story and bring out interesting details in the music, as well as stylistic guidelines for each type and period of music in the recorder repertoire. This is a good overview without getting into the subtle details of each style.

The final chapter is the author's thoughts on playing musically and expressively, focused mainly on solo or ensemble playing performance issues, covering intonation, historical fingerings, stage fright, and other topics.

The author presents the book in a very accessible manner, including personal stories from his own experience as a recorder student and professional. He draws you into each topic and provides clear instructions on how to improve on each aspect of playing. I found it easy to conceptualize what





he was talking about, to think about how I am doing it, and how to correct problems in my playing. An added bonus is that there are online companion videos linked to each section of the text to aid those who learn better by example.

This book is a valuable compendium of recorder fundamentals, tips, advice, and techniques, something that would normally take years of private lessons to acquire. I can say that many of his examples and descriptions are virtually identical to those I have received from my teachers during lessons, workshops, and master classes, so his approach seems very well-founded. Of course, no book can substitute for the personal guidance of a good teacher. To get the most out of this (or any other) book, you need to be able to listen to and be critical of your own playing, recognizing specific problems and what is causing them. That being said, I feel that reading, understanding, and working from this book cannot help but make you a better player. Highly recommended!

The book is available from Von Huene Workshop (<http://www.vonhuene.com>) for \$65. It is also available as a downloadable e-book (PDF) from <http://geertvangele.com> for 25 Euros, and the 36 videos complementing the book are free.

*David McGown*

### **Now Is the Time To Pay Your Dues for 2019–2020!**

It's time to renew your membership for the 2019–2020 Washington Recorder Society year! The dues are still \$55. Members are entitled to discounts for the workshops with Gwyn Roberts and Shelley Gruskin; to WRS-funded scholarships to the Amherst Early Music Weekend in DC in March; and to our members-only online music library.

If you would like to pay online, visit our web page, [www.washingtonrecordersociety.org](http://www.washingtonrecordersociety.org), click on the Membership tab on the menu, and then click on "Become a Member." Our Treasurer, Carolyn Lincoln, will also accept credit cards at the first WRS meeting on September 16. If you prefer, you can complete the attached form and follow the instructions on the form for mailing a check. If your contact information has changed, please click on <http://www.washingtonrecordersociety.org/become-a-member-of-wrs/> or use the attached form.

**Please pay your dues no later than November 1!**

### **In Case of Inclement Weather**

If there is inclement weather on a Monday night when an Antiqua or Nova session is scheduled, or on a Saturday when a workshop is scheduled, contact the Church of the Atonement to find out whether the church is closed. The phone number for the church is 301-649-4131; the email address is [officemgr@atonementlife.org](mailto:officemgr@atonementlife.org). The church's website is <https://www.atonementlife.org>.

### **Local Recorder Teachers To Help You Improve Your Playing Technique**

#### **ADÉLA GARDAVSKÁ-BALIMA**

Washington, DC

Phone: 240-688-2809

Email: [cameladel@gmail.com](mailto:cameladel@gmail.com)

Lessons offered: children, teens, and adults. Individual lessons and ensemble coaching.

Other information: Higher Professional Education Degree in Music-Recorder, Evangelical Academy Conservatory in Olomouc, Czech Republic.

#### **RACHEL ISAACSON**

Travels to students' homes in the Washington, DC, area.

Phone: 571-338-4606

Email: [isaacson.rachel@gmail.com](mailto:isaacson.rachel@gmail.com)

Lessons offered: children, teens, and adults. Individual students and ensemble coaching.

Other information: Studied in the Historical Performance Institute and Early Music Department at Indiana University (Bloomington).

#### **CAROLE ROGENTINE**

Bethesda, MD

Phone: 301-530-6386 (home); 301-523-5515 (cell)

Email: [crogentine@gmail.com](mailto:crogentine@gmail.com)

Website: [www.learnrecorderwithcarole.com](http://www.learnrecorderwithcarole.com)

Lessons offered: teens and adults. Individual students and ensemble coaching.

Other information: Offers harpsichord accompaniment; former music director, WRS; recorder faculty at the Levine School; studies with Gwyn Roberts; past study at Indiana University School of Music and the Oberlin Summer Performance Institute.



**Opening in Kokopelli Performing Group/Class**

Carole Rogentine's intermediate–advanced level performing group/class Kokopelli has an opening starting this fall. Kokopelli meets biweekly on Wednesday nights. Repertoire includes medieval through modern music, playing all sizes of recorders including great bass and contrabass. Kokopelli has played at Levine Music Strathmore senior teas, WRS, Friendship Heights Community Center concert series, and other venues. Please contact Carole at [crogentine@gmail.com](mailto:crogentine@gmail.com).

**WRS YEAR AT A GLANCE**

Sept. 16	Antiqua
Oct. 7	Nova
Oct. 21	Antiqua
Nov. 2	<b>Gwyn Roberts Workshop</b>
Nov. 4	Nova
Nov. 18	Antiqua
Dec. 2	Nova
Dec. 16	<b>Holiday Party</b>
Jan. 6	Nova
Jan. 27	Antiqua
Feb. 3	Nova
Feb. 17	Antiqua
Mar. 2	Nova
Mar. 7	<b>Shelley Gruskin Workshop</b>
Mar. 16	Antiqua
Mar. 21–22	<b>Amherst Early Music Workshop in Washington, DC</b>
April 6	Nova
April 20	Antiqua
May 4	Nova
May 18	Antiqua
June 1	Nova
June 6	<b>Spring Recital</b>

**Regular meeting, workshops, and spring recital at Presbyterian Church of the Atonement.**

**Amherst Early Music Workshop at George Washington University**

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