

Recorder Reporter

Newsletter of two chapters of the American Recorder Society (ARS),

Chicago Chapter & the West Suburban Early Music Society

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Chicago Chapter News

Andrew Shultze once again directed the meeting for the Chicago Chapter on February 20, leading us in playing medieval music mixed with lecture notes on the topic. We talked about the Carmina Burana, an early 13th century manuscript discovered at a Benedictine monastery in Bavaria in 1803. The text, mostly in Latin, contains a set of hand-illustrated miniatures, two sacred theater works, and several hundred songs, including love songs, satire, and drinking tunes. Of particular note are the songs intended for the medieval Feast of Fools, parodies of sacred texts. We worked on a few pieces from the Carmina Burana, 13th century works played by pilgrims at the Shrine of St. James at Santiago de Compostela. And we played a work by Adam de la Halle, a 13th century troubadour, poet, and composer, credited for producing some of the earliest polyphonic music, and the earliest musical comedy known.

The March playing meeting will be a Do it Yourself session emphasizing ARS Editions. One piece is "The Harmonious Blockflute" by Glen Shannon:

www.americanrecorder.org/events/PTRM/11ptrm/harmoniousblockflute-final.pdf

Another, "Tue, Tue" is a folk song from Ghana:

www.menc.org/documents/wlc/2011files/teacher/06_tue_tue_singer.pdf

If you have favorites or pieces you would like to try from the ARS Editions, bring copies to share. Also in March, the Ridgeway Consort performs.

On April 17, Patrick O'Malley directs, and Par Tre offers the music of Guillaume de Machaut (1300-1377). And the annual Spring concert is on May 15.

The Home Street Recorder Ensemble

The members of the Home Street Recorder Ensemble, Mary Anne Gardner, Kathy Smart, and Mike Becker, seem to be wondering where the last 20 years went. I personally would guess that they spent that time pretty well, making lots of beautiful melodies. And I could add here my own standard cliché, "beautiful melodies *from a long lost, elegant age*," but the concert on February 20 in Oak Park actually featured mostly 20th century works, and confirmed that the recorder is truly a modern instrument.

Either way the artists' years of experience were clear on Sunday night in the handsome (and acoustically perfect) setting of Frank Lloyd Wright's masterpiece, Unity Temple. For their 20th anniversary concert the ensemble was joined by Patrick O'Malley and Laura Kuhlman, and newcomer Jennifer Trueman.



Home Street Recorder Ensemble, Unity Temple, Oak Park



The concert in particular featured Hindemith's celebrated 1932 *Trio*. As I listened I found myself wondering where Hindemith found recorder players to perform for him in those days. This work is one of the pieces that helped inspire new interest in this long neglected instrument; the American Recorder Society itself was still in the future. We enjoyed fine performances of pieces from several of Hindemith's students, Cesar Bresgen (1913-1988), Harald Genzmer (1909-2007), and Hans Ulrich Staeps (1909-1988). We also heard a work by late

WSEMS member, North Central College professor, and composer Richard Eastman (1916-2009), and *Toccata* (1995) by David Smart, father to Kathy Smart. The ensemble provided a few medieval pieces too, and closed with an old favorite for nearly everyone in the building, *The Fairie Round* by Anthony Holborne (1545-1602). It was an excellent evening of music making, and a tribute to several lifetimes of splendid musicianship from a group of old friends to both local ARS chapters.



Hurdy Gurdy Workshop, University of Chicago Folk Music Festival, February 12, Ida Noyes Hall



Oak Park Recorder Society, playing at Falstaff's Feast, a Fundraiser for the Oak Park Festival Theater, February 26

Workshop at Concordia

Our workshop with Tom Zajac, *A Musical Tour of Colonial Latin America*, is almost here! Please send in your registration soon so we can have an accurate count of participants. If you need a flyer feel free to contact Mark Dawson at msjddawson@sbcglobal.net or call (773) 334-6376. The flyer is also available on our web page and on the chapter's Yahoo site. The fee is \$65 for ARS

members and includes music, lunch, snacks, splendid company, and an excellent day of playing and instruction.

West Suburban Early Music Society

The WSEMS February meeting was led by guest director Nancy Chabala. We played through a variety of pieces, including Glen Shannon's latest composition, *Harmonious Blockflute* for Play the Recorder Month. The Library group met and played through two English Country dances: *Bare Necessities* and Henry Purcell's *Hole in the Wall*, in honor of St. Valentine's Day. Purcell's work was originally titled *Hornpipe* although it sounds more like a minuet. *Bare Necessities* is a waltz of more recent vintage. Our next meeting will take place at 2 PM on March 13 at the Naperville Covenant Church as usual. Hope to see you there!—*Eric Stern*

Whitewater Scholarships

The 51st annual Early Music Festival at the University of Wisconsin/Whitewater is scheduled for June 3-5. Join us for another wonderful weekend of recorder and early instruments, singing, drumming, jam sessions, classes and workshops, and a concert at the end.

We would like you to join us, especially if you have never attended before. Please note that the Chicago Chapter ARS has a scholarship fund available, from the Kroessen Fund, to encourage new players or new friends of the chapter to attend workshops like Whitewater. Contact Mark Dawson if you would like an application.

Music Coming Up

Music of the Baroque offers Bach's Brandenburg Concerti 3, 4 & 6, and Telemann's Concerto in F Major for three violins, strings, and continuo, on Sunday, March 13 at 7:30 at the First United Methodist Church of Evanston, and Monday, March 14 at 7:30 PM at the Harris Theater in Millennium Park in Chicago. Our own **Patrick O'Malley** will be playing recorder in the Brandenburg Concerto #4. Visit www.baroque.org or call (312) 551-1444.

The **Venere Lute Quartet**, featuring Chicago chapter friend Gail Gillispie, plays on Saturday, April 2 at 8 PM in Ida Noyes Hall of the University of Chicago, 1212 East 59th Street (a block from Rockefeller Chapel). Visit www.newberryconsort.org or call (312) 255-3610. Tickets are \$30 at the door, \$28 in advance.

Andrew Schultze leads the **Chicago Syntagma Musicum** in performing sacred vocal and instrumental music for Lent by the Bach family of musicians on Sunday, March 13 at 3 PM, at Rockefeller Chapel, the University of Chicago, 5850 South Woodlawn (call 773 702-2100 or visit <http://Rockefeller.uchicago.edu>).

Join **John Langfeld** on Sunday, April 10 at 4 PM at St. Luke's Evangelical Lutheran Church, 1500 West Belmont, for "Sight, Sound, Movement, and Language: Interdisciplinary Connections for Recorders." The concert features a work for alto recorder, Flamenco dancer, and guitar, a Baroque suite with multimedia, and recorder music set to poetry. The concert is free to the public, and a reception follows.

The **Ensemble Musical Offering**, Milwaukee's Band for Early Music, offers a performance featuring Clea Galhano on recorder on Saturday, March 5 at 8 PM, Cathedral Church of All Saints, 818 E. Juneau Avenue, Milwaukee, and Sunday, March 6 at 4 pm, Wauwatosa Woman's Club, 1626 Wauwatosa Avenue, Wauwatosa. The second program offers guest soloists on traverse and baroque bassoon, Saturday, April 16 at 8 PM and Sunday, April 17 at 4 PM, at the Cathedral Church of All Saints. Learn more by visiting www.musicalofferingltd.org.

Ars Musica of Chicago offers two concerts, the first features a Baroque violin sonata by a Vincentian priest, Fr. Teodorico Pedrini, who lived in China for 35 years, and early 17th century works from St. Vincent de Paul's of Paris. Sunday, March 6 at 4 PM, at the DePaul University Art Museum, Richardson Library, 2350 North Kenmore, Chicago. On Sunday, April 3 at 4:30, Ars Musica offers Dueling Harpsichords at the Jeanne Vail Chapel of Northwestern University, 1870 Sheridan Road in Evanston. This concert features music by Boccherini and Bach for two harpsichords. Tickets are \$20, \$15 for seniors and \$5 for students, cash only. Go to ArsMusicaChicago.org to learn more.

The World's First Recorder Player

The National Museum of Slovenia, found in Ljubljana, prominently features the oldest musical instrument known. This flute (it's a *recorder!*) was carved 43,000 years ago from the leg bone of an ancient cave bear cub (now extinct). It was discovered by the Slovenian scientist Ivan Turk in a cave called Divje Babe in 1995, in a layer of sediment yielding stone tools of Neanderthal origin. A pair of evenly spaced round holes appears on one side, implying a melodic intent. The people of Slovenia proudly proclaim their heritage as being the place where music itself was invented!

Well, maybe not.

Actually, most of the scientists in the world who think that someone hand-fashioned the artifact at the National Museum of Slovenia are Slovenian. Other scientists disputed Turk's findings shortly after he published them. The artifact is nearly 15,000 years older than any other possible ancient musical instrument, so it lacks context. Further, from what we know about the

Neanderthals—a species that had largely died out by 35,000 years ago, shortly after modern language and symbolic reasoning skills apparently emerged in *Homo sapiens*—it seems unlikely that they could have produced something so sophisticated as a flute. Other scientists suggest that the holes in the artifact resulted from the bone being gnawed on by a large carnivore, followed by weathering. They point to other bone "flutes" with similar holes recovered from deposits where cave bear bones appear in quantity but where no evidence of any hominid presence has ever been found. Also, the flute of Divje Babe is too short to have offered enough holes to form a diatonic scale, and remnants of bone marrow remain inside, suggesting that the world's first recorder player never bothered to clean it out properly. Finally, the bone lacks tell-tale tool marks suggesting intelligent manufacture. Rather, the bone clearly was chewed on by something big enough to prompt any hominid with sufficient reasoning capacity to, say, play Anthony Holborne, to run at speed much faster than a standard cut time rate.

Still, the Slovenian National Museum staff clings to hope. The museum's brochure for the flute provides a picture of what the first recorder player in the world might have looked like. Here is a Neanderthal playing his bone alto recorder—our musical ancestor!



Thanks to Esther Schechter for providing a copy of the brochure of the Flute of Divje Babe from her visit to Slovenia last year.—*Mark Dawson*

March is Play the Recorder Month

We plan to have a free public performance and open rehearsal at the Conrad Sulzer Regional Library, 4455 North Lincoln in Chicago on Monday, March 21 from 7 to 8:30 PM. The Baron's Noyse will be playing, and we encourage others to join us in the Lerner Auditorium, on the left side of the main lobby. It would be great if other ensembles related to the Chicago chapter or WSEMS made plans to perform in public in March for Play the Recorder Month in 2011.—*Dennis Sherman*

Good Friday Recorder Players Needed

Marco Castillo is looking for a bass, an alto, and a tenor to perform at LaSalle Street Church in Chicago on April 22 at 7 PM. You will perform two pieces, including Mozart's *Ave Venum Corpus*. He will send the music in advance to participants. LaSalle Street Church is at 1136 North LaSalle, near North Avenue in Lincoln Park. You can reach Marco at vinikasteel@gmail.com or call him at (773) 369 7327.

Online Recorder Resource

Victor Eijkhout is a research scientist at the Texas Advanced Computing Center at the University of Texas at Austin. He is also a musician who plays a variety of instruments, and a composer for recorder. He both writes contemporary works and arranges Renaissance pieces for recorder, and his work is available for free download. You can find his compositions at:

www.eijkhout.net/music/recorder.html

He also has works posted at the Icking Archive:

<http://icking-music-archive.org/ByComposer/Eijkhout.php>

Check out his "Visitor from Afar," a piece set for two bass recorders and a "pentatonic instrument." This pentatonic instrument can be an alto recorder, but "something exotic" would be better, like a Native American flute in A or a Chinese Hulusi in C.

Chapter Information

Visit the Yahoo group <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ChicagoARS>.

Our chapters are open to anyone, regardless of musical training, who wants to cultivate and sponsor love and appreciation of the art, history and use of the recorder and related instruments. Our meetings, programs and publications help members to come together and to find others with similar interests. Chicago Chapter Dues begin September 1, and West Suburban dues cover June 1 through May 31 and are due in September. Both groups include membership in either chapter and in the *American Recorder Society*. Members are listed in the ARS directory, receive *The American Recorder* magazine and

this newsletter. The *Recorder Reporter* is published monthly from September to May jointly by the Chicago Chapter and the West Suburban Early Music Society.

Chicago Chapter ARS (chicagoars.org)

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Chicago Chapter meetings: Usually third Sunday of each month, September through May, 2 PM, at Covenant Presbyterian Church, 2012 West Dickens, Chicago. Enter the front door of the parish building immediately west of the church and go to the large fellowship hall on the right.

West Suburban Early Music Society

President/Chapter Representative:	Nancy Good (Good-Naperville@wowway.com) (630) 355-6690
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WSEMS meetings: Second Sunday of each month, September through April, first Sunday of May, 2-4:30 PM at the Naperville Evangelical Covenant Church, 1150 Hobson Road, Naperville, southwest corner of Naper Boulevard and Hobson Road. Exit I-88 at Naper Boulevard and travel south. The church entrance is on a side street, more obvious from Hobson Road.

Mark Dawson, editor

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