

AMERICAN RECORDER



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A M E R I C A N R E C O R D E R

ON THE COVER

3D printed copies in different materials of recorders and flutes from the museum of the Royal College of Music. See Feature article on p. 14.



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Editor's Note • GEOFFREY BURGESS

One of my strategies to overcome the winter blues is to look ahead to what is on offer in the summer, and so I take great delight in sharing that in this issue of AR. In addition to the annual roundup of workshops and festivals, which is richer and more invigorating than ever, Maureen Curran-Dorsano provides a wonderful description of the Workshop

Wanderlust that took her all around the world over the past decade. There's also an encouraging report on ARS's scholarships that can help you realize your dream of attending one of the events. Then turn to the Critique section for reviews of music that will set the mood for travel, and to further prepare for your summer adventures, read Lobke Sprenkeling's advice in Learn for enjoyable ensemble playing.

You might know that those space-age looking large recorders in the Paetzold range are 3D printed, but did you know that the same technology is being applied to historic recorder designs, and helping in the conservation of irreplaceable specimens? Find out more about what's going on in the museum of the Royal College of Music in the main Feature. And for those who want to sample the full richness of recorders without leaving their studio, Emily O'Brien describes her involvement in a major new venture to create a Recorder Sample Library. ❁

President's Message • CAROL MISHLER

In March, the ARS Board will hold its first in-person meeting in almost 6 years. When the pandemic hit in 2020, the Board went to Zoom for its biannual meetings and has stayed there until now. When we meet in Atlanta on March 28-30, Phil Hollar, Judy Smutek and I will be the only 3 who have been on the Board long enough to have participated

in an in-person meeting.

It's hard to deny the efficiency and cost reduction of online meetings. Some music organizations have adopted Zoom for all future meetings, but after thinking carefully, we decided to stagger in-person and online meetings, with the majority being online, to get the benefits of both.

The intangible benefits of meeting in person are real. An off-hand conversation at a break can lead to a new ARS program. Meeting participants may get a deeper understanding of ARS history and why certain actions have been taken. As we plan initiatives and benefits for ARS members, the synergy of a group meeting in person is simply different.

The relationships formed when meeting in person help us when the going gets tough. The shared experience of finding your way to the meeting site, homestays with ARS members, and playing sessions with the local ARS chapter bring us closer. You get to know each other in ways that online meetings don't allow. So when someone misses a deadline, makes a mistake, or needs help, it is easier to respond with compassion and support. Board members play with local chapters, enabling them to see first-hand chapter needs and practices.

It's a bit like playing the recorder in person versus playing in an online session. We are grateful that we once "played it safe" by playing almost exclusively online. We appreciate that Zoom still makes it possible for recorder players to play together regardless of location, or make progress in private lessons with recorder teachers.

But this spring, the ARS Board will embrace the real thing. Wish us well! ❁

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VOICES

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

As 2024 draws to a close, I wanted to let you know how much your thoughtful Spring issue of *American Recorder* with its precious memories of Frans Brüggen compiled by Cléa Galhano along with Jamie Allen's special composition have touched us – musically and from a human point of view. It has illuminated the year and I hope you have had good feedback from your readers, too. There have been other initiatives, a CD with new recordings on Frans's historical recorders by Lucie Horsch, following Kees Boeke and Walter van Hauwe's earlier, more extensive DVD; and a book about Sour Cream, for now in Dutch.

Thank you again for keeping the fire burning and this comes with our warmest best wishes for the holiday season and the new year!

— Machtelt Brüggen with
Zephyr and Eos

RESOURCES:

Sound and Soul: The Recorder collection of Frans Brüggen

A film by Daniël Brüggen with Kees Boeke and Walter van Hauwe playing instruments from the Brüggen collection in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

The Brüggen Project

A CD with Lucie Horsch playing instruments from the Brüggen collection accompanied by the Orchestra of the 18th Century which Brüggen himself had founded released by Decca in November, 2024. Machtelt Brüggen and Lucie Horsch talk about The Brüggen Project at: youtube.com/watch?v=nTdCw6vSW5U

WORKSHOP WANDERLUST

Maureen Curran-Dorsano

Spring is on the way, and you know what that means. If you're a gardener, you're poring over seed catalogs and gardening websites. If you're a baseball fan, you're counting down the days till the season opener. And if you're a recorder player, you are waiting for the *American Recorder* Spring issue detailing all of the summer workshop offerings. If you've never attended a summer workshop, I hope this little chronicle will whet your appetite.

2015. Port Townsend Early Music Workshop

My family was gathering on the Oregon coast, and I discovered there was a recorder workshop in nearby Tacoma, WA. I grabbed my two other Minnesota recorder-player friends, Evelyn Emerson and Mary Livant, and off we went for what would be the first of many workshop adventures.

We would come to learn that all of the workshops follow the same basic format, but for us, everything was new, and we were amazed at just how much could be packed into one week: technique classes, directed ensembles and recorder orchestra during the day, presentations and faculty concerts in the evening, and a student performance at the close of the workshop. We even had the chance to squeeze in a visit to the Chihuly Glass Garden in Seattle. But our favorite collective memory is the closing celebration. We had read that everyone dresses up Renaissance-style for the event,

so we followed directions (we were all teachers, after all) and purchased appropriate attire. Imagine our surprise when we walked into the reception to find we were the only ones in costume! It was embarrassing but hilarious, and of all the workshop memories we have chalked up over the years, this one remains at the top of the list.

2016. Mountain Collegium Early Music and Folk Music Workshop

The following year, we decided to head east to Mountain Collegium in Cullowhee, NC. What makes this workshop unique is that, in addition to its early music offerings, there is also a folk music track that reflects the musical heritage of the Smoky Mountains. So, we packed up our dozen recorders, three dulcimers and one ukulele and set off for our summer adventure #2. Beautiful surroundings, great faculty and classes, a session with a local-legend dulcimer player and my first (and last!) jam session with my uke, all made for a week of music-making unlike any other before or since. My favorite memory from this workshop is the opening gathering and a raucous play-along with all of the other early music instruments – crumhorns, sackbuts, shawms, viols and others I never knew existed. As I had never played in any kind of orchestra before, it was exhilarating and just plain fun.



► Evelyn Emerson, Maureen Curran-Dorsano and Mary Livant in Renaissance costume at Port Townsend, 2015.

2017. Whitewater Early Music Festival

The next year, we opted for a road trip to our neighboring state of Wisconsin for the weekend-long Whitewater Workshop. Despite the very short amount of time, the top-notch faculty guided us through an eclectic repertoire of recorder music. We were there barely 48 hours, and the adage “always leave them wanting more” certainly applied.

2017. Amherst Early Music Workshop

We double-dipped that summer, and returned to the east coast for the Amherst workshop (which was not, by the way, in Amherst, nor even in Massachusetts!). What made Amherst memorable was not only the rich variety of classes – voice, recorder, viol, Renaissance reeds and brass, flute, harpsichord, frame drum – but a full menu of evening delights, including a semi-staged performance of the Baroque era's *The Beggar's Opera*; a showing of the 1922 silent film *Robin Hood*, with a live score performed by an early music ensemble; and the final, festive Tapestry of Early Music performed by several top international musicians. An added bonus was that this was the only workshop that sold souvenir tee-shirts! Before heading home, we spent a day in Boston and were able to visit the Von Huene Workshop, where I dropped off a couple of my recorders for some much-needed TLC.

2018. Accord Music Workshop, Moulin de Cajarc, France

In 2018, our trio became a duo, and we cast our net wider. We landed in the south of France at the Moulin de Cajarc, a renovated 18th-century mill, nestled beneath the medieval hilltop town of Cordes-Sur-Ciel in the Southwest of France. The mill is owned by a British couple who would open it



up twice a year for small, intimate gatherings of 12 participants. All were French except for the two of us and one other American from the Seattle area. Being a French speaker and having visited France many times, I felt confident I could handle the language, but I soon learned that speaking French and playing music in French are two very different things. The minute the director started talking about black and white notes, we knew we were in trouble. We learned that quarter notes are *noires*, half notes are *blanches* and whole notes are *rondes*. Then there was the whole solfège thing – calling the notes on the staff *do, ré, mi* rather than the letters we're used to. Thank goodness for the bottle of wine waiting for us (in true French fashion) at the end of each day! We always planned to return, but sadly, the workshop has not been offered since 2022.

2019. Irish Recorder and Viol Course

Having survived our first international workshop, we were game for another. As luck would have it, my son was going to be spending the year in Ireland, so we decided a visit to the Emerald Isle to see him off was in order. First on the itinerary, the Irish Recorder and Viol Course, set in a lovely Irish country house on the east coast of Ireland. We arrived at our first class, armed with our black, white and round notes, only to learn that in the Anglo-Saxon part of the

◀ Group playing at the Mideast Early Music Workshop.

world, those notes are crotchets, minims and semibreves, which caused more head-spinning. Fortunately, the Irish tutors and participants were very patient with the two clueless Yanks in their midst. A field trip to the Stone Age World Heritage site of Newgrange, a sand sculpture contest on the nearby beach, and a traditional Irish *céilí* at the end of the workshop rounded out another unforgettable workshop experience.

2020 and beyond. Helen Hooker

When I said good-bye to my son in Ireland in 2019, we had no idea that the world was about to be swept up in a pandemic and that it would be three years before we saw each other again. It would be a long dry spell before the next workshop as well. Enter Helen Hooker. Helen is a recorder player, performer, conductor and teacher based in the UK. She is also a godsend, who, in answer to the isolation imposed by COVID, began her Recorder Consort Video project. Throughout the pandemic, Helen used her time, talent and generosity to keep hundreds of recorder players playing consort music when there were no consorts to be found. Since then, Helen has been part of every playing session, and we still look forward to each new play-along video that she continues to put out. With over 150 videos and printable scores, her site is well worth a visit: helenhooker.co.uk/. Everything is free, though donations are appreciated.

2023. Mideast Early Music Workshop

By 2023, we were champing at the bit to get back to a live workshop. This time, we were off to Pittsburgh, PA

and the Mideast Early Music Workshop. Of all of the workshops, this was the easiest and most affordable trip for us Midwesterners. The workshop was much like all of the others, with a few unique touches. In one class, for example, we had the chance to provide instrumental accompaniment to the vocal ensemble, and I found that joining them in their voice warm-ups was great for recorder players as well. I also had great fun in a class – aptly named Rhythm for All – directed by a professional percussionist, and trying my hand at some simple drumming myself. Most memorable for me (and reminiscent of Mountain Collegium) were the evening sessions where we gathered with all of the other early music instrumentalists. This kind of play-along experience just doesn't happen outside of a workshop setting, and all recorder players should have the chance to play alongside a hurdy-gurdy at least once in their life!

2024. NORVIS Early Music Summer School

Another hop over the pond took us to the Northumbrian Recorder and Viol School (these days just called NORVIS), located in County Durham, England (Harry Potter country). They describe their summer school as the oldest and friendliest, and they lived up to their claim. They are also the most diverse, in a number of ways. While the majority of attendees were Brits, several other countries were represented as well, including a few American expats. Diverse class offerings also set them apart: recorders, viols, lutes, early guitars, strings, harpsichord and voices. While it is not unusual to see recorder players with recorders of every size, it is less common to see so many of them playing other early music instruments as well. Most amazing, though, were the tutors. Several were not only virtuosic on their main instrument,



but also proved their prowess on other Renaissance and Baroque instruments. Their concerts alone were worth the price of the entire workshop. We Americans just don't get to experience live performances like those, and we felt as though we had died and gone to heaven.

What then are the big take-aways from my workshop wanderlust? I wish I could say I have greatly improved my technical prowess, but I'm still very much an intermediate player and, at 75 years of age, I'm certain I always will be. I'd like to

◀ Have instrument will travel.

report that I have set new goals and have committed to a regular practice routine, but the truth is that those goals are fleeting, despite my best intentions.

What I can say is that, first, I have made music with hundreds of people from all over the US and abroad, and even though I don't remember all their names and will most likely never see them again, my life is richer for having been part of this ad-hoc community of recorder lovers.

Second, it is a rare privilege to work with professional musicians who share their talents with us for an entire week. The faculty concerts have been the highlight of every one of these workshops, each one offering a cornucopia of musical treats that only happens in a workshop setting.

And third, a summer workshop may be only one week out of the year, but it is a glorious one, one that delights the heart and feeds the soul, long after the workshop has ended. So, browse through the descriptions, choose one, and get ready to make some magical memories of your own. ✿

Improve your recorder skills at Mountain Collegium Early Music Workshop

June 29–July 5, 2025

Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, NC

Registration opens March 2025

mountaincollegium.org

all levels, emerging through advanced • workstudy awards available

Recorder Faculty: *Gwyn Roberts, Anne Timberlake, Jody Miller, Annette Bauer, Joan Kimball, Phil Hollar, & Barb Weiss*

Additional offerings in capped reeds, early brass, viols, and more!

AMERICAN RECORDER SOCIETY

ENCOURAGEMENT

Scholarships and Grants

Not so long ago the members of the ARS Chapter in Greensboro, NC found themselves without a recorder professional to lead the group. There had been tremendous growth under the leadership of recorder player, teacher and ARS Board Member Phil Hollar. When Phil relocated across the state, Susan Samuelson took the helm. Susan's formal training as a pianist made her a great candidate, but she felt she needed to brush up on recorder-specific skills and to improve her ability to conduct an ensemble. An ARS Workshop Scholarship provided an easy way for her to fill in some of these knowledge gaps by taking a week-long course for ensemble leaders at Mountain Collegium Early Music Workshop.

The story of Susan at the Greensboro Chapter is one of many where individuals or organizations have benefited from the ARS's Scholarships and Grants. Workshop experiences give many of us a time of intensive work to concentrate on improving. While there are many low-cost options for instruments and sheet music, quality learning experiences can be prohibitive to personal budgets. ARS Workshop Scholarships can help. They are available to players of any ability level, whether you are just learning the first notes of the instrument, or you are looking to help your local chapter improve. Of her own experience, Susan writes:

It is an immersion in music that I don't have the skill to write well enough to describe. Come and experience it for yourself.

Teresa Deskur, a young recorder professional, also took advantage of an ARS Workshop Scholarship to attend the famed Amherst Early Music Workshop. She summarized her goals and outcome in a beautiful letter to the ARS:

I was lucky enough to grow up in a town with an excellent recorder teacher, but this is not the case for most players who often have to travel for lessons, or seek online resources. That's one of the reasons that workshops like Amherst can be so exciting; to have all that knowledge, experience, and enthusiasm concentrated in one place. I aspire to someday teach recorder workshops, and had been hoping to pick up some tricks of the trade during my second week in Amherst's Central Program. From observing the teachers' work, I was able to get lots of ideas about the most effective ways to lead classes and playing sessions.

Even if, like Susan or Teresa, you have musical experience in a different area, you may need guidance to get up to speed on recorder to be a contributing member to your local chapter or ensemble. Often there will be unexpected benefits, and surprises that surpass your expectations. Daniel Parsons had just started to learn alto recorder when he applied for assistance to attend the Mideast Early Music Workshop in Pennsylvania.

It was an amazing experience, and ended up being quite different than I expected (in a good way!). I am quite new to playing recorder, having played violin all my life. I was worried it would be overwhelming, or I'd have to sit things out. But instead, it was a very supportive setting, and within an hour or so of the first day, things just started to click, and I was starting to be able to

play musically and I felt empowered to try new things.

And then, of course, there is the immeasurable social benefits of making music with others. Beth Campbell had been super excited to attend the 2023 Summer Texas Toot, and applied for assistance to attend.

Hoping for the healing that music-making with others brings to my soul, the Toot EXCEEDED those expectations! It was amazing to spend a week with like-minded people who love early music and making music together. By the end of the first day I was spontaneously singing – a true sign of happiness and relaxation for me. I came home with 3 new-to-me used instruments! There are few places where someone like myself can try out many instruments and purchase for a reasonable price.

There are even grants to help you start your own workshop to share your gained experience with others. Through one of the ARS's DEI Grants, Nancy Gorbman was able to teach Recorder Explorers, the first Kyuquot Summer Music Camp in the remote village of Kyuquot, a small community of mostly indigenous people on the west coast of Vancouver Island. After her introductory course, the enthusiasm Nancy instilled in the students was infectious, and they started passing on the skills to other family members.

ARS members are the sole source of funding for these scholarships. Whether you make a one-time donation when renewing, respond to the President's Appeal with a contribution, or leave a bequest to ARS, we work to get as much funding to chapters, players, and teachers as we possibly can. To learn more about

contributing or applying to the scholarships and grants available to both individuals and organizations visit www.americanrecorder.org/scholarships

—Jody Miller, Scholarship & Grants Chair

The following is a list of recipients of ARS Scholarships and Grants awarded in the 2023–24 season.

Workshop Scholarships

- Teresa Deskur: Amherst Early Music (AEM) Workshop
- Dena Davis: AEM Workshop
- Sam Dill: AEM Workshop
- Susan Samuelson: Mountain Collegium Early Music Workshop
- Adriana Caro Gomez: Mideast Early Music (MEM) Workshop
- Daniel Parsons: MEM Workshop
- Ezra McIntosh: AEM Workshop
- Michael Domain: MEM Workshop

Educational Outreach Grants

- Dug Gap Elementary School, Dalton, GA, for new student recorders
- North American Virtual Recorder Society (NAVRS), online ARS Chapter, for training for professional recorder players/teachers
- Montclair Early Music, ARS Chapter in New Jersey, for a 6-week student recorder challenge

Chapter and Recorder Orchestra Grants

- Central Coast Recorder Society, ARS Chapter in CA, for coaching sessions for less-experienced players
- British Columbia Recorder Society, ARS Chapter in BC, for refurbishment of a set of Renaissance recorders

Traveling Teacher Program

- Triad Early Music Society, ARS Chapter in NC, for 4 chapter coaching sessions in a chapter without a recorder professional

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

The Boston Early Music Festival, June 8–15

Recorders at BEMF

BEMF Beyond Borders, co-hosted by the ARS:

A Celebration of Recorder Music from Five Continents

Sunday, June 15, 10:00, New England Conservatory's Jordan Hall.

For the third time BEMF will showcase young international players in a recorder orchestra. The event, organized by Cléa Galhano will present students from 5 countries in live and video performances. To see videos from previous BEMF Beyond Borders performances: bemf.org/2025-festival/engaging-communities/.

Shakespeare in Love: Golden Age Venetian Consort Music at the English Court

Sunday, June 15, 12:30, New England Conservatory's Jordan Hall.

BEMF's headlining recorder group, the Boreas Quartett, joined by Kathryn Montoya, present music by Giovanni and Jeronimo Bassano & others with readings from Shakespeare's works. The program relates to connections developed in a recent novel by Jodi Picoult (see review in this volume, p.44).

Recorder Masterclass

Saturday, June 14, 1:30–4:30pm, Boston Ballroom, The Colonnade Hotel

Masterclass for soloists and consorts led by members of the Boreas Quartett.

Information forthcoming at bemf.org/2025-festival/schedule-of-events/

ARS Recorder Relay

Friday June 13, 10–2, Old South Church, 645 Boylston St, Boston

This ever-popular event will feature local players plus international student groups. Participant sign-up: americanrecorder.org/bemf

ARS table at the Exhibition

Wednesday, June 11–Saturday, June 14, The Colonnade Hotel

Come to meet the Board and Staff, browse AR magazines, join or renew membership, or just get information about the organization.

- Maine recorder community sponsored by Dorothy Beeuwkes, Mercer, ME, for 4 chapter coaching sessions in an area without an ARS chapter

Professional Development Grant

No applicants

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Grants

- Tucson Music Therapy, Tucson, AZ, for recorder concert series for audiences with disabilities 🌸

AMERICAN RECORDER SOCIETY

CONTRIBUTIONS

ARS DONORS

The following generous donors contributed between July 1 and December 31, 2024. With these funds, we are able to create a beautiful and informative magazine; offer scholarships and grants; provide helpful resources to our chapters, consortia and recorder orchestras; continue to add valuable content to our website; and much more. We can't offer all of these valuable educational and community-building programs without you. Thank you for your support! ❁

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ON THE RECORD(ER)

International news about the recorder

NEW TECHNOLOGIES

CREATING A SAMPLE LIBRARY FOR THE RECORDER

Boston-based recorder player Emily O'Brien writes about the project that she spearheaded to create a sample library of every note on 27 different recorders

If you've ever written, arranged, or transcribed music for the recorder in music notation software, you've probably grumbled about the awful simulated recorder sounds. The synthesized imitations of other instruments aren't that great either.

The best way to get digitally created instruments to sound realistic is to use a sample library built up with real musicians recording every note on the particular instrument. Software can then use those recorded samples to play the notes, instead of synthesizing them.

Today's composers, arrangers and musicians working with electronics use sample libraries not only to hear realistic renditions of their music when played by real people, but to create accompaniments and soundtracks made up entirely of sampled instruments instead of live performers, or to supplement live performers. You might have heard a track by a singer-songwriter that had orchestral accompaniment, for example. A lot of times they didn't hire an orchestra, they used a sample library and played the orchestra parts on a MIDI keyboard.

But until now, sample libraries for recorders were lacking: not enough instrument sizes, not enough articula-



tions, and certainly not as complete as other instrument libraries. That lack can be a major impediment to writing for the recorder and hearing how it sounds in context. If we want our instrument to be a part of the spectrum of sounds used by composers, we need a good recorder sample library.

A couple of years ago, with funding from the ARS, I teamed up with Versilian Studios to create a new sample library of recorders, to cover all the bases...and all the basses! It's been a long process. My part alone entailed about 60 hours in the recording studio, recording 1-2 notes at a time on 27 different recorders on mics in five different positions!

For each instrument, I played every note with a variety of different articulations – sustained, accented, with and without vibrato, and a variety of tenuto and staccato styles. Then I played 2-note slurred pairs from a half step to an octave (only 50% of them for time's sake – this portion took as long for each instrument as all the rest put together). I had to be careful to sit very still and keep a close eye on

▲ Interface for Versilian's Recorder sample library, showing Baroque 415 Terton soprano.

the tuner and an ear on the reference pitch coming into my headphones. Inevitably, some instruments are better-behaved than others, and some took significantly more time to get everything right.

After I finished my part, the Versilian folks edited all the takes, and processed them into a usable format. They also had to design a user interface, then get it out to Beta testers and incorporate any feedback. It took 2 years from doing the recordings to release. Critical to this huge project was support from the ARS and early backers who sponsored the effort.

There are a lot of other things – for example ornaments, alternate fingerings, and multiphonics – that we could have done, but had to leave off for sake of time and expense. At present, to create a trill, the program will grab the appropriate legato 2-note combination. It gives an acceptable

result, and maybe you don't want something as personal as a trill to be generated by AI anyway.

This library works with Kontakt Player which can work in tandem with many popular music notation programs as well as digital audio workstations and other applications. There are three versions of the library:

- The **Full Version** includes all 27 instruments with a variety of articulations including true legato, and all five mic positions. It even offers a variety of historical tuning systems, so you can hear how different a piece will sound in quarter-comma meantone versus Pythagorean, for example.
- The **Baroque Collection** includes just the Baroque A=440 instruments, from sopranino through contrabass, with all the mic positions and the various articulations and temperaments. This one is a bit cheaper, and covers all the most common sizes of recorders – just not the historical pitch ones like voice flute, sixth flute, and the Renaissance consorts.
- The free and open-source **Community Edition** includes just one mic position and a couple of articulations, on soprano through contrabass.

You can plug the free Community Edition into MuseScore, which is also free and easy to learn, and come out with some pretty respectable-sounding results! It's a huge deal in terms of making the sound of a recorder consort accessible to everyone.

My hope is that Versilian's Recorder sample libraries will help composers and arrangers get a realistic idea of how their music will sound and how the instruments behave. They allow the instrument to be part of the palette in soundtracks played entirely on virtual instruments. That's critical for encouraging composers to work with our instrument, learn

about it, and keep writing great new recorder music.

I wasn't involved in the technical behind-the-scenes stuff, nor do I understand it, but I learnt a bit about it in conversations with Sam Gossner, founder of Versilian Virtual Instruments. Here's a transcription of one of our interactions.

EMILY O'BRIEN What do you see as the most important benefit of a sample library?

SAM GOSSNER A vital part of a composer's submission to an orchestra or other ensembles for consideration is a high-quality simulated rendering of their work. Pieces that are submitted with a score alone, or with poor-quality synthesized sounds are often just passed over. In many cases, the simulated versions can also be used to help musicians learn their parts when rehearsal time is limited, especially with new music where the sounds and styles may be less familiar.

EO What other sample libraries has Versilian created? How do they compare to this one?

SG I've sampled everything from orchestras to ophicleides and just about everything in between. Our main product is an extended orchestral library called VSCO 2. It's comparatively tiny next to Recorder, at just 16 GB vs. 86 GB, but it took 3 years to develop. It lacks the legato transitions and the consistency of Recorder, but has an eclectic charm to it that's still sought after today. It has its own little sSATB set of recorders, but I will admit my playing is far below yours, Emily!

Our next largest project was a collaboration with a harp-kit company in Minnesota, where I flew out and spent a week sampling a large portion of their catalog.

EO Who are your customers, and what kinds of work do they use samples for?



▲ Emily O'Brien in the studio.

SG Sample libraries fill two crucial roles: to imagine, or mock up, what a piece may sound like while working on it, and to allow instruments to be used in contexts where they would otherwise be unaffordable. For a composer, it's like having a recorder player by your side. We try to encourage idiomatic use by preserving as much of the natural character of the instruments as possible and not shying away from any weaknesses or flaws. Some things will naturally sound better or worse depending on what you write – just like in real life. The composer can then share the mockup with their client or performer along with the score, to give an idea of their concept for the piece.

These forms of media are increasingly accessible to creators with smaller budgets. Fifty years ago, to make an album you required a record contract, a large studio full of expensive, fragile equipment, and countless hours splicing hundreds or thousands of feet of magnetic tape. Now an award-winning album can be recorded, mixed, and produced in a living room with commodity equipment and a budget laptop, but a small budget can limit what sorts of instruments or styles of music are accessible. Having high-quality,

reasonable sounding instruments allows the recorder family in its entirety to be heard, enjoyed, and shared, shining light on this often-misunderstood family as something far more aspirational to young people.

EO Once all the audio is recorded, what is involved in getting it from there to a finished product you can sell?

SG I work with an incredible team of experts around the world to turn the dozens of hours of raw audio into a working product. First, all the audio makes its way to our sample editor Cassie, who performs the laborious task of splitting every sample – all 187,600 of them – apart. The samples must be inspected for flaws and defects, and bad takes replaced with spares. The samples must be labelled. We use a series of tools and techniques to make this process easier, but it still relies largely on good old-fashioned manual intervention. Once the splits are made, I perform cleanup operations as needed, such as applying filters to reduce unwanted noise. The samples are then exported and organized into folders in preparation for assembly. Tests are made to ensure the samples are correctly labeled and edited at this stage. Then my colleague Simon in Berlin takes over. His job is to map all of the samples within the software. Mapping is the process of assigning samples to play back when certain conditions are met, for example matching the specified note at the specified octave. Only once this process is done will we have any idea what the library sounds like.

Then Simon and I come up with a graphical user interface. In this project, we took inspiration from Baroque and Renaissance architecture. Simon created three different designs, one for each consort, with different color palettes, structures, and backgrounds to subliminally convey which consort the instrument is from. Featured

prominently in the center of each instrument's interface is a photo of a key feature of the instrument – maybe an engraving, a bocal, or a key – to help distinguish each instrument.

Then began the long testing process. We had a team of about a dozen volunteer testers for Recorder, plus a few of our brave sponsors gave it a go! The hardest part was inspecting the legato transitions. In total over 80 bugs were identified and fixed. In the Beta stage, we were fortunate enough to be invited to show an early version of the library at the Boston Early Music Festival, where we received a lot of feedback and even found a few bugs. That must have been the first time you got to hear your own samples.

EO Right! That was exciting.

SG The final hurdle was preparing the immense amount of release materials and the special process that allows Recorder to run in Kontakt Player. Simon worked closely with Native Instruments to meet compliance standards and implement controls compatible with their line of keyboards. In the meantime, I prepared the roughly 90 pages of documentation, and filmed some instructional videos.

The final cherry on top, Simon filmed over an hour of demonstration videos, showing every single patch in the entire library for prospective customers. Special thanks is also due to our demo composers Quetzal and Adam, as well as our programmer Tomás who worked tirelessly to squash bugs and improve the user experience as the project closed in on release.

To hear Emily using the library with the eCorder, go to youtube.com/watch?v=m6b5_oF-8es

You can get your copy of the library at versilian-studios.com/, or check out the demos of the various instruments via their YouTube channel versilian-studios.com/. 🌟

NOW ONLINE

DOCUMENTING RECORDER MAKING

Parts of Daniël Brügger's ongoing series of documentary videos about recorder players and makers is being made accessible online. His 2011 film *Ricercata* can now be viewed on YouTube. It includes interviews with Bob Marvin and Frans Brügger, and shows a visit to the Yamaha factory in Japan. youtu.be/R8EP6EiX2bQ

Master Makers (2017) is still available as a DVD. This film zooms in on Friedrich von Huene, Martin Skowronek, Hermann Moeck, Bob Marvin and Frederick Morgan. In 5 individual portraits, these influential 20th-century masters of the craft share their history, motivation and opinions. Together they offer a fascinating account of the recorder's redefinition as an historical instrument after World War II. The portion about Friedrich von Huene is accessible to ARS members at: youtube.com/watch?v=2MKJnRGn4gw.

Daniël is currently busy with a documentary on Adriana Breukink, which he hopes to finish in 2025. For more information visit: musicframe-films.nl 🌟



▲ Daniël Brügger

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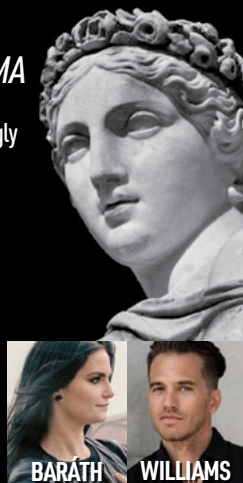
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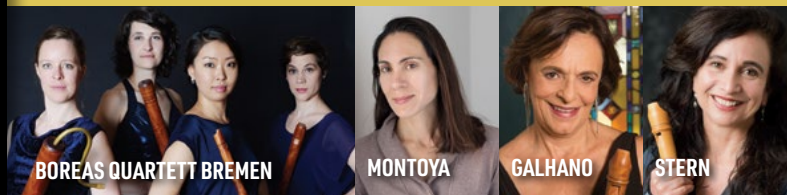


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OLD RECORDERS – NEW TECHNOLOGIES

3D PRINTING HISTORICAL RECORDERS FOR MUSICIANS

BY GABRIELE ROSSI ROGNONI & GABRIELE RICCHIARDI

What can we learn from 3D technology? A museum curator and scientist introduce an exciting initiative to give old recorders voice, and at the same time preserve them.

Performing on historical instruments presents musical and emotional appeal for both players and audiences, but it also comes with risks for the immediate and long-term conservation of the instruments. For decades, musicians and museums have discussed the opportunities and challenges presented by musical instruments in museum collections: Should they be played? What can they tell us? Why,

and for whom do we preserve them?

With no clear consensus on the most effective means to proceed, musical access to instruments in museums has generally been limited, particularly in relation to woodwinds, where age and rarity increase both the interest for musicians and the risks for the physical integrity of the objects.

Hand-made copies have for some time been an effective response to these issues. They bring together

research and close observation of the originals with the skill of a maker who, building on historical evidence can develop modern instruments that combine efficiency, durability and often increased playability through small adjustments to the geometry and materials. But effective modern instruments require complex interpretation of the originals, and that often comes at the cost of accurate reproduction. There is also the question of what is “original” to an old instrument, because all instruments preserved in museums are, to some extent, altered by time and wear. Most woodwinds show signs of their long, and often adventurous lives in the form of natural warping, shrinking and bending, as well as human interventions resulting from use, restorations and damage. This is particularly true for recorders, where even tiny deformations in the voicing area cause significant changes to the instrument’s acoustic properties.

Historical instruments present a variety of non-standardised characteristics that require musicians to familiarise themselves with a single specimen, rather than with a uniform type, learning its individual voicing,



Gabriele Rossi Rognoni is Curator of the Royal College of Music Museum in London and Chair of Music and Material Culture at the same institution, where he also coordinates the activity of the Wolfson Centre in Music and Material Culture. He was President of ICOM-CIMCIM, Curator of the Medici Collection at the Galleria dell'Accademia in Florence, Fellow of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, and Wissenschaftlicher Mitarbeiter at the Institut für Musikforschung Preußischer Kulturbesitz in Berlin. His research interests focus on the intersection between humanities and hard sciences, and on the social study of music through musical instruments and iconography.

Gabriele Ricchiardi is Associate Professor of Physical Chemistry and Director of the NIS Centre for Materials Research at the University of Turin. His research activity is devoted to materials science studies in a variety of fields ranging from industrial materials (catalysts, adsorbents, glasses) to cultural heritage (ancient pigments, materials for musical instruments). He founded the 3D Early Winds (3DEW) collective with engineer Federico Xiccato and flautist Manuel Staropoli, pioneering 3D-printing of historic wind instruments since 2016.

fingering and quirks. Developing an understanding of how a specific instrument connects to the repertoire and the soundscape for which it was built is a valuable skill for young musicians aiming to establish themselves as leaders in the field. It tests their sensitivity toward historical performance, and the flexibility necessary to engage with this practice in the future.

With its mission to inspire and educate musicians and develop awareness of heritage and history from the perspective of performance, the museum of the Royal College of Music (RCM) in London places a particularly strong priority on finding ways to increase access to its collections – musically and otherwise – while still safeguarding the long-term conservation of the objects for posterity.

In an endeavour to explore new ways to facilitate the connection between musicians and historical instruments, the RCM museum in collaboration with the University of Turin's Department of Chemistry launched a project to explore the potential of 3D printing historical instruments. This was aimed particularly at education, performance and research for highly skilled musicians, testing state-of-the-art possibilities to combine accuracy, affordability, durability, safety and musical reliability. The study has been supported through a grant from the Wolfson Foundation and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

The Project

Over the past few years, the use of 3D printing has become pervasive in areas such as education, modelling and prototyping, medicine, construction and creativity. The availability of small, portable printers and easy-to-use online services have brought this technique into people's homes and made it accessible and affordable. 3D printing has also spread in the world

of musical-instrument making with products spanning from cheap toys to the commercial production of affordable lines of good-quality instruments (particularly woodwinds and brass) and the development of innovative designs in stringed instruments, and even pianos.

The multitude of independent projects currently in development is typical of a technique in its early stages. Several projects have been initiated to explore the potential of this technique in relation to musical heritage, adopting different techniques and purposes, from documentation to conservation, and from education to commercial enterprises. The Musée de la Musique in Paris, in collaboration with the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) and Sorbonne University, recently tested the musical and acoustical potential of different materials and printing techniques to reproduce a transverse flute by Jacques-Martin Hotteterre.

In the current project, a group of eight instruments from the RCM collection were chosen with the aim of experimenting with a variety of different challenges, including copying originals in different materials, in some cases including keys and metallic parts. In addition to a Renaissance cornetto, an early clarinet, a Baroque flute and a Classical oboe, three recorders were chosen:

- RCM0063 – Jacob Denner, Nürnberg, c.1720
- RCM0067 – Paul Villars, Paris, c.1750
- RCM0096 – Johann Wilhelm Oberlender, Nürnberg, c.1750

The oldest instrument bears the stamp I.C. Denner and is attributed to the workshop of Jacob Denner (1681–1735). It is also the only Denner recorder made of ivory, a material which this maker used very rarely, and stands out from the rest of his production for the richness of the



Tomographic scans provide valuable information about the conservation status of the instrument & allow very accurate evaluation of the state of preservation.

carving particularly of the foot and the lower end of the head.

The second recorder is a later alto, also in ivory, by Paul Villars (d.1776). This is the only recorder known to have survived by this maker, whose biography is intertwined with the most celebrated makers active in mid-18th-century Paris, particularly Charles Bizet to whom he was apprenticed.

Finally, the third recorder selected is a boxwood alto by Johann Wilhelm Oberlender sr. (1681–1763) active in Nürnberg in the years immediately following Jacob Denner. A richly carved boxwood instrument, it combines synthetic, animal and plant elements.

All instruments are musically efficient – meaning that they can be acoustically tested, although in most cases extensive playing would be impossible due to their state of preservation and risk for physical integrity.

The purpose of the project was to create copies focusing on three stages:

- The instrument as it is now.
- The instrument as it likely was at the time of its construction.
- A scaling of the instrument to a modern standard pitch to facilitate its musical use in current practice.

3D printing requires a full and detailed digital geometric model to start with. In some previous projects, the geometry has been obtained from a three-dimensional CAD drawing based on the manual measurements and drawings, a procedure which

in many cases eliminates essential features of the originals, such as asymmetries resulting from historical tools and techniques. To capture these, the decision was made to adopt X-ray Computed Tomography (CT) as the source of geometrical information. This was collected with a Nikon XT H 225 ST scanner located in the research facilities of the Natural History Museum, a few metres away from the RCM. This type of industrial or metrological scanner offers very high precision and resolution as compared for example with medical CT, whose effectiveness is severely limited by the necessity to limit the X-ray dose. The protocol adopted in this case was also informed by guidelines developed by the Germanisches Nationalmuseum and EZRT (Development Center for X-ray Technology) of the Fraunhofer Institute for Integrated Circuits (IIS) as part of the MUSICES project, although these focus specifically on CT scanning for documentation and investigation, rather than 3D printing.

The tomographic scan provides valuable information about the conservation status of the instrument and allows very accurate evaluation not only of the state of preservation, but also of the possible alterations and of the construction methods. However, it is not a suitable input for 3D printing. The latter requires a digital representation of the geometric boundaries (or surfaces) of the object, usually represented as a mesh of triangles. The extraction of metrologically accurate surfaces from CT data is not trivial: it requires a calibration of the extraction method with reference measurements, and it is subject to several technical artefacts caused by various technicalities.

Once a model has been extracted, it can be printed as is, or digitally restored by means of standard three-dimensional computer modelling tools. This project experimented with

digital restoration of damage resulting from shrinkage, warps and cracks. For the recorders, virtual restoration typically involved sealing cracks, straightening distorted wood, reconstructing missing parts, and removing previous restorations. However, as one of the goals of the project was to explore the characteristics of historical instruments with musicians without introducing the modifications and adaptations that are often introduced in hand-made copies, any modification to characteristics that were considered original was avoided.

The 3D-printable digital models – both representing originals as they are now and virtually restored – were then sent to several professional services specialising in 3D printing located in the UK, Italy, and Belgium (ARRK, 3dPrintUK, WEERG, Shapeways). It must be noted that the precision required for the reproduction of the fine details of recorders, especially in the voicing area, requires the use of high-end professional printers. Printing with low-cost low-resolution printers is feasible, but it produces parts that need extensive manual finishing to become functional. Although acceptable and desirable as a general making practice, manual finishing introduces a bias in the results, and was therefore avoided as much as possible. In all cases, the recorders were printed in the same

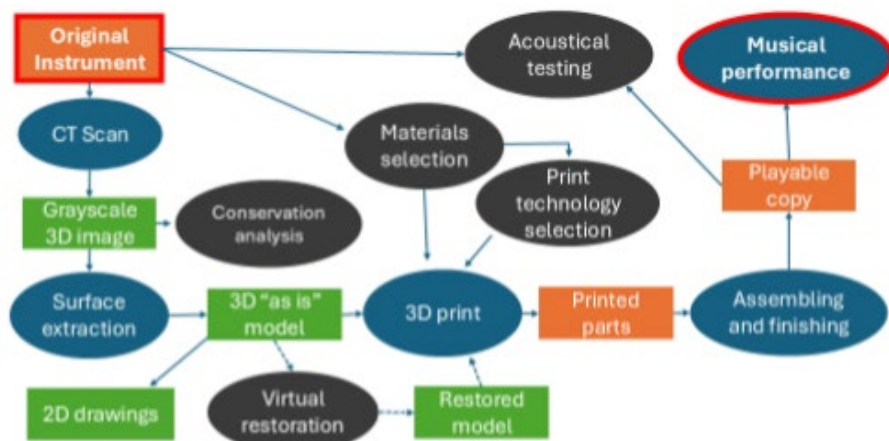
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A truly inspiring project with the scope for so much potential in the world of historically informed performance.

number of parts as the originals (e.g. block, head, middle joint and foot) and assembled manually with traditional techniques, using cotton thread and wax for the tenons.

Out of the selected group of instruments, the Denner recorder was used to compare the performance of different materials and printing techniques, as well as the quality/cost ratio offered by different services. Exchanging the original and 3D-printed parts was used to test the quality of the copy, and will provide a valuable tool for the physical acoustical study of the printed copies in the future.

Several printing technologies and materials were tested. Among those based on the sintering of powders, Selective Laser Sintering (SLS) of polyamide and mixed polyamide-glass powders, as well as HP's proprietary Multi Jet Fusion (MJF) technology based on similar materials, offer the best precision/cost compromise, but their accuracy is sometimes not ideal, as they produce parts with



a rough and sometimes porous finish that needs to be smoothed and sealed to reproduce the acoustical response typical of wood. More sophisticated (and costly) technologies adopt liquid polymer precursors and light-driven solidification, obtaining higher precision and smoother surfaces. We experimented with Masked Stereo Lithography (MSLA), employing both pure polymers and their compounds with inorganic particles. In both powder-based and liquid-based techniques, it is possible to select materials to approximate the acoustical properties of wood. Previous studies have demonstrated that density and elastic modulus (or elasticity) are the main factors affecting acoustic wave reflection and absorption in woodwind instruments. Luckily, the density of printed polyamide (Nylon) is very similar to that of boxwood. However, its elasticity is much lower, although it can be increased by compounding with glass powders.

In the case of ivory, which is a natural polymer-inorganic composite, its mechanical properties can be very closely reproduced with several 3D-printable composites. Regarding wood, it is worth mentioning that its anisotropy – i.e. the directionality of the grain – cannot be reproduced by current 3D-printing technologies. However, as compared to string instruments for instance, the effects of wood grain are much less marked in woodwinds, where the sound is not generated by the vibration of wood, but (mostly) by the vibration of air, the principal role of the wood being that of absorber or reflector of the sound waves in the instrument cavity.

◀ The complex workflow from the museum to the stage. Orange: physical objects; Blue: processes; Green: data; Black: analysis.

A subsequent phase of the project – currently ongoing – consists in the comparative acoustical analysis of the original and copies, focusing specifically on materials, finishes (including elements such as roughness and porosity of the surfaces) and perceptive analysis from the perspective of players and audiences.

A further set of instruments produced for practical purposes was obtained by scaling the dimensions to produce an instrument at 415 Hz. The purpose of this was to facilitate the use of the copies in the context of today's early music performance practice. Comparative analysis will also be undertaken on these instruments to quantify the impact of the scaling on timbre.

Finally, together with the dissemination of results, a feasibility study will explore the most effective way to share the datasets created through the project and an eventual business model for the commercialisation of the copies.

Results

At the time of writing, the scanning and printing phases of the project are completed. Many of the recorders are now in the hands of teachers and students at the RCM. You can read the reactions of Sarah Jeffery and her students below (p. 19). Here we will report on some technical aspects.

The Denner ivory recorder has been printed with several technologies and in different materials. All copies are dimensionally consistent with the original and can be played easily across the full range of the instrument.

The sound of unfinished SLS instruments is a bit weak due to roughness and porosity of the internal surface. By varnishing or sealing the bore with oil, the sound improves significantly. Automatic surface smoothing processes also improve the sound without arbitrary human intervention. The

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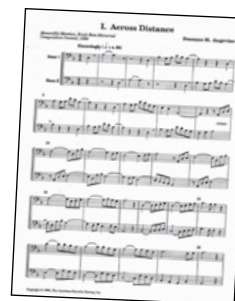


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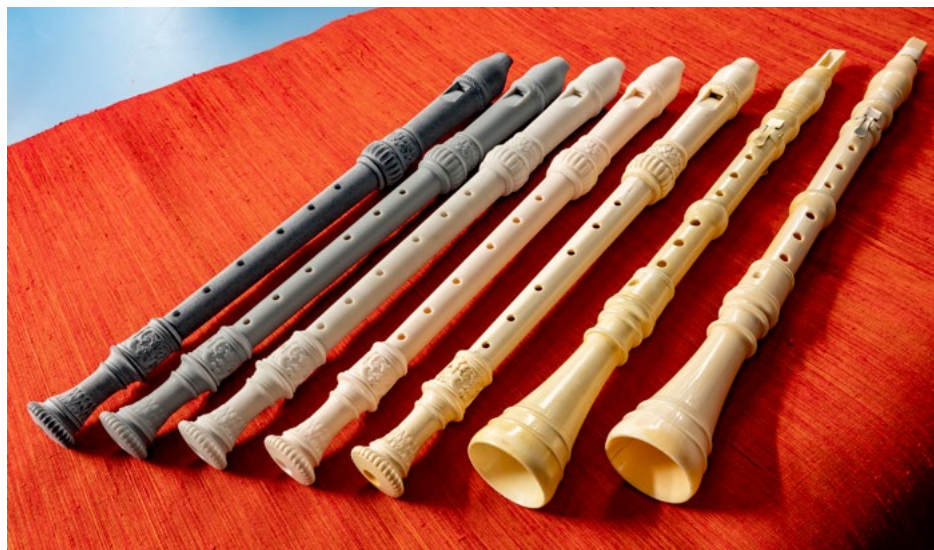
From the ARS in the Erich Katz Music Series

Suzanne M. Angevine,
A Short Tale
 for two
 basses

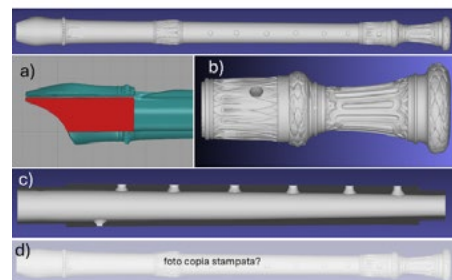
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americanrecorder.org/katzeditions



◀ Prints of the Denner recorder RCM0063 in various materials with the original 5th from left, and 2 clarinets: 3D copy, and original by G.H. Scherer (RCM 0101) on far right.



compounding of Nylon with glass produces a more faithful sound, as well as a heavier instrument with similar feeling and handling to the ivory original.

Multi Jet Fusion instruments have a smooth and non-porous surface and play well without any treatment. However, MJF produces slightly rounded edges in many points of the voicing area which affect the sound. From the player's perspective, these instruments are very good, but quite different in sound from the original.

Masked Stereo Lithography produces very accurate geometries and the instruments play with a strikingly faithful sound without needing any finishing work. This is particularly true for a material commercially called Ultracur3D RG3280, comprised of a ceramic powder bound by a photopolymer, whose density and elastic modulus closely match those of natural ivory. This is unfortunately quite an expensive technology, with a current cost of several hundred dollars per copy.

As already mentioned, the exact reproduction of the voicing area is the main challenge in the printing of recorders. Its fine details are at the limits of accuracy of current printing technologies. Moreover, this is also the area least likely to be pristinely

preserved in originals: a reminder that even original models are often far from being faithful to the original. In the case of the ivory Denner alto, CT showed that, in contrast with the apparently perfect external appearance, the windway is severely damaged by cracks running parallel to it, likely caused by the ivory shrinking with humidity and saliva exposure. These cracks also cause the windway ceiling to rise with respect to the labium plane. In the restoration, it was possible to close the cracks, but reverting the ceiling deformation without introducing arbitrary elements remains a challenge. The current block, possibly original, is also severely deformed. Shrinkage and warping of the wood results in a very irregular windway. Consequently, the block was printed both "as is" and in a variety of geometries that correct the most predictable distortions. The original geometry plays very similarly to the museum instrument, while a general improvement of sound is observed in the corrected versions. Interestingly, when asked to choose the best block for their copies, most students have chosen the same corrected version, namely the one in which only wood warping had been corrected. A detailed account of these experiments in restoration will be given elsewhere. A

▲ The Villars recorder RCM0067 a) section of the windway; b) decorated foot; c) section through the tone holes; d) printed copy.

trio of these instruments, printed in different materials, was played by the RCM students in a public concert in London on March 18, 2024.

As far as the Villars ivory alto recorder is concerned, a similar approach has been followed but only using the BASF Ultracur resin.

This resulted in a well-playing instrument, which needed no restoration. In the case of this late and morphologically unusual instrument, the main result was to provide the first copies of this instrument, allowing musicians to experiment freely with repertoire and blend with other instruments, activities that were not possible on the original.

Finally, the richly decorated boxwood Oberlender alto was reproduced using MJF and MSLA technologies, in both cases with materials matching the density of boxwood.

Conclusions

As the main focus of this project is on music performance, the goal has been to provide performers with instruments that are as close as possible



▲ Oberlender alto recorder RCM0096. Photos: RCM.

to the sound, feel and response of the originals in their current state of preservation – including their idiosyncrasies and imperfections, without the risks associated with playing historical woodwinds. Instruments of these kinds would normally have been produced in several sizes enabling ensemble and accompanied performance. Neither is easily achievable today with the surviving instruments, and in consideration of a general standardisation of pitch for early music at 415 Hz.

So far, the copies have succeeded in raising the curiosity and enthusiasm of professional musicians who have been willing to engage with them in performance and in perception studies.

A few enterprises have already started commercialising prints of historical instruments with increasing success, but to date this project is the most significant attempt led by a public institution to test this technique and promote its usage for general education. Future performances and tests will help to confirm whether

scanning and printing techniques are already able to support advanced and professional early music performers. If this is the case – as first attempts seem to confirm – 3D printing would have the potential to revive the relationship between players (and particularly woodwind players) and instrument collections that were drastically curbed in the 1970s and 80s after the damage that regular performance can cause to historical instruments was realized.

Finally, although the impact of these (partially) automated techniques on human makers should be carefully monitored and assessed, at this stage it seems unlikely that 3D printed copies will compete with hand-made reproductions. The latter benefit from careful experience developed by individual makers through decades tailoring instruments to the specific needs of professionals. Nevertheless, 3D printing might offer affordable and extremely accurate reproductions with the potential of transforming the impact of instruments held in collections on the world of historically informed performance.

SARAH JEFFERY ASKS FOR RESPONSES FROM THREE RCM RECORDER STUDENTS

I was thrilled that my students and I could take part in this ground-breaking project. Some time prior we had



► A brief encounter with the original recorders. L to R: RCM BMus students Larli Davies, Anna Walker and Luca Imperiali. Photo: Sarah Jeffery.

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been lucky enough to get to know the original 18th-century recorders in the RCM museum under the careful guidance of Gabriele Rossi Rognoni, tentatively handling and even blowing a few notes on them, though we now know the damage due to age is too extensive to be able to do so again. Luckily, the 3D copies offer the next best thing!

We had a set of 3D printed Denner recorders at our disposal, and the students were free to practice, rehearse, and try them out in their own time. This enabled them to get to know the idiosyncrasies of the original instrument: How do the holes feel? How heavy is it? What is the stretch? Simply being able to pick up the copy rather than just looking at the original makes history instantly more tangible. Further to this, a particularly exciting aspect was the opportunity to play on and compare the exact copies of the original “warts

and all,” with copies that have been digitally restored to a hypothetical original condition. This gave the students the opportunity to feel and hear what cracks, an aged block, or worn-down wood does to the sound.

I asked recorder students Anna Walker, Luca Imperiali, and Larli Davies to share what they learned from the process.

ANNA My experience with the 3D printed Denner recorders was in two parts. Firstly I filmed a showcase for the RCM’s online magazine *Upbeat*, and secondly was part of a demonstration at the institution’s conference on 3D printing technology.

LUCA I was involved in showcasing how various materials can drastically affect the timbral quality of the instruments. Each material affected how much air I had to use to make a full sound. The instrument in nylon was the hardest, the one with glass

particles the easiest. This affected the brightness of sound, and even gave a few subtle intonation differences, though this was also affected by the two types of blocks – the exact copies and restored versions.

LARLI I was excited to have the opportunity to work with these new instruments and showcase them at an RCM conference in March. It was a unique and challenging experience, and overall very rewarding!

What did playing these instruments add to your normal recorder practice?

ANNA There were many challenging and surprising aspects of playing these recorders. The fact that we had three different copies, all of which were different weights and materials, meant we had to be able to adapt to these different variables as the heavier instruments required more nimble dexterity.

LARLI Having briefly played the original Denner in the museum, I was eager to see how the replica would impact my interpretation. Understanding the instrument’s voicing and balance provided valuable insight into concepts of natural phrasing and shape. It was also cool to get to know a brand new instrument without an existing roadmap.

What repertoire have you used the 3D Denners for?

LARLI I played Telemann Fantasia No. 8 in the conference concert. Throughout the process, I tried out other pieces by Telemann, Handel, and even some contemporary repertoire to get a sense of the instrument.

LUCA To demonstrate each of the recorder’s idiosyncrasies while playing, with the two other students I performed Mattheson’s Sonata for three recorders, op. 1/3. The close tessituras and occasional unisons, as well as the varied characters found throughout the piece pushed us to

RESOURCES:

- Theobald O. J. Fuchs, Rebecca Wagner, et.al. ‘MUSICES (Musical Instrument Computed Tomography Examination Standard): The Final Report Featuring Methods for Optimization, Results of Measurements, Recommendations, Check-Lists and Meta-Data Models.’ E-Journal of Nondestructive Testing 24/3 (March 1, 2019). doi.org/10.58286/23696.
- RIT – Image Permanence Institute. 2023. Findings from 3D Printing and 3D Printed Objects in Collecting Institutions Survey. s3.cad.rit.edu/ipi-assets/survey/IPI_Survey_3D_Full_Report_2023.pdf.
- Ulrike Wegst. “Wood for Sound,” *American Journal of Botany* 93/10 (2006): 1439–1448. doi.org/10.3732/ajb.93.10.1439
- On the Paris museum’s 3D copy of the Hotteterre flute, see Stéphane Vaiedelich, Claudia Fritz, Elsa Lambert, and Mina Jang. “Reconstitution par impression 3D d’une flûte de J. Hotteterre dit le Romain: des fac-similés pour demain?” *Rencontres nationales: Recherches en musique*, Oct 2020, Paris, France. hal-03446621f. hal.science/hal-03446621/document
- Digital restorations in the RCM project were done by freelance engineer and organologist Federico Xiccato in Castelfranco Veneto, Italy who specialises in computer modelling of complex mechanical parts, ranging from modern roller coasters to early musical instruments.
- You can hear a little of the originals, and the copies, along with an explanation of the project from Gabriele Rossi Rognoni and Sarah Jeffery in this video: youtube.com/watch?v=YiVjcZW5BzM

get to the know the instruments inside and out. We frequently found ourselves adapting breath pressure, articulation and fingerings to create a cohesive sound.

ANNA As well as playing the Mattheson trio, I tried some Baroque repertoire by Telemann and Fasch, and various extended techniques to test the instruments' capabilities in a modern context.

What did you get out of the experience as a whole?

LARLI Working with these instruments was a completely new experience that came with challenges. Given that the original was likely intended more as an ornament than a concert instrument and has sustained damage over time, the tone and tuning weren't always ideal. There were some little details, such as the weight of the instrument and the feel of the carved ornament on the foot joint that felt unfamiliar. All in all, it was a good exercise in using alternative fingerings and maintaining a flexible sound.

ANNA Playing these instruments was a really interesting experience, I got to test what an instrument would sound and feel like if it was made from different materials, and how to adapt my playing to achieve the same sound. Overall I had a great time, and would recommend it to anyone who has the opportunity to do this.

LUCA Removed from the context of performance, the recorders were fascinating to handle. Since the instruments were near-perfect copies of the original ivory alto by Denner, it gave us a chance to play music that existed in parallel to Denner on an instrument analogous to what musicians from the time would have been familiar with – all without endangering the fragile and rare original. A truly inspiring project with the scope for so much potential in the world of historically informed performance. ❁



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The annual look at upcoming workshops and festivals

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Descriptions are supplied by workshops listed and may be edited for length. Workshops and Festivals are arranged chronologically in two separate listings. For Festivals turn to p. 30. Contact information and web addresses at the end of each listing are as complete as available at time of printing. Those with the ARS designation in their descriptions have joined the ARS as Partner Members. Other shorter workshops may be sponsored periodically through the year by ARS chapters and other presenters, and are listed on the ARS website, when information becomes available.

.....

▲ Headline quote paraphrased from a saying attributed to Plato.

▼ Midnight viols and recorders at Featured artists at Pinewoods.
photo Lisa Terry.



WORKSHOPS

March 9

K-STATE RECORDER WORKSHOP

Kansas State University, Manhattan KS
Clinician: Anne Timberlake

► Offers two separate technique tracks during the morning session – one for Beginner to Advanced Beginner players and a second for Intermediate to Advanced players. The afternoon session will focus on large-group playing for all workshop participants. Open to all levels from age 13 up.

CONTACT: DAVID WOOD
davidwood@ksu.edu

March 15–16

AMHERST EARLY MUSIC FESTIVAL SPRING BREAK WORKSHOP (ARS)

St. George's Episcopal Church,
Arlington, VA

*Directors: Letitia Berlin and
Amy Dominques; Recorder faculty:
Rainer Beckmann, Letitia Berlin,
and Wendy Powers*

The Sacred and Profane

► Exploring Sacred and Secular Music from the 15th to the 18th centuries. An exciting weekend of classes for recorders, viols, lutes, and singers. The all-workshop sessions will focus on works by Guerrero and Monteverdi.

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March 2–May 4 (weekly classes
on Sundays) **UNIT 1**

August 21–25 (daily classes) **UNIT 2**

August 25–26 (daily classes)
**Recorder and Flute Teaching
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BOREALIS SUZUKI INSTITUTE

Edmonton, Alberta, Canada or
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CONTACT: KATHLEEN SCHOEN
(780) 887-1421

schoenduo@gmail.com

schoen-duo.ca/education-3/borealis-suzuki-institute/

April 9–13

COLUMBIA GORGE EARLY MUSIC RETREAT

Menucha Retreat and Conference Center, Corbett, OR

Faculty: Annette Bauer, Larry Lipnik, Laura Kuhlman, Gayle & Phil Neuman

► Menucha partners with the Portland Recorder Society to offer this 5-day, 4-night gathering dedicated to early music. Open to recorder players of intermediate to advanced level; participants are encouraged to bring any additional early music instruments they may play (strings, double reeds, etc).

portlandrecordersociety.org/events/;
menucha.org/programs/columbia-gorge-early-music-retreat

April 11

BRITISH COLUMBIA RECORDER SOCIETY WORKSHOP AND CONCERT

Maple Ridge, BC, Canada

Farallon Recorder Quartet:

Tish Berlin, Vicki Boeckman,

Miyo Aoki, and Frances Blaker

Between Heaven and Earth

► Inspired by the title of Farallon's concert, Between Heaven and Earth. Explores compositional styles and particular idioms used by composers on this theme. The one-day workshop concludes with a performance by the quartet.

bcrecordersociety.com/farallon-event.html

April 11, May 26, August 11, October 27

CAMBRIDGE WOODWIND MAKERS: RECORDER MAKING COURSES

Linton Cambridgeshire, UK

Tim Cranmore or Jacqueline Sorel

► The making of woodwind and brass instruments is considered an endangered craft by the British Heritage Crafts Association. Cambridge Woodwind Makers is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to preserving and promoting the art and artisanship of woodwind and brass instrument making and repair through participation. With a range of expert tutors they run courses in woodwind instrument making and repair and care. Each workshop is 5 days in duration, supervised by a professional maker in a fully equipped workshop. Baroque oboe & natural trumpet also offered.

CONTACT:

info@cambridgewoodwindmakers.org

April 27–29

WINDS AND WAVES RECORDER WORKSHOP

Lincoln City Cultural Center, Lincoln City, OR

Faculty: Tish Berlin and Frances Blaker

► Come make music with old friends and new on the Oregon Coast! Four class periods a day, featuring a range of styles from Medieval to Contemporary. For Intermediate to Advanced recorder players.

CONTACT: TISH BERLIN

(510) 882-1169

tibiarecorderduo@gmail.com

tibiaduo.com/performances-and-teaching/

May 16–19

BACH+ WEEKEND

CAMMAC Music Centre, Harrington, QC, J8G 2T2

Director: Guylaine Lemaire; Faculty: Francis Colpron

From Bach to Brahms:

A Springtime Celebration

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cammac.ca/en/bach-plus-weekend/

May 23–26

AMHERST EARLY MUSIC MEMORIAL DAY WORKSHOP (ARS)

Wisdom House, Litchfield CT

Director: Valerie Horst

► Get a head start on your summer with a weekend of small and larger chamber music in an idyllic retreat center in rural Connecticut. The Amherst Weekend Workshops are smaller, more relaxed versions of the summer festival. Take classes in a variety of subjects for most of the day: repertory, notation, technique, and ensembles. In the evenings enjoy all-workshop group sessions, English country dancing, a gala Sunday evening faculty concert and party, and more.

CONTACT: SALLY MERRIMAN

(781) 488-3337

info@amherstearlymusic.org

amherstearlymusic.org

May 25–31

SUMMER TEXAS TOOT (ARS)

Schreiner University, Kerrville, TX

Director: Danny Johnson;

Susan Richter, Administrator

Faculty: Jody Miller, Jennifer Carpenter,

Joan Kimball (recorders and winds);

Mary Springfels, Sydney ZumMallen,

Carol Deihl (viols); Therese Honey,

Héctor Alfonso Torres González,

Danny Johnson (harp, lute, voice)

► A one-week program of classes at all levels, focusing on Renaissance and Baroque music, but also ranging from Medieval to Celtic to 21st century. Expert instructors in recorder, viol, lute, harp, reeds and voice teach technique classes, coach one-on-a-part groups, and lead larger ensembles, both mixed and whole.

CONTACT: DANNY JOHNSON

(512) 578-8040

info@toot.org

toot.org/nwp/summer-toot-2025/

May 30–June 1

WHITEWATER EARLY MUSIC FESTIVAL (ARS)

University of Wisconsin, Whitewater, WI

Directors: Laura Kuhlman, Pamela Wiese; Recorder Faculty: Miyo Aoki, James Chaudoir, David Lee Echelard, Cléa Galhano, Lisette Kielson, Laura Kuhlman, Mona Mann, Patrick O'Malley; Viol da Gamba: Charles Rasmussen, Gail Schroeder, Katherine Shuldiner

► A weekend workshop for vocal, recorders and viols with fantastic presenters. Offers classes on a variety of subjects ranging from Advanced Beginner to Advanced levels. Ice cream social and large group playing on Saturday evening.

CONTACT: PAMELA WIESE

(708) 860-0451

oprecorder@gmail.com

whitwaterearlymusic.org/

June 8–14

VIRGINIA BAROQUE PERFORMANCE ACADEMY WORKSHOP

Asbury United Methodist Church, Harrisonburg, VA

Director: Lynne Mackey

► Designed to give participants hands-on experience in Baroque technique and interpretation through daily masterclasses and coached ensemble sessions with internationally acclaimed faculty. Players of diverse

levels are welcome. Part of the Shenandoah Valley Bach Festival.

CONTACT: LYNNE MACKEY

(540) 849-8491

Lmackey8@gmail.com

svbachfestival.org/baroque

June 15–29

BAROQUE PERFORMANCE INSTITUTE

Oberlin College, Oberlin, OH

Director: Kenneth Slowik; Recorder

faculty includes: Michael Lynn

and Anne Timberlake

Music in England from Purcell to Handel

► BPI, the premiere summer workshop focusing on Baroque instruments and voice, marks its 52nd year of preparing musicians of ages 15 and up to perform some of the great works on period instruments. Learn Baroque techniques from faculty and resident artists and participate in masterclasses, recitals, and student concerts to gain a fuller appreciation of this musical genre.

For the first time, a dedicated Recorder Program offers exciting new possibilities. Led by Anne Timberlake, it will feature daily masterclass and technique sessions for all recorder students. During the afternoon, students will be able to select from two possible paths: Baroque Ensemble or Consort. The first is recommended only for advanced students. Consort program students will participate in daily, coached consort sessions and will also perform on the Saturday Student Recital. Oberlin owns a fine collection of Renaissance and Baroque recorders that may be used by some ensembles.

oberlin.edu/summer-programs/bpi

June 16–22

SAN FRANCISCO EARLY MUSIC SOC. BAROQUE WORKSHOP (ARS)

Downtown Berkeley, CA

Lindsey Strand-Polyak; Faculty: TBA (available mid to late January)

► A full week of immersive musicking open to winds, strings, singers, as well as keyboard and plucked continuo instrumentalists. Welcomes players of all levels of experience and ability looking for a supportive and welcoming place to discover and develop new musical skills. Features small and large ensemble instruction, private and group lessons, sight-reading and skill-building classes, and Baroque dance sessions. Pitch A=415.

CONTACT: LINDSEY STRAND-

POLYAK; STACEY HELLEY (LOGISTICS)

(510) 831-3077

baroqueworkshop@sfems.org

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June 16–23

MEMPHIS SUZUKI INSTITUTE

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Director: Samuel Sidhom;

Faculty: Mary Halverson Waldo,

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June 29–July 5

MOUNTAIN COLLEGIUM (ARS)

Western Carolina University,

Cullowhee, NC

Director: Jody Miller; Faculty: Gwyn

Roberts, Anne Timberlake, Annette

Bauer, Jody Miller, Phil Hollar, Joan

Kimball, Will Peebles, Barbara Weiss

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this intensive and fun workshop. With classes in Renaissance, Baroque, and contemporary music for recorder players, there are offerings to suit musicians of all levels and interests. In addition to 4 daily classes, there are nightly large-group playing sessions, concerts, evening dancing sessions, and so much more! Work-study awards are available. Also offers classes in capped reeds, early brass, viola da gamba, folk music, early harp, etc. Come for the recorder experience, but leave with so much more!

CONTACT: JODY MILLER

(404) 314-1891

info@mountaincollegium.org

mountaincollegium.org

June 29–July 6 & July 6–13

AMHERST EARLY MUSIC, SUMMER FESTIVAL (ARS)

Muhlenberg College, Allentown, PA

Director: Frances Blaker; Recorder faculty: Miyo Aoki, Annette Bauer, Rainer Beckmann, Rachel Begley, Letita Berlin, Frances Blaker, Saskia Coolen, Rotem Gilbert, Héloïse Degrugillier, Valerie Horst, Sarah Jeffery, Patricia Petersen, Wendy Powers, with Na'ama Lion & Kathie Stewart (flute) (not all both weeks).

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CONTACT: SALLY MERRIMAN

(781) 488-3337

info@amherstearlymusic.org

amherstearlymusic.org

June 29–August 24

CAMMAC SUMMER MUSIC RETREATS

CAMMAC Music Centre, Harrington, QC, Canada

Director: Guylaine Lemaire;

Faculty: Francis Colpron (Les

Boréades), Vincent Lauzer & Marie-Laurence Primeau (Flûte Alors)

► Eight weeks of summer programming with a different theme each week including Early Music, Jazz, Blues, Broadway, Choral and Chamber Music programs. Recorder classes and programs for all levels of players available each of the 8 weeks led by internationally renowned musicians. Programs available for adults, teens and children.

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(819) 687-3938

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May 30–June 1

SOCIETY OF RECORDER PLAYERS FESTIVAL

Titus Salt School, Baildon near

Shipley, West Yorkshire, UK

Guest artists, tutors and conductors to include: Sarah Jeffery, Palisander, Flanders Recorder Duo, Mary Tyers, Helen Hooker, Kate Allsop, and many more.

► Hosted in collaboration with The Early Music Shop, the new venture of a joint festival will present some exciting possibilities with a wider range of players, but still familiar features such as a commissioned work, and a range of conductors.

earlymusicshop.com/blogs/recorder-festival-2025/whats-on

July 6–12

PORT TOWNSEND EARLY MUSIC WORKSHOP

University of Puget Sound,

Tacoma WA

Director: Jo Baim

► Offers an exciting week-long opportunity for players of recorders, viols, and percussion as well as singers, to immerse themselves in music of the Medieval, Renaissance, and Baroque periods, music from Brazil, and more. Most classes are geared towards players with reliable technique and reading skills, but there is always a place for those who are less experienced, rusty or coming back to music after a break. Many of our participants agree that our workshop is one of the most friendly and inclusive of any they have attended.

Total immersion in a week-long residential workshop is the most beneficial for learning and shared camaraderie, but the workshop also offers new commuter options.

CONTACT: JO BAIM

(206) 932-4623

jobaim@msn.com

seattle-recorder.org/workshops-more/

July 8–11

MADISON SUMMER CHAMBER MUSIC WORKSHOP

Madison, WI

Director: Trevor Stephenson;

Recorder faculty: Lisette Kielson;

Bach Lectures: Geoffrey Williams

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July 20–26

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workshops@sfems.org (logistics)
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August 2–9

NORVIS

Barnard Castle, County Durham, England

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norvis.org.uk

August 9–16

COUNTRY DANCE AND SONG SOCIETY EARLY MUSIC WEEK AT PINEWOODS (ARS)

Pinewoods Camp, Plymouth, MA

Director: Karen Burciaga; Faculty includes: Miyo Aoki, Anney Barrett, Michael Barrett, Héloïse Degrugillier, Jan Elliott, Frances Fitch, Eric Haas, Ben Matus, Sarah Mead, Dan Meyers, Emily O'Brien, Jonathan Oddie, Joshua Overby, Christa Patton, Tom Roby, Melissa Running, Jacqueline Schwab, Niccolo Seligmann, Lisa Terry

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CONTACT: (413) 203-5467
camp@cdss.org
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August 16–23

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August 29–31

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St. Matthew's Lutheran Church,
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Administrative Director: Susan Schwartz; Musical Director:

Lawrence Lipnik

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October 26–November 1; November
2–November 8

ROAD SCHOLAR NATIONAL RECORDER/EARLY MUSIC WORKSHOP (ARS)

Hidden Valley Music Seminars,
Carmel Valley, CA 93924

Directors: Letitia Berlin and Lawrence Lipnik; Faculty: Week 1: Letitia Berlin (recorder), Lawrence Lipnik (recorder, viola da gamba), Frances Blaker (recorder, all-workshop orchestra), David Morris (viola da gamba), and Shira Kammen (early strings); Week 2: Letitia Berlin (recorder), Lawrence Lipnik (recorder), Frances Blaker (recorder, all-workshop orchestra), Mary Springfels (viola da gamba), and Wouter Verschuren (dulcian/shawm)

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Joanna Blendulf, *viol consorts*
Vicki Boeckman, *recorder*
James Brookmyre, *recorder*
Cléa Galhano, *recorder orchestra*
Antonio Gómez, *percussion, world music*

David Morris, *viol consorts*
Jonathan Oddie, *collegium, harpsichord*
Hanneke van Proosdij, *recorder*
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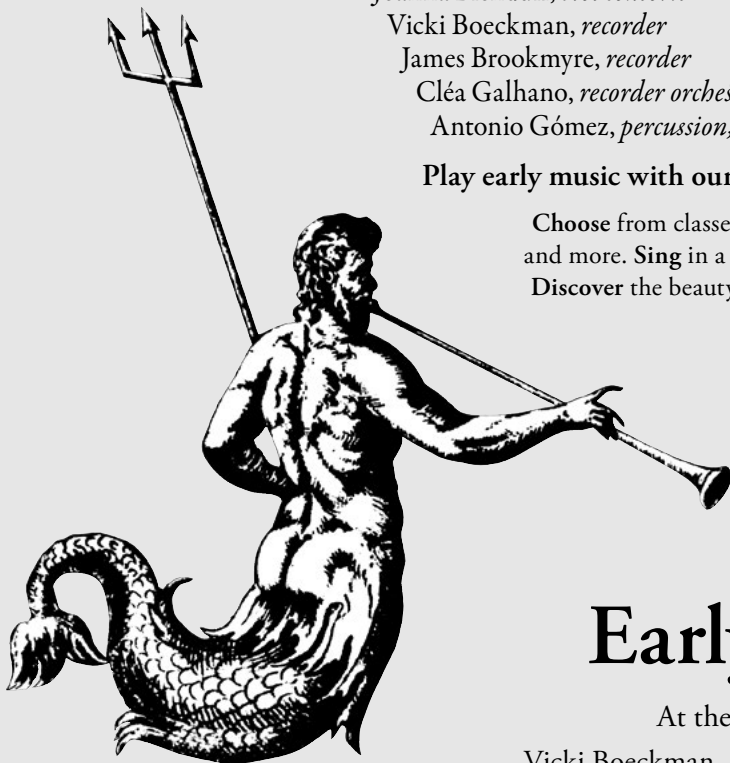
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March 15

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To register to participate visit:
piffaro.org/recorder-fest/

May 25–31

BLOOMINGTON EARLY MUSIC FESTIVAL

Bloomington, IN

President: Suzanne Ryan-Melamed

► The first early music festival to be dedicated to the African Diaspora, BLEMF 2025 offers a wide-ranging exploration of Black musicians and their too-often overlooked contributions to early Western musical culture across the three centuries of the transatlantic slave trade. The week-long series of concerts and discussions, educational workshops for kids and adults includes presentations by New York Baroque Dance Company, Alchymy Viols, Tonos del Sur, a

program tracing the peregrinations of Haitian song, plus the second BLEMF Community Showcase, and a new installation of the New Neighbors Children's Art Exhibit in partnership with Exodus Refugee Immigration.

CONTACT:
office@blemf.org
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June 8–15

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Boston, MA

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BEMF.org

June 13–July 13

INDIANAPOLIS EARLY MUSIC FESTIVAL

The Indiana History Center,
Indianapolis, IN

Director: Mark Cudek

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CONTACT:**(317) 840-4272****manager@IndyEarlyMusic.org****indyearlymusic.org****June 19–21**

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BAROQUE MUSIC FESTIVAL**

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*Directors: Matthias Maute & Vincent
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CONTACT:**Executive Directors: Maurice-G. Du****Berger & Vincent Lauzer****info@montrealbaroque.com****montrealbaroque.com****July 24–26**

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DE MUSIQUE BAROQUE DE
LAMÈQUE**

Lamèque, NB, Canada

Director: Vincent Lauzer

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CONTACT:**baroque@iledelameque.ca****July 14–20****BLUE HILL BACH**

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bluehillbach.org**August 9–31**

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Exploring Early Music as an Ensemble: Approaching Scores, Facsimiles and Instrument Choices



**WRITTEN BY
LOBKE
SPRENKELING**

Lobke Sprenkeling obtained her

Bachelor's and Master's degrees as a recorder player and theatrical performer at the Royal Conservatory of The Hague and Utrecht Conservatory, Netherlands. She continued her studies at the Escola Superior de Música de Catalunya, Spain, with a national scholarship from the Dutch Culture Fund. In 2016 she earned her music Ph.D. *cum laude* at the Universidad Politècnica de València. She also studied multidisciplinary theater from a musical perspective (Carlos III University, Madrid, and the Yale University Summer Program); her specific interest in the relationship between musician and body has led to her performing in and creating multidisciplinary works. She taught recorder at the pre-conservatory program (ages 8-18) of Conservatorio Profesional de València (2007-16), and has taught in Europe, Mexico and the U.S. (sessions with the recorder societies in Phoenix, AZ, and Seattle, WA, and for Amherst Early Music).

She currently teaches recorder at the Real Conservatorio Superior de Música de Madrid. In 2022 she released a CD and in 2023 taught at Lyon National Conservatory in France, in an Erasmus Program collaboration with recorder pedagogues Pierre Hamon and Sébastien Marq.

Info: <https://lobke.world>.

As recorder players, we are fortunate to perform repertoire that spans the Middle Ages to the present. Modern ensemble pieces tend to be highly precise in their notation, indicating every detail such as dynamics, tempo, note values, and instrument choices. However, when we turn to early music, we often find that this information is not present in the score – unless it is a heavily edited, and subjective, modern publication. Therefore it's essential to understand the appropriate historical performance practices. From choosing instruments to interpreting scores, playing early music requires us to take into account historical context and pay close attention to what is implied but not written. In this article, we will explore two important aspects of playing early music in an ensemble: reading both modern scores and facsimiles, and selecting appropriate instruments.

For beginners, learning how to read any score and understanding what to look for is key to building a solid foundation. For more advanced players, interpreting facsimiles and learning to listen carefully to what the other players in the ensemble do will enhance your interpretation and overall enjoyment. At the same time, selecting the right size of recorder is an essential part of playing early music. This article aims to provide a guide for ensembles of all levels to deepen their understanding of Early Music and its performance practices.

What to Look For

What should beginners focus on when reading early music scores? Most modern editions are quite respectful of the original notation. For example, even if they are adapted to modern clefs for ease of reading, modern scores may indicate the original clefs at the beginning of the staff (see example 1). Some editions keep the original note values, while others adapt them to modern conventions, such as reading quarter notes instead of half or whole notes (2). In some modern editions, bar lines are omitted, which may take some getting used to, but can be advantageous, as pre-Baroque music had a different and in some ways more free concept of meter (see 3, 4).

The first question you should ask when approaching an early music piece is: from which historical period is the music? Baroque pieces (c.1650–1750) are generally the easiest to begin with in terms of historical conceptions about the notes, as their notation is more similar to modern conventions. Baroque music for recorders often specifies instrument sizes, and many modern adaptations for recorder ensemble of pieces originally composed for other instruments (such as Vivaldi concertos or Bach fugues), already take the recorder's range into account. Original pieces for recorders might be duets for two altos and basso continuo, which can be played on a bass recorder. The bass player might need to adapt notes that fall outside the range of their instru-

1: In this modern edition of *Mille Regretz* by Josquin Desprez, the original C- and F-clefs are shown as well as the first note of each voice. It respects the original note values.

2: In this edition, the note values are twice as fast, for ease of reading.

ment by transposing them an octave up or down. That requires careful judgment to ensure that the musical line remains intact. Composers occasionally wrote for several equal recorders, such as the 3-part sonatas by Mattheson or the 5-part recorder concertos by Boismortier.

French Baroque music, in particular, will present repertoire originally written for the traverso (flute), which could be transposed for the alto recorder, or played on a D-recorder (the voice flute). In such repertoire, the G clef may appear on the first line instead of the second, but modern editions will typically adjust this for recorder players. If you come across traverso repertoire that is slightly too low for your alto recorder, consider the historical practice of transposing it up a minor third to fit your alto recorder. See examples 6, 7, 8.

For Renaissance (c.1500-1600) and Pre-Baroque (c.1600-1650) music, there are more unwritten rules to consider. In these periods, the C clef was commonly used instead of the G clef. Renaissance ensemble music can be divided into two genres: instrumental dance music (such as pavans, galliards, and basse dances by composers like Susato, Attaignant, or Praetorius) and vocal music. Instruments were expected to imitate the human voice, which was considered the highest form of music. This polyphonic music calls for a more “horizontal” and cantabile style of playing, which involves softer articulation and more portato (legato).

1

Superius
Contratenor
Tenor
Bassus

Mil - le re - gretz
Mil - le re - gretz
Mil
Mil - le re -

2

Cantus
Altus
Tenor
Bassus

Mil - le re - grets
Mil - le re - grets
Mil - le re - grets
Mil - le re - grets.

Keep in mind, however, that slurring notes is a practice that belongs to Baroque music and should be avoided in Renaissance music. Even diminutions, the ornaments from the Renaissance, should be articulated gently, using a soft D-articulation. Remember from my last article in AR Fall 2024 that higher recorders will articulate more softly while the lower recorders will separate the notes a bit more in order to be audible and not “muffled.”

If the music is vocal, you can use the text as a guide for your breathing, inhaling at commas or full stops. If you need to breathe in other places, do so in a way that doesn’t disrupt the flow of the phrase or the energy of the text.

Pre-Baroque music is modal rather than tonal, meaning it’s written in modes like D dorian rather than D minor. Modern editions may suggest accidentals above the notes, as original scores did not always include them. Historically, musicians would

decide where to apply accidentals based on context. For example, sharps were often used in cadences to create a leading tone, while flats could be added to avoid tritones, which were considered dissonant. Modern editions typically offer valuable guidance for interpreting these choices, but don’t be afraid to experiment by adding sharps or flats where you feel they are needed. I prefer editions that indicate these accidentals as suggestions, rather than fixing them at the beginning of the score, or in front of the notes without indicating that they have been added (9). Renaissance scores can often be found on cpdl.org, where you can compare modern editions that stay closer to the original notational practices with those that take more interpretative, and sometimes subjective liberties. If you’re curious about original notation, many facsimiles (copies of original manuscripts or prints) are available on

3



3: In this fragment of a Fantasia by Orlando Gibbons, the barlines were left out, which helps to perceive the natural flow of the melodies.

4: The barlines in this edition interrupt the motives.

4

the other voices do, and reacting to it.

As for time signatures, pre-Baroque music often lacks bar lines, and the concept of bars as we know them didn't exist until the 17th century, when the first bar lines appeared as a means of making it visually easier to group the written notes. Instead, the so-called "tactus" was the pulse or beat, the basic unit of time. Music could flow rhythmically around this pulse, and a musical motive could shift in time based on the interaction between voices. When playing Renaissance music, it's ideal to use an edition without bar lines or perhaps with only a small tick to indicate where the bar line would go. That helps organize the music mentally without disrupting melodic lines. Compare examples 3, 4.

The concept of proportionality was also crucial in early music. For example, in pieces that switch from binary to ternary time, the overall pulse remains the same, but it is subdivided into three instead of two. This concept of subdivision is central to Western classical music, in contrast to other musical traditions that rely on the smallest note value and create compound irregular time signatures (like 5/4 followed by 7/4, for example).

More advanced players may wish to explore facsimiles, which are reproductions of original manuscripts or prints. Petrucci's 1501 publication marked the beginning of printed music (5), and while early printed music can be challenging to decipher, facsimiles of music from the 17th and 18th centuries are relatively accessible. Once you are comfortable with these,

imslp.org or in the digital catalogs of libraries through the RISM website.

One unique feature of Pre-Baroque music is that scores with all parts were rare; composers wrote parts directly for each voice (5). This is a fascinating aspect of Renaissance music, as it suggests that composers and performers relied heavily on memory and their understanding of polyphonic rules. For us, it's important to learn from this that, just like in those times, it's essential to rely more on our listening skills and less on just reading the

notes when playing this music. Musicians would often add diminutions – dividing long notes into smaller note values – to enrich the musical lines with ornaments. Playing this music well requires developing a close relationship between your fingers and your ears, so you can add small ornaments, for example in cadences or in other places where they're not in the way of the other voices. Our starting point, before anything else, is playing from musical parts instead of the score, while learning to listen for what

5



you can explore earlier music, such as the three-part music of Ruffo or the four-part madrigals of Rore, just to mention a couple among a vast collection of music. Facsimiles provide valuable insights into how the music was originally conceived. They offer clues such as the use of original clefs to minimize ledger lines, the absence of bar lines, and groupings of notes that reveal the phrasing and structure of the music. As with all sign notations, including written text, there are a lot of signs that can subconsciously influence our interpretation.

We also enjoy the puzzles different forms of notation present, such as how to approach the performance from part books instead of full scores. Playing from individual parts requires you to listen more closely to your ensemble, and it opens up your ears to the different voices in the music. Interestingly, part books can also reveal important details about the spatial arrangement of the instruments. Sometimes, multiple voices were placed on two consecutive pages of one joint book, for players who were all reading from it. For five-part music, the lowest instrument would sometimes have its music written across both pages. This arrangement hints at the strategic placement of the lowest instruments in the center of the ensemble, where they can aid tuning and produce a more balanced overall sound. When performing Renaissance music, consider placing your lowest instruments centrally.

Furthermore, a critical aspect of Renaissance music is the concept of *musica ficta* (literally “false music”).

This refers to sharps and flats that were not notated but were understood to be played, in accordance with unwritten rules of performance practice. The system of *musica recta* (“correct music”) was based on thinking in terms of three scales consisting of six notes, called hexachords, on C, F (with a B-flat), or G. The seventh note of these scales was not considered proper to use, so musicians would have to switch between the three hexachords in order to do their solfège correctly. The term *musica recta* represents all the notes that were part of this system, while *musica ficta* refers to the sharps and flats outside this system. This explains why many sharps and flats were played but were rarely written down. For a deeper understanding, the YouTube channel Early Music Sources provides a valuable video on the practical application of *musica ficta* in Renaissance music.

As you delve into music from earlier periods such as the 14th and 15th centuries, you will encounter further challenges. You will find that playing from a modern edition will be much more accessible. Contrary to the later mensural rhythms, where each note has a fixed duration, the notation from these times was based on modal rhythms, where the duration of each note depended on the notes around it. The complexity of this notation makes it difficult for modern musicians to read, and it can take a lot of practice to become familiar with it. Even so, it is still worthwhile to explore it in original notation, even if only to gain insight into how the composers of the time thought about rhythm and

5: Contratenor part to Josquin’s *Cela sans plus* taken from the first music printed by Petrucci in 1501. Although clear, this notation is harder to get used to than later music. There is no score; the 3 parts were printed separately. The lack of bar lines & other markers, makes coordination difficult.

notation. This will not only deepen your understanding of early music but also help you in your musical interpretation, as a comparison with the modern score.

What To Listen For

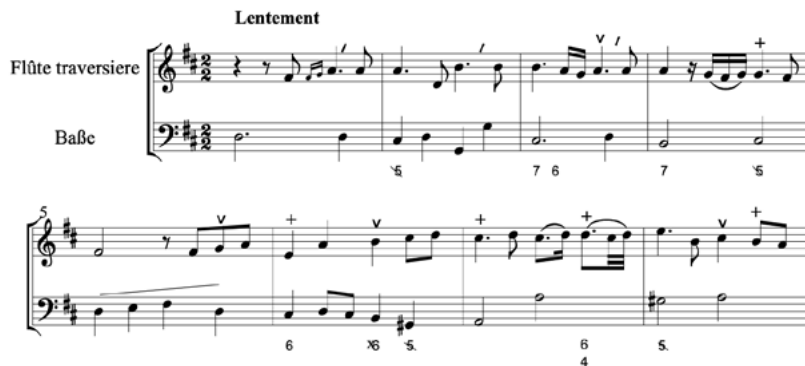
In Baroque music, trills are an essential ornament, particularly at cadences. If you’re unsure whether to add a trill, try playing your cadences both with and without one. Some trills were written, but others were expected as part of the performance practice. In French Baroque music, trills (*tremblement*), mordents (*battement*), and appoggiaturas (*coulement*, *port de voix*) were frequently used. Hotteterre’s treatise, *Principes de la flûte* (1707) is invaluable for learning about French Baroque ornamentation and articulations – very concise and accessible. In Italian-style Baroque music and German Baroque music, we could add more long slurred scale-like ornaments and arpeggios. In any case, when playing in an ensemble, you will want to limit your ornaments or come to an agreement with the other players.

In pre-Baroque music, you can add diminutions, especially in the higher voices, but it’s important to be mindful of the other voices and avoid over-ornamenting. In polyphonic music, cadences happen at different times in each voice, so you can add an ornament on your cadence, but it’s important to listen to your ensemble members and avoid disrupting their

6



7



8



lines. As with all improvised ornaments, sometimes it will work out perfectly and other times you belatedly find out another player decided to ornament at the same time as you – and even that doesn't always sound bad. The element of imitation adds life to Renaissance music – if one player ornaments a line that will be imitated, others should consider including, extending, or contrasting the ornament. This will add a lot to the fun to playing these pieces together.

Even without ornaments, imitation and contrast are key to bringing the music to life. Pay attention to when voices imitate each other and try to match your articulations and phrasing. Similarly, recognize where

contrasts occur in the music and adapt your playing to highlight them. Try to be spontaneous as part of the process of getting less dependent on reading and becoming a better listener and ensemble player.

In Renaissance consort music, except in dance music, the aim is to imitate the human voice, which was considered the ideal model for musical expression. This means playing with smooth, lyrical lines. In contrast, Baroque music offers more freedom to explore unique instrumental qualities. You can play more expressively, letting the instrument's own character shine through. This allows for a greater exploration of sound color, dynamics and articulation.

Suite 1 by Hotteterre

6: facsimile at original pitch, which doesn't fit on an alto recorder

7: Modern edition for traverso in the original pitch.

8: Transcription transposed for recorder.

Choice of Instruments

Your instrument choice is crucial to achieving the correct sound and style in early music – especially pre-Baroque music. We are used to playing on F- and C-instruments, which was a configuration that became standard from the 17th century on. During the Renaissance, consorts were tuned in fifths, meaning a four-voice piece would be played with a bass recorder in F, two tenor recorders in C, and an alto recorder in G. In this tuning system, there were also D-soprano and B-flat-bass recorders, so that music could be extended to higher and lower voices. It's good to consider the possibility, if you think you're ready for it, to choose a recorder that suits the historical style of the music you're playing. Renaissance music often sounds best on Renaissance recorders with the G-alto covering the highest voice(s). Their construction differs from Baroque instruments and their sound is more mellow. The choice between soprano and alto for the first voice in itself also makes a difference. Each has its own timbre and should be considered if the range of the voice allows it.

Learning to play the G-alto recorder is an essential part of conservatory education. It was considered the cantus instrument in Renaissance consort music, often performing the highest voice(s). It is more challenging than the Baroque F-alto or soprano recorder, as it features different finger-

ings and a somewhat different way of blowing. Playing Renaissance instruments requires a keen ear for tuning, as many flats and sharps are achieved by covering part of a single hole, rather than using double holes. Over time, this becomes a matter of muscle memory, just like any other skill, but it does take some getting used to. Additionally, playing the G-alto means dealing with another transposing instrument. Combine this with reading in C clefs, and it becomes even more disorienting. However, with practice and patience, you'll gradually get used to these challenges.

The key takeaway for instrument selection is that the choice of recorder should reflect both the historical context of the music and the acoustics of the ensemble. Consider the size, range, and tone quality of each instrument to best match the style of the piece you're performing.

Tuning

Tuning on G-alto is similar to tuning on F and C instruments, that is, tuning in octaves and fifths. An F-bass and a G-alto tune on a D, since the fingering of the D on both instruments creates a stable and reliable tone. F-bass and C-tenor tune on a fifth: C with G or D with A. Final harmonies at the end of musical phrases are best tuned in the following order: octaves, fifths, then thirds.

When comparing Medieval and Renaissance music, it's important to note the difference in tuning systems used during these periods. In the Medieval era, particularly on the European continent, Pythagorean tuning was common, while in the Renaissance, meantone tuning became more standard. The most noticeable difference between these two systems is in the way thirds are tuned. In Medieval music, major thirds are wide and minor thirds narrow, creating a dissonance on the third, while focusing on

9

The image shows a musical score for four voices, likely Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass, arranged in four staves. The music is in a key with one sharp (F#) and a common time signature. The lyrics are 'ni mie i' repeated across the staves. The notation includes various note values (minims, crotchets, quavers) and rests. A small box with the number '9' is in the top left corner of the score area.

perfect fifths. English music from the Medieval period often features thirds and can be seen as an exception, but in general, cadences tend to resolve from a major third into a perfect fifth. On the Continent, the major third was considered dissonant, intentionally creating tension that was resolved by the perfect fifth.

In contrast, the Renaissance era embraced the meantone system, which produced smaller major thirds that created a rich, consonant harmony full of natural harmonics. This allowed for a smoother, warmer sound that is distinct from earlier times.

When playing Renaissance music, try to lower your major thirds slightly to achieve this warm, harmonious effect. In contrast, when performing Medieval music, aim to bring out the tension in the major third, understanding how this dissonance plays a role in the overall sound.

9: This modern edition of *Ancor che col* by Cipriano de Rore has respected the original notation without the sharps, but adds the editorial suggestion above the notes.

Conclusion

Playing early music with an ensemble is a rewarding and deeply fulfilling experience, especially if you pay attention to historical context, notation, and instrument choices. By exploring modern scores and facsimiles, learning to interpret the unwritten rules of historical performance, and carefully selecting instruments suited to the styles, you bridge the gap between the music on the page and the living, breathing art it becomes when played.

Whether you're a beginner just starting to read early music or an advanced player exploring the intricacies of facsimiles and ornamentation, the journey is one of constant discovery and growth (and let's not forget the fun!). Embrace the flexibility and creativity that early music allows, and remember that the process of discovering these sounds, techniques, and instruments is as much about listening as it is about playing. ✨

LINKS OF INTEREST

- For the previous article in Lobke's series on Consort Playing, go to: americanrecorder.org/docs/AR_fall24.pdf
- Advanced players interested in comparing the use of modern editions with facsimiles when exploring music from the 15th century by Ockeghem and Dufay, can find videos with follow-along scores and parts, and minus-one play-along tracks at Lobke's YouTube channel.
 - Ockeghem *Fors seulement* Modern score: youtu.be/w9T9tZhAT04
 - Facsimile: youtu.be/roTrFvEyKhW
 - Dufay *Ce jour de l'an* Modern score: youtu.be/TPu6rT8Lu20
 - Facsimile: youtu.be/8xlvtk4hg0
- RISM – Répertoire International des Sources Musicales (*International Inventory of Musical Sources*) opac.rism.info/main-menu/kachelmenu – is a catalogue of music in public collections focusing on works produced between 1600 and 1850.

Music

Satisfy your Wanderlust with these these editions of music with exotic themes.

- | | | |
|-----------|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 01 | Vitambo vya moyo
(African Suite No. 4) | by Sören Sieg |
| 02 | Pink Noise: A Caribbean Rhapsody | by Guus Haverkate |

KEY: rec=recorder; S'o=sopranino; S=soprano; A=alto; T=tenor; B=bass; gB=great bass; cB=contra bass; Tr=treble; qrt=quartet; pf=piano; fwd=foreword; opt=optional; perc=percussion; pp=pages; sc=score; pt(s)=part(s); kbd=keyboard; bc=basso continuo; hc=harpsichord; P&H=postage/handling.

01

Vitambo vya moyo (African Suite No. 4)

by Sören Sieg

Self-published, 2018. ATTBgB.

Sc 26 pp, 5 pts 7-8 pp ea.

Abt. \$28.

soerensieg.de/en

REVIEWED BY:

Bruce Calvin

German composer Sören Sieg (b. 1966) learned to play the recorder, violin and piano as a child, and later the saxophone, trumpet, guitar and drums. He studied sociology, politics and music in Hamburg and Bielefeld, and later toured with his a cappella choral group LaLeLu for 18 years in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. Since 2012 he has published 10 books and numerous works for classical ensembles that are played all around the world.

On his website, Sieg explains that *Vitambo vya moyo* is Swahili for “moments of the heart.” He describes the suite as “pure happiness.” Later he notes that “the feeling of happiness can change to sadness at any time. Just like sadness can be transformed back into happiness.” He also acknowledges that “this suite is very European in terms of its dynamics, development and polyphony. When examined closely, it is a European piece on African music.”

The opening of the first movement, “Kinokero” (The Gazelle), brings to mind nature programs with large herds of gazelle fleeing from predators across the grasslands of Africa. Then they slow down and start feeding on the grass, before again racing away from danger. In the fast sections, the time signatures alternate between 5/8 and 3/4 with the 8th note providing the constant pulse. The rhythm in the great bass emphasizes the shift between the two time signatures. The slow sections provide a refreshing

contrast of calm against the intensity of the fast sections.

In the second movement, “Kinyongo” (Wistfulness), the great bass begins with a twist on a walking bass. The line is sometimes passed up to the bass, and continues between these two parts throughout the movement. The other parts have a theme beginning with a falling 5th floating above, sometimes as solo lines, sometimes together in harmony. Near the end, entering a measure apart, all parts mimic the bass’s walking line, closing with the great bass finally intoning the theme for the first time. All of the parts resolve in final long chords.

The third movement, “Jamboree” (Celebration of Joy), reflects through its complex rhythms the mixture of pulses within a joyous crowd of people. The constant shifting among 7/8, 3/4, 9/8 and 2/4 provides a dynamic sense of where the beat is. This is a movement that would stump the best sight-readers, and would need to be carefully practiced at a slower speed before taking it up to the suggested tempo of quarter note=200 bpm.

Listening to this suite does indeed create a feeling of happiness, but playing it is much more difficult than it sounds. It would be appropriate for a high intermediate group that is willing to dedicate the time to practicing, or for an advanced group. The alto line lies high in the range of the instrument, frequently jumping up to high G. The great bass part infrequently goes down to a low E, but no lower.

The whole suite of three movements is about 11 minutes long. The printing is clear with large notes on a heavy ivory stock paper. There are some impossible page turns that would require making a photocopy of the next page. The notation for triplets is unusual, with the “3” appearing below the staff lines rather than above the notes, making it hard to see.

Listen to this African suite (and other selections) on Sieg's website: soerensieg.de/en/content/vitambo-vya-moyo-african-suite-no4-recorder-quintet-attbg. ❁

Bruce Calvin has reviewed videos and books for professional library publications. He is a spiritual director for people of diverse faiths; visit knowthatiam.blogspot.com. Having started playing recorder in college, he met with a group weekly for some years to play recorders in the Washington, D.C. area.

02

Pink Noise:**A Caribbean Rhapsody**

by Guus Haverkate

Peacock Press P662, n.d. [2018?].
AATTB. Sc 15 pp, 4 pts 4 pp ea.
Abt. \$9.80..

recordermail.co.uk

REVIEWED BY:
Victor Eijkhout

Dutch composer Guus Haverkate is not a very visible composer in these internet days. He has, however, been writing recorder music since the 1970s, with his set of recorder studies being particularly successful (12 *Capital Studies*, reviewed in *AR* Spring 2017). According to an article in *Blokfluitist* from 2021, much of his ensemble writing is inspired by a drive to reproduce jazz and pop sensibilities. In particular, he aims to reproduce the free phrasing of jazz musicians (he himself plays clarinet in jazz contexts), and to somehow concoct a plausible rhythm section. Both of these aspects come out in his *Pink Noise*, written for an ensemble of that name (pinknoise.org.uk).

This piece is subtitled *A Caribbean*


Rhapsody, which explains section titles such as “The Waves,” “The Surfers” and “The Beach Party.” There are actually more titles, but the six-minute running time can roughly be divided into two sections: the waves and the party, with the surfers as the bridging section.

While the beach party is very enjoyable Caribbean music, I was most intrigued and charmed by the opening sea/waves/clouds part. This section uses voices very close together, but rhythmically syncopated from each other to give the effect of rolling waves. In particular, the two altos spend the first minute playing mostly low G and A in 8th notes, 16ths, triplets, quarter-note triplets, and never the two in the same rhythm. While these parts are playable, with enough concentration, rhythmic coordination will be tricky. A conductor might almost be needed.

I was least taken with “The Surfers” where Haverkate introduces syncopation in the lower voices, but the effect of this is blurred out by long notes in the higher voices. “The Beach Party” is pure fun, with the top voices singing a melody over the rhythm figures in the lower voices. Heavily syncopated, this section may pose a reading challenge, but ultimately the result makes perfect sense.

Overall, I found this piece a fresh breeze in the contemporary recorder repertoire. Recommended for high intermediate ensembles. ❁

Victor Eijkhout resides in Austin, TX. A multi-instrumentalist and composer, Eijkhout has two titles in the ARS Members' Library Editions. His other compositions can be found at eijkhout.net and you can support his work through patreon.com/FluteCore. See and hear samples of some of the music that Eijkhout reviews posted at youtube.com/americanrecordermag.



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Recordings

Musical Time Travels

01 **Adriana: Her Portrait, Her Life, Her Music**

Thiemo Wind and Erik Bosgraaf bring the music of a 17th-century Dutch female recorder player to life in a book and CD

02 **Concertos & Suite for Recorder and Strings**

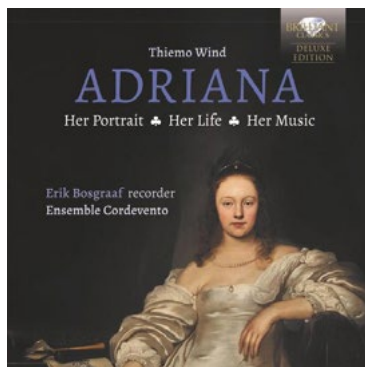
Renowned French player Hugo Reyne presents his own arrangements for recorder and strings of music by J.S. Bach



REVIEWED BY TOM BICKLEY

AR Recording
Reviews Editor
Tom Bickley is a
multi-instrumentalist/

composer/teacher in Berkeley, CA. He grew up in Houston, TX; studied in Washington, D.C. (recorder with Scott Reiss, musicology with Ruth Steiner, and listening/composition with Pauline Oliveros); and came to California as a composer-in-residence at Mills College. A frequent workshop faculty member and leader at chapter meetings, he teaches recorder at the Bay Area Center for Waldorf Teacher Training; and Deep Listening for Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. A retired academic librarian, Tom performs with Three Trapped Tigers (with recorder player David Barnett), Gusty Winds May Exist (with shakuhachi player Nancy Beckman), and Doug Van Nort's Electro-Acoustic Orchestra, and he directs the Cornelius Cardew Choir.



01

Adriana: Her Portrait, Her Life, Her Music

If you have ever enjoyed performing or practicing or listening to music from Jacob van Eyck's 17th-century collection *Der Fluyten Lust-hof* (The Flutist's Pleasure Garden), Thiemo Wind and Erik Bosgraaf's book and CD *Adriana: Her Portrait, Her Life, Her Music* is for you. In the 128 pages and 31 CD tracks we come to understand a great deal about the musical life of the Dutch Republic in the 17th century. The book is rather like a miniature coffee-table book, not that it lacks substance, but rather that I can imagine it in a much larger format. The publication is beautifully designed, with meaningful illustrations, and readable

text, blossoming from Wind's work as a music journalist and musicologist researching van Eyck's world, and Bosgraaf's skill in programming and performing music of this period.

The narrative of the life of recorder and gamba virtuoso Adriana van den Bergh reads as a historical drama. Familiar figures from music history such as van Eyck, Paulus Mattheijsz and Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck figure into the story as do the varying social and economic fortunes of the merchant classes of the Dutch Republic. The recorder and related music publications feature in 50 plus full color illustrations that build up a captivating image of Amsterdam of that time. When this publication arrived in early 2024, given the recent most untimely death of recorder maker Adriana Breukink, I glanced at the title and immediately thought of her. It is interesting also to read about this young 17th-century woman virtuoso in light of both the misogyny in classical music over the centuries and the remarkable number of superb women professional recorder players active in our day.

The music on the companion recording was selected by Bosgraaf to illustrate both Wind's text and the musical life of 17th-century Amsterdam. The connections between Dutch and Italian music of the time become quite evident. Thiemo Wind provides a very useful guide to each piece in his notes. Bosgraaf brings the excellent technique and musicality to these recordings that we expect from him. He plays on all but three tracks, and on four pieces is joined by his former student, recorder player Wei Hung. Their playing in Uccellini's *Aria Quinta sopra la Bergamasca* (track 30) is especially delightful. I really like the placement of the instruments in the stereo field, and the virtual front-row seat provided to the listener thereby. Details on all the instruments used and the personnel for each piece

add to the value of the book. The music is available via download and streaming services, but the benefit of reading the book makes the purchase of the print and CD edition the optimal choice. ✨

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Adriana: Her Portrait, Her Life, Her Music. Book by Thiemo Wind, CD by Erik Bosgraaf, recorder with Ensemble Cordevento (Anna Dmitrieva, violin; Wei Hung, recorder; Izhar Elias, baroque and renaissance guitar; Robert Smith, viola da gamba, cello; Liza Solovey, theorbo; Alessandro Pianu, harpsichord). 2024. Book, 128 pp. with 1 CD, 85:26. approx. \$35 Brilliant Classics 97188.

brilliantclassics.com/articles/a/adriana-her-portrait-her-life-her-music (includes links to album via streaming and download services). Promotional video available at youtu.be/xtAl-OQnk2Q?si=XxeOMMfjvTdTS32h Album streamable via youtube.com/watch?v=rLRPEkOUJJ4



02

J.S. Bach, Concertos & Suite for Recorder and Strings

In the Discogs database I see entries for 43 albums by Hugo Reyne, among them three (including this one) of the music of J.S. Bach. In this release, *Concertos & Suite for Recorder and Strings*, Reyne adapts five works by Bach to create works for solo

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recorder and string orchestra. Given the amount of 17th- and 18th-century music specifically for recorder, one might ask, what is accomplished by making these arrangements? The recording and Reyne's commentary in the CD booklet provide compelling responses.

The arrangements are skillfully done and the scores to be arranged were very well chosen. The playing from soloist and ensemble is bright and engaging. In his notes, Reyne articulates his rationale for choosing these particular works to arrange. He notes the precedence in Bach's own work of reusing thematic material. The source material for these works are Harpsichord Concerto BWV 1056 and Sinfonia of Cantata BWV 156 (adapted as Concerto in C minor, tracks 1-3), Harpsichord Concerto BWV 1053 in E major, Sinfonia and Aria of Cantata BWV 169 and Sinfonia of Cantata BWV 49 (as Concerto in C major tracks 4-6), Sinfonia and Aria of Cantata BWV 209 (as Concerto in C minor tracks 7-9), Suite BWV 1067 in B minor (as Suite in C minor tracks 10-16), and a single movement from Harpsichord Concerto BWV 1055 in A major (as Larghetto in E minor track 17). Reyne chooses to adapt the scores so that the solo recorder parts are playable on either an alto in F or in G, following the practice of Bach's original recorder parts for those instruments.

A related approach to arranging Bach works as recorder concertos can be found in two releases by Erik Bosgraaf (*J.S. Bach: Concertos for Recorder* Brilliant Classics 90012; and Vol. 2 Brilliant Classics 96394, the latter reviewed in *AR* Spring 2023).

Reyne's recordings merit careful attention and yield satisfying listening. The sound engineering by Jérôme Vidaller at the chapel of the Collège Notre-Dame de Bourgenay in Vendée, France provides a balanced stereo

image of the ensemble with the recorder in the foreground. Though I wish this recording were available via streaming and distribution services, for the many of us who enjoy Reyne's work, ordering this CD directly from him is well worth it. ✨

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

J.S. Bach Concertos & Suite for Recorder and Strings. Hugo Reyne, recorder with Les Musiciens du Soleil. 2024. 1 CD, 72:43. HugoVox 004. CD available exclusively by ordering from Hugo Reyne (hugovox@orange.fr) 15,00 € [approx \$15.00] + postage).



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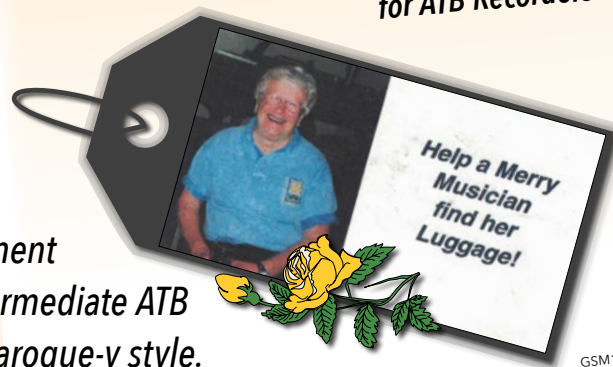
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Book

Could a woman from the Bassano family of recorder makers and players have written Shakespeare's plays? In this historical novel, Jodi Picoult explores the life of Emilia Bassano, the first published female poet in England.

By Any Other Name

by Jodi Picoult



New York: Ballantine Books. ISBN 978-0593497210, 2024. 544 pages with four plates. Hardcover \$20-40, eBook \$14.99.

jodipicoult.com/jodi-picoult-books.html

REVIEWED BY:

Gail Nickless

Controversy has swirled for centuries around whether the celebrated plays and sonnets could have been written by someone other than William Shakespeare (1564–1616)

– son of a glovemaker, and likely uneducated and untraveled. Even in his lifetime, authorship of his plays was questioned.

In Elizabethan England plays were commodities – sold, then modified by any playwright as a company's actors changed; or written collaboratively. Shakespeare was rarely known to work with other authors. When he died, he left no unfinished writings (unlike contemporaries, whose last works were finished by colleagues). He was buried in Stratford, rather than in Westminster Abbey with other lauded authors like Chaucer. Various theories have arisen, especially in the 1800s:

- Instead of dying in 1593, Christopher Marlowe secretly wrote Shakespeare's plays.
- Well-known men, and a few women including Queen Elizabeth I, used Shakespeare to sell writings for which they couldn't publicly claim credit due to their social standing or gender.
- The Earl of Oxford oversaw a group of noble playwrights writing plays that were then brokered by Shakespeare.

In *Shakespeare's Dark Lady*, John Hudson hypothesized that Shakespeare's output was written by Emilia Bassano (1569–1645), daughter of Baptiste Bassano of the famous family of Italian recorder makers who were court musicians in England, and the first published female poet in England in 1611. David Lasocki interrogated Hudson's theory in an article in *AR* Winter 2015. In the 2024 novel reviewed here, Jodi Picoult builds a story around Hudson's theory, Lasocki's writings and what is known of Emilia's life.

Picoult employs a popular device where simultaneous narratives connect a modern person with the past – perhaps to an item or event; or, as here, to a relative. Among many parallels, Emilia and her descendant are both Jewish female playwrights who struggle to have their voices heard in a predominantly male world. Picoult's skill is to spin a credible story, and leave to her readers to navigate between her creative speculation and verifiable facts about her subject.

As a ward of the Countess of Kent, Emilia is educated as males were at the time – languages, reading, writing, dancing – as preparation to serve in an aristocratic household. Music training was unnecessary; she already played recorder from age 3.

After the Countess remarries, Emilia lives in the household of the Countess's brother, the ambassador to Denmark. She is trained as a courtesan – in Picoult's novel, a deal negotiated by her cousin Jeronimo in exchange for money. She becomes consort to Baron Hunsdon (1526–96), the Lord Chamberlain who oversees England's theater. Picoult suggests that Emilia is able to read scripts sent for Hunsdon's approval, and to meet many people at court, like Christopher Marlowe. Only nobility-adjacent, she and Marlowe develop a close friendship around discussions of writing.

He helps her convince Shakespeare to front her works. Emilia seeks discretion, and tells Shakespeare, “You wish for everyone to know your name; I wish for no one to know mine.” But the discretion required of a courtesan does not include pregnancy. With child after a decade with Hunsdon, she is married off to a musician cousin – again for a price.

Emilia’s life is hard; her husband Alphonso Bassano squanders money. She sells herbs, brews ale, she tutors, and continues selling plays and sonnets to Shakespeare. When Alphonso dies, she studies law to petition for the income from his hay patent. She runs a school for daughters of families with limited income. Her money struggles end when she dies in 1645.

The modern-day plot centers on Melina, a promising student playwright at Bard College (of course), whose confidence is shattered when her entry in a theater festival is excoriated as reflecting excessive female emotion.

Melina moves to New York City with her college friend Andre, a Black gay playwright. They struggle to submit plays for production, getting by with day jobs in offices or as nannies.

Melina discovers her Elizabethan ancestor, Emilia Bassano. Research convinces her that Emilia might also have been a playwright. She writes a play about Emilia and Shakespeare which triggers Andre to comment, “Your play isn’t about history. What happened to Emilia is still happening, every day.”

Using the name Mel, Andre surreptitiously submits Melina’s script to a theater competition. It is a finalist, but its author is assumed to be male. Melina intends to step up as the play’s female author – but the festival director thinks Andre is Mel. The situation is further complicated when the judge, the theater critic from her Bard failure, chooses the play to be produced.

Melina begs Andre to continue posing as Mel in order to see her play staged.

She defends her premise that Emilia wrote Shakespeare’s plays: “When [Elizabethan audiences] saw a play with the name Shakespeare on it, it was an inside joke. But over four hundred years later, we’ve forgotten the punch line.”

Picoult’s curiosity about who wrote Shakespeare’s plays arose when she was an English major in the 1980s. The author of 29 novels with a reputation for accurate background research, she did her homework on Elizabethan life, as well as music and theater – then and now.

The historical characters speak mostly in modern English, with occasional text adapted from Shakespeare.

Emilia’s story is double the length of Melina’s, so Picoult’s focus is on the past. Could you read only the chapters on Emilia, possibly of most interest to recorder players? Yes, but you would miss larger themes about marginalized populations and the arts, plus skillful parallels between the modern and historical storylines.

Are Picoult’s books only for females? Her website says that 49% of readers who write to her are male.

I’d recommend this novel to anyone, but particularly to those interested in historical fiction, theater and music – especially the recorder. The book’s thought-provoking connections underscore the possibility that Emilia Bassano wrote at least some of the Shakespeare canon. Perhaps future examinations of data will provide more evidence, one way or the other. ✨

Gail Nickless served as AR editor from 2002 until her retirement in 2024, having begun working for the ARS as its executive director in 1994. She reads a lot, and plays music with the Rio Grande Recorders (Las Cruces, NM). Continuing as music and book reviews editor for AR, she invites others to participate in that endeavor. Contact her with genres you are interested in playing/reading, and about which you could report at ARmusicreviews@gmail.com.

RESOURCES AND LINKS OF INTEREST

- David Lasocki, “The Bassano Family, the Recorder and the Writer known as Shakespeare” americanrecorder.org/docs/ARwinter15body.pdf
- For more on the Bassano family, see D. Lasocki with Roger Prior, *The Bassanos: Venetian Musicians and Instrument makers in England, 1531–1665* (1995); available at instantharmony.net
- John Hudson, *Shakespeare’s Dark Lady: Amelia Bassano Lanier the woman behind Shakespeare’s plays?* Gloucestershire, [U.K.]: Amberley Publishing, 2014.
- Online discussions of *By Any Other Name* can be found at penguin.co.uk/articles/2024/07/jodi-picoult-interview-by-any-other-name-shakespeare-emilia-bassano; kwit.org/podcast/first-fifty/2024-08-21/standing-on-their-shoulders-a-conversation-with-jodi-picoult
- For more on speculative theories about Shakespeare, search “Shakespeare authorship question” “Dark Lady Shakespeare” and “Emilia Bassano Lanier” at en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shakespeare_authorship_question; [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dark_Lady_\(Shakespeare\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dark_Lady_(Shakespeare)); en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emilia_Lanier

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AMERICAN RECORDER (ISSN 0003-0724) is published 4 times a year: February (Spring), May (Summer), August (Fall), November (Winter), by American Recorder Society, Inc., 3205 Halcott Ln, Charlotte, NC 28269-9709. Periodicals Postage Paid at Charlotte, NC, and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to American Recorder Society, PO Box 480054, Charlotte, NC 28269-5300. TEL: 704-509-1422 | TOLLFREE: 1-844-509-1422 | FAX: 1-866-773-1538 ARS.Recorder@AmericanRecorder.org | <https://AmericanRecorder.org> Copyright©2024 American Recorder Society, Inc.

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