

AMERICAN RECORDER

Berkeley Festival 2018 Double Coverage

June 3-10 marked the **2018 Berkeley Festival and Exhibition (BFX)**, www.berkeleymusicfestival.org, at various venues of Berkeley, CA, and with a theme of “reimagining, reinventing, redefining early music.” BFX is now completely an arm of longtime partner, the **San Francisco Early Music Society (SFEMS)**, which sponsors year-round concert and workshop events.

BFX seems to be rising from the ashes of transition. A 2016 fire also literally reduced to ashes part of First Congregational Church, which had become the center for BFX after it moved from facilities on the University of California-Berkeley campus, where the festival was founded. It was conceived as a summer event, by then-director of Cal Performances (Cal Perfs) **Robert Cole**, now retired from Cal Perfs and as of this Festival completely retired from his BFX activities. From 1990 on, it has been held in even-numbered years between occurrences of the biennial Boston (MA) Early Music Festival (BEMF, celebrating its 20th biennial festival in June 2019).

The biennial festival started as a component of a year-round schedule of large-scale events like operas and dance company productions taking place in the campus’s Zellerbach Hall—with some of those large-scale events happening in the summers of the early BFX years, along with recitals occurring in the acoustically-satisfying Hertz Hall. Recorder superstars were regularly booked to play in Hertz Hall during BFX: Marion Verbruggen (a particular favorite), Dan Laurin, the Flanders Recorder Quartet, Piffaro, Il Giardino Armonico, and others.

Rounding out the offerings were an exhibition and auxiliary events like master classes in other campus classrooms, plus Fringe events in the many nearby churches. While these daytime events were sparser in BFX’s early years than the fullness of the BEMF schedules then, the daytime activity level increased—producing a vibrant Fringe, mostly due to efforts of festival partners (like SFEMS, and the ARS and other instrument-related groups).

The early BFX mainstage events were a little edgier than those at BEMF. They were early music, but with a twist: operas staged with the modern Mark Morris Dance Group, or a dressage event featuring costumed horses and riders, with music played by louds at an outdoor arena. The Festival experienced a downturn as costs to use campus rooms rose, forcing all BFX events (main, Fringe and exhibition) to move off-campus to venues like First Congregational Church. The edge was smoothed slightly, while larger-scale productions and international artists were put on hold.

After the shift to First Congregational, **Early Music America (EMA)** spearheaded the exhibition, also bringing its own high-profile events to Berkeley—like a 2004 national conference entitled “The Future of Early Music in America” and its multi-day Young Performers Festival (begun in 2011 at BEMF, and alternating yearly at BFX and BEMF until May 2018, when it moved to the Bloomington Early Music Festival in conjunction with Indiana University).

Service organizations like the ARS have remained steady partners over the years, offering master classes, panel discussions and other information-sharing events, or performances. 2018 was no different in terms of Fringe events and collaboration, now with SFEMS at the helm.

With parts of First Congregational still charred, SFEMS took the free 2018 BFX exhibition, held June 7-9, down the block to First Presbyterian Church. The ARS had a busy table there, manned by Administrative Director **Susan Burns**.

By that mid-week exhibition opening, BFX events were well under way. In fact, several significant recorder Fringe events occurred very early in the week.



GAIL NICKLESS, EDITOR

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Early Days at BFX 2018

Also at First Presbyterian, on June 2 (a day before BFX was officially underway on Sunday, June 3), the **Barbary Coast Recorder Orchestra** (BCRO) “jump-started” the Fringe Festival, on which it has become a favorite recurring event. Led by **Frances Feldon** and **Greta Haug-Hryciw** with guest conductor-composer **Tom Bickley**, BCRO repeated its March “Harmony out of Chaos” program, a mix of old and new works both composed and arranged for recorder orchestra (see the [Summer ARS Newsletter](#)).

Some features of the group and their work bear repeating from the Spring article. BCRO operates as an outreach arm of **Voices of Music (VOM)** and provides a showcase for recorder players with a range of skills and experience. Preparation for their annual concerts begins in September and concludes with a spring concert, repeated at the Fringe in BFX years. The format, conductors and repertoire have been successful for the players and delightful for their audiences.

VOM also supports another outreach activity, the **East Bay Junior Recorder Society**, which offered its 20th-anniversary concert on June 3 at the Berkeley Art Museum & Pacific Film Archive (BAMPFA), a concert also previewed in the [Summer AR](#). Directed by **Louise Carslake** and **Hanneke van Proosdij**, the young musicians ages 7-18 play ensemble music that could be the envy of recorderists with years of experience.

During the week, BAMPFA also presented other concerts as well as its own festival of early music-related movies, <https://bampfa.org/program/early-music-film-2018>—curated by the very busy VOM directors **David Tayler** and **Hanneke van Proosdij**, both active in recorder circles.

Later on June 3 was a performance by **Three Trapped Tigers (TTT)**, the duo of **David Barnett** and **Tom Bickley** (*l to r, photo below left*). For this concert at Trinity Chapel—played to a full house drawn from among many members of



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the Bay Area’s wide-ranging early music scene, amateur to professional—they were joined by **Greta Haug-Hryciw** for two pieces on a program of mostly contemporary music, some with extended techniques, mixed with very old music—all loosely called “Looped Local Roads: an afternoon of pre-modern music for post modern ears and vice versa.”

Among the selections that were decidedly pre-modern were three final pieces, by Francesco Landini, whose music might be thought of as avant garde for the Middle Ages. These early works were played on Medieval-style recorders made by Bob Marvin.

The juxtaposition of modern avant garde (such as the very rarely heard *Serenade for Three Recorders* by Lou Harrison) with very early cutting edge music was an intriguing contrast. Mixed in were selections that cleared the sonic palate—for instance, songs by Thomas Morley from his *Plaine and Easy Introduction to Practicall Music* (as at <https://tigergarage.org/showcase>).

On this event, as well as on the ARS Great Recorder Relay later during BFX, Bickley sometimes played a Helder tenor, which caught the attention of some audience members who asked about it afterwards. Articulations by all three performers varied from crisp to soft, but were always very precise—requiring a subtle coordination among the players.

It’s always interesting to observe that professionals, like their amateur counterpoints, do things like have a coughing spell while performing, or make a bad start that results in beginning again. Both of these happened on the TTT recital (as well as to others on the **ARS Great Recorder Relay**). What’s instructive to amateurs and audiences in general is to see how the communication among professional players lets them get past minor mishaps—often so quietly and matter-of-factly that listeners are barely aware of any effect.

Moving on to June 4, **Albany Consort** offered “Bach: Brandenburg Concerto 3 with additions”—a pastiche concert with a Bach cantata movement substituted for the less complete middle movement of the Brandenburg. This also gave a chance to add winds (**Lindsay McIntosh**’s oboe and **Marion Rubenstein** on recorder) to J.S. Bach’s *Brandenburg Concerto No. 3*, normally for harpsichord and strings—here also with wind parts in the outer movements, adapting the work in a way that Bach might also have done himself. The entire concert is at www.youtube.com/watch?v=iscSCIy2Ayg. After the adapted Brandenburg, at about 24:30, is Telemann’s *Tafelmusik No. 2* quartet, frequently played on various winds including recorders (here with two violins, bassoon and continuo).

Also on June 4, the **Virtu Ensemble** presented “Mad About You”—a concert of “Mad Songs and Theater Music from Restoration England,” artful arrangements of works by Henry Purcell and John Eccles. Virtu (www.virtuensemble.org) consists of **Angelique Zuluaga**, soprano; **Claudia Gantivar**, recorders; **Alisa Rata Stutzbach**, viola; **Maria Bordsky**, harpsichord; and guest **Laura Rubenstein-Salzedo**, violin.

The ensemble produced a very full sound that was perfect for diminutive Trinity Chapel. With one to a part, all of the lines were very clear, well-balanced and played with great enthusiasm; the singing was just right for the intimate venue.

While songs were the main part of the program, there were also instrumental pieces deftly arranged by members of the ensemble. The Restoration repertoire performed was perhaps the most popular entertainment in the newly re-opened theaters of London in the 1660s. The semi-operas featured very dramatic music with texts to match, often based on Shakespeare and other classics of literature.

Next up, **Calexstone’s** “The Lady and the Falcon” ranked certainly among the most popular of BFX Fringe events. Though the Berkeley Piano Club was hardly the epicenter of the Festival and is almost hidden away, all of the seats were taken, with others standing or sitting on the floor.

The core group are multiply talented recorderists **Letitia Berlin** and **Frances Blaker**, with **Shira Kammen** and **Allison Zelles Lloyd**, and guests **Andrea Fullington** and **Temmo Korishelli**. Calexstone (<http://calextone.com>) is named for the nymph and hunting partner of Artemis, Callisto; the group has been entertaining loyal fans for about five years.

Calexstone’s program of vocal and instrumental German music of the 15th and 16th centuries featured instruments including recorders, douçaine, psaltery, hammered dulcimer,

vielle and harp. Selections were by Ludwig Senfl, Oswald von Wolkenstein and anonymous composers. Songs were mostly in German, one in Latin and one particularly lusty song in English with all four vocalists.

All of the playing was energetic and focused, and the singing expressive, conveying fully the meaning of the words. Perhaps the most impressive was Wolkenstein’s *Der Mai*, full of curious and even silly bird calls.

This was great entertainment, bringing life to well-loved Medieval music, featuring masterful performers who know how to connect with their audience.

June 6 at BFX 2018

Out-of-towners stepping off the airplane on June 6 would have been able to hit the floor running. An 11 a.m. Festival event of 18th-century French chamber music allowed the young members of **Juilliard415** to shine.

About 80 fans, some followers of a couple of the conservatory students who call the Bay Area home, gave rousing applause throughout—from the opening notes of the charming *Premier Quatuor in D major, TWV43:D3*, of G.P. Telemann, featuring the Baroque flute artistry of **Berhanne Walker** with violinist **Alana Youssefian**, cellist **Ana Kim**, and the continuo of **Francis Yun**, harpsichord, and **Adam Cockerham**, theorbo. In the course of various pieces, several often taken up by recorder players (including a work from the *Concerts Royaux* of François Couperin and from Jean-Philippe Rameau’s *Pieces de clarveçin en concert*), it became obvious that the “415” in this select group’s name represents how seriously they take pitch. They often played unison themes as one big instrument rather than multiple ones.

Audience members at Juilliard415 were invited (in an announcement by Festival founder **Robert Cole**) to the **EMA reception** following. In years of attending BFX events, it’s rare to



Karin Brookes (in yellow) greets visitors to the EMA table, next to the ARS table in the Exhibition

encounter an unvisited venue—but St. Mark’s has a lovely garden room, hidden away with a patio, where a number of concert attenders gathered for snacks. Visiting with the crowd were recently-hired EMA executive director **Karin Brookes** and a number of SFEMS Board members (including SFEMS president **Joyce Johnson Hamilton**, mostly a cornetto and brass player, but who confessed to taking recorder lessons).

Just around the corner was the next Fringe event, featuring **Bertamo Trio** members **Letitia Berlin**, recorder; **Yuko Tanaka**, harpsichord; and **David Morris**, viola da gamba. The trio (<http://bertamo.com>) is sponsored by InterMusicSF, a non-profit dedicated to presenting small-ensemble music. The three musicians have been performing together as Bertamo since 2010 in the Bay Area and beyond, where this well-vinted trio has a well-established presence, offering programs of Baroque music specially arranged and expertly performed.

***In the Exhibition:
Bill Stewart (l) and
Greta Haug-Hryciw
at the table for
Lazar's Early Music***

“Odd Lots: Music by Marais, J.S. Bach, Frescobaldi, Ortiz, and Hudson” is Bertamo’s program of favorite works that just needed to be heard, but didn’t quite fit into any of their other programs. The printed program for the 2 p.m. event at Trinity Chapel was cleverly designed and worded to resemble the brochure for an auction of very fine wines, perhaps foreshadowing the vintages about to be opened. Cheers!

The sparkling start was Marin Marais’s *La Sonnerie de Ste. Geneviève du Mont*, a fresh reading of the *Bells of St. Geneviève* ground with alto recorder instead of the usual violin. The contrasts of dynamics and textures made for a very refreshing performance.

The three-part Ricercare from Bach’s *Musical Offering* began with Berlin on recorder, deftly setting the mood for an artful tapestry woven with judiciously applied ornaments suited to the instruments. Three miniatures presented together—a dance suite by Hudson, a recercada by Ortiz and a canzona by Frescobaldi—gave each trio member a star turn.

The concert concluded with a demanding trio sonata by Telemann, TWV42:g11, whose four movements in a variety of styles brought down the wine auction hammer. Bertamo Trio is a very polished ensemble whose forte is arranging Baroque music that particularly features the recorder as a virtuoso instrument.

In the late afternoon on June 6, again at Trinity Chapel, more Telemann was to come, plus more Rameau and J.S. Bach, with an ensemble specifically formed to play this late Baroque chamber repertoire—the **Paris Quartet**: **Janet See**, transverse flute; **Lisa Weiss**, violin; **Katherine Heater**, harpsichord; and **Peter Hallifax**, bass viol. Opening the program was the sixth of Telemann’s *Nouveaux Quatours*, his famous *Paris*

Peter Fisher of Briarbird Consort (center) flanked by audience members including Glen Shannon (right)



Quartet in E minor (1738). The initial five movements were played at first, in very demanding passages for both flute and violin. The performance was bookended, with the celebrated *chaconne* from this Paris quartet ending the event—a dramatic way to build a delightful program to its close.

In between, the *Troisième Concert* by Rameau (1741) presented three movements that were at once flamboyant and delicate. The flute and gamba dominated the second movement, a Rondeau with a range of moods and challenging rhythms. The concluding Tambourins had fiery solo passages for all players.

Next Bach’s *Trio Sonata, BWV525*, was offered by flute, violin and viol. Though originally for organ, all of the sonatas in BWV525-530 are very effective in chamber music adaptations (for flute or recorder, depending on key). Passages that are daunting on keyboard still require skill on solo instruments, very well played here.



Who could resist a composer smackdown?

Who could resist a composer smackdown—and at the picturesque and historical Berkeley City Club? **Briarbird Consort** put Telemann and J.S. Bach head to head, playing representative works in the same key by each contender, back to back. This “Battle of the Century” (the 18th century, that is) featured **Peter Fisher**, Baroque flute (playing a Rod Cameron instrument after a 1740 original by Rottenburgh); **Paul Hale**, Baroque cello; and **Nina Bailey**, harpsichord. They offered an E minor pair: Bach’s sonata BWV1034, and Telemann’s solo TWV41:d2—the latter from a set that is not well-known but that creates a cosmopolitan “taste” from French, Italian and Polish elements. Later the consort offered a daunting E major pair (BWV1035 and TWV41:d10).

After each pair came an aria with nice interplay among members of the full consort, now including soprano **Kaneez Munjee**: with the first set, Telemann’s “Ich zweifle nicht” from *Harmonischer Gottesdienst*, and concluding after the E major pair with “Seele, deine Spezereien” from Bach’s *Easter Oratorio*, BWV249.

The winner? The crowd went wild for the Telemann E major solo, with its melodious echoes, sonorous phrase endings and concluding arpeggiated *Spirituoso*. Asked his overall opinion afterwards, Fisher also thought Telemann went the distance—at least in this match. (Recorder players, take note: Telemann may give you many satisfying musical moments—plus those requisite places to breathe—if Bach’s clever extended phrases tax your technique.) It was a nice win for Telemann, in the 250th anniversary of the year of his death.

A full house of eager audience members attended the evening Festival event: **Dark Horse Consort**’s “The Sound of St. Mark’s” concert. The ensemble, named for the copper horses outside of St. Mark’s in Venice, Italy, included an additional cornettist and theorbo to expand the usual core group of 8-10 musicians (**Kiri Tollaksen** and **Alexandra Opsahl**, cornetto; **Robert Mealy** and **Julie Andrijeski**, violin; **Greg Ingles**, **Liza Malamut**, **Erik Schmalz** and **Mack Ramsey**, sackbut; **John Lenti**, theorbo; and **Ian Pritchard**, keyboard).

Surely no one missed the appropriateness of this fine ensemble performing this program in the 1902 Mission Revival-style church with such a name—St. Mark’s Episcopal Church in Berkeley. The acoustics, fairly spare décor, and brilliant sound of violins, cornetti, sackbuts, organ/harpsichord and theorbo combined for an engaging performance of music by Giovanni Gabrieli and his colleagues, Giovanni Picchi and Dario Castello.

The early-17th-century repertory has a remarkably uniform sound (for instance, commonly recurring rhythmic figures) to which the ensemble brought variety via subtle

timbral changes, choices of numbers of instruments and spatial placement—good ideas for any group to embrace. The repertory, familiar to many via recordings and performances by modern brass quintet (two trumpets, horn, trombone and bass trombone), was brought to life by the greater range of tone colors of these early instruments.

Expressive playing from everyone in the group delighted the audience, who gave a well-earned standing ovation. You can hear a slightly different version of the Dark Horse Consort play Gabrieli’s *Canzon septimi toni* at <https://youtu.be/yB96NymHfLQ>.

Anyone still awake at the end of a busy day of perhaps seven concerts? If so, it’s off to a local gathering spot, **The Musical Offering Café**, for a late-night snack and a chance to hear Bicinia: 12 duets from *Cantiones Duarum Vocum* by Orlando de Lassus, for voice and Renaissance flute by **The Runaways**: **Melike Yersiz**, alto; **Tanmoy Laskar**, flute and baritone. (You don’t have to study gamma rays and celestial wonders, like Laskar does when he’s not making music, to play these yourself; arrangements adaptable to recorders are at <https://imslp.org/wiki/Category:Bicinia>.)

BFX centerpiece: Purcell’s Dido and Æneas
Festivals often present opportunities to delve into what moves us and perplexes us in the music being heard. The BFX centerpiece for 2018, a production of Henry Purcell’s *Dido and Æneas*, was demystified in a June 7 mid-morning multimedia lecture on both music and text, presented by musicologist **John Prescott** and literary scholar **Nicholas Jones** (also a singer and multi-instrumentalist who plays in several Bay Area recorder groups). In a comfortable tag-team approach, the two put *Dido and Æneas* in historical context, with its regal roots in the French exile of British monarch Charles II.

There are few fully-sung English operas, of which *Dido and Æneas* is one—also John Blow’s *Venus and Adonis*, from which an example was played showing French influence and spotlighting the weeping motive played eloquently by three recorders in the final Lament in Blow’s opera.

Purcell was greatly influenced by Blow, as well as by Jean-Baptiste Lully’s *Armide*, from which another example was played with musical points made by Prescott. Jones’s historical rundown pointed out that stability under Queen Elizabeth I (after the end of the Wars of the Roses) gave rise to a burgeoning empire—modeled on the Roman empire, founded by Æneas in his epic tale. Purcell’s librettist Nahum Tate was an admirer and adapter of Shakespeare (who lived two generations earlier), although his literary versions often have happier endings; his Æneas is more inept than Virgil’s hero, and his Dido is decisive that Æneas must continue on his journey to found Rome. Tate also introduces some comic “weirdness,” in the persons of ironic witches who replace the influence of the gods on the action and on Æneas’s fate.

It was perfect timing to start the day by putting *Dido and Æneas* in context, and then that evening to hear the moving rendition of Purcell's opera by **Voices of Music (VOM)**. VOM directors **Hanneke van Proosdij** and **David Tayler** had reconstructed (over an amazingly short period of months rather than years) a performing score, since none has survived from Purcell's era. They took later SATB adaptations and revamped them to be sung by the **San Francisco Girls Chorus (SFGC)** with the VOM period orchestra. This very poised female choir comprises singers in their middle to late teens, although the chorus web site at www.sfgirlschorus.org/premierensemble also mentions groups for younger singers. SFGC members sang some roles as well as full choruses in the opera—all from memory, and with semi-staged movement. They sang equally well in lively songs of sailors or as cackling witches, or in the laments for the departed Dido. The title roles were dramatically delivered by mezzo-soprano **Mindy Ella Chu** as Dido, Queen of Carthage, and baritone **Jesse Blumberg** as Æneas.

The undertaking, utilizing the entire First Congregational Church sanctuary (which was not affected in the 2016 fire), was conducted by Van Proosdij—at times leading while seated at the harpsichord, smoothly standing to conduct the chorus, and later turning to the house as the chorus moved



... new orchestrations can be heard as a sort of essay or exploration of the original piece.

from the front area into the aisles at the end, singing “And scatter roses on her tomb” while distributing roses to some audience members. The tragic but poignant ending, a weeping *chaconne*, had been played in the session that morning by Prescott and Jones, making it easier to identify in a live and poignant performance.

The opera was only the second half of the evening's performance—the first having consisted of three works by Antonio Vivaldi plus one by Nicola Porpora. SFGC joined VOM for two of those works, conducted by the chorus director, **Valérie Sainte-Agathe**. Hear Vivaldi's *Laetatus sum, RV607*, from this concert at www.youtube.com/watch?v=vmBlnzjXRGU&feature=youtu.be. Another young performer—**Alana Youssefian**, who had been heard with Juilliard415 the previous day—was featured Baroque violin soloist, stunningly playing Vivaldi's *Concerto in D Major, RV212*. She and other young players appeared in ensembles throughout the BFX.

June 7 at BFX 2018

It was not a day only of learning about and hearing music by Purcell. In between on June 7, an orchestration of J.S. Bach's *Goldberg Variations* (1741) by **Albany Consort's** harpsichordist and cofounder **Jonathan Salzedo** comprised the program of a BFX Fringe concert. The salon at the Christian Science Organization seemed a very good setting for the ensemble of nine musicians. Violinist **Laura Rubenstein-Salzedo** took the role of leader, setting tempi and affect with aplomb.

In introducing the performance, Salzedo posed a question, which he left to the audience to answer: whether the orchestration he made is an interpretation or transcription. Though the original Goldberg keyboard work was two decades later than Bach's Brandenburg concertos, the string and continuo sound was quite happily reminiscent of the third Brandenburg, heard earlier in the week. Salzedo certainly sought to create an orchestration that emulated early-18th-century practice. He succeeded, and in doing so reminds us that new orchestrations can be heard as a sort of essay or exploration of the original piece.

The well-attended performance was received heartily. It can be heard at <https://youtu.be/yrCgC5xhbTw>.

In the Exhibition: (top) Hanneke van Proosdij (l) of Voices of Music at the Prescott Recorders table; ARS Administrative Director Susan Burns (seated) in the BFX exhibition



Rosi Terada (r) saw Cléa Galhano at the ARS table, after Rosi had received a rose near the end of the June 9 performance of Dido and Æneas

An overlapping concert gave the rare opportunity to hear five historical flutes (yes, five!) offering music from Adrian Willaert (1490-1562) to Joseph Bodin de Boismortier (1689-1755). Playing in Renaissance consorts and Baroque trios to quintets were **Lars Johannesson, Christopher Krueger, Na'ama Lion, Vicki Melin and Janet See**. Much of this fare is musical fodder for recorders, as well—see [https://imslp.org/wiki/6_Concertos_for_5_Flutes,_Op.15_\(Boismortier,_Joseph_Bodin_de\)](https://imslp.org/wiki/6_Concertos_for_5_Flutes,_Op.15_(Boismortier,_Joseph_Bodin_de)).

The audience for an early afternoon house concert sat in a beautiful garden of a home in north Berkeley to enjoy the **Canova Winds** woodwind quintet play from the partially enclosed, wisteria-covered deck of the home. The program of early-19th-century music for flute, oboe, clarinet, horn and bassoon worked well amidst the trees, leafy shrubbery, flowers and occasional cameo solos by nearby birds.

Canova Winds (**Joshua Romatowski**, flute; **Curtis Foster**, oboe; **Elise Bonhivert**, clarinet; **Anna Marsh**, bassoon; **Sadie Glass**, horn) plays period instruments appropriate to their repertory. At pauses in the program of works by Giuseppe Cambini (1746-1825) and Franz Danzi (1763-1826), the players each described and demonstrated the instruments, taking care to point out differences between the Baroque versions and their particular later-era instruments.

In the luxuriant garden setting such pleasant chamber music, played by these very proficient musicians, might have been even better with more relaxed tempos. Still, the “Afternoon Spritz” felt like an excursion into a garden entertainment of the Classical era.

It was time to return to St. Mark’s for more Paris quartets from Telemann, this time on a 4 p.m. BFX event featuring the **Philharmonia Baroque Chamber Players**—a select group of musicians formed in 2005 from the ranks of the Bay Area’s Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra for a concert at London’s Royal Opera Covent Garden. Its members (**Elizabeth Blumenstock**, violin; **Stephen Schultz**, Baroque flute; **William Skeen**, gamba; and **Jory Vinikour**, harpsichord) began and ended with two of Telemann’s remarkable Paris quartets of 1738: D major (TWV43:D3, also played by Juilliard415) and E minor (BWV43:e4), bracketing a suite in E minor and a sonata in A major (both from 1730).

Blumenstock is in the process of “retiring,” although she was very present and busy in BFX 2018 events. The excitement and energy of a player like her is hard to match in performance—yet it was satisfying to hear the contrast of the smooth lines of Schultz’s flute and the more angular violin replies, especially in the Replique movement of the E minor suite. The spinning motives and highly decorated scales in the final E minor Paris quartet spurred the audience of about 300 into requiring two bows.

At the dinner hour and later, **San Francisco Bach Choir** (SFBC) hosted its signature and very popular **Bach & Brew**, a free evening of three- and four-part drinking songs (music provided), this time at the highly regarded Fieldwork Brewery in Berkeley. A crowd of vocalists and non-vocalists alike enjoyed bawdy madrigals by Thomas Weelkes, Henry Purcell and others while sipping pints of Fieldwork’s magnificent beers. Lucky random patrons got a surprise treat when vocal warm-up patterns began, and then segued into full-fledged harmonies by experienced choristers, scattered around the room and led by SFBC artistic director **Magen Solomon**.

The day was not over: a sold-out house gathered for the 10 p.m. performance of material from Sequentia’s “Lost Songs Project.” The ensemble’s founder **Benjamin Bagby** took the role of 6th-century C.E. Roman philosopher Boethius, and **Hanna Marti** took the role of Philosophia, both of them performing as singers and harpists (using a six-string Germanic harp and a 16-string harp). **Norbert Rodenkirchen** played wooden flutes based on Medieval models.

The songs, using texts from Boethius’s *The Consolation of Philosophy* (c.524), were sung in Latin, accompanied by various combinations of harps and flutes; both are mentioned in texts from that period. Translations of the texts were projected on a screen next to the performers.

Between these “Songs of Consolation” of the 9th–11th centuries, Bagby read English translations of prose sections from Boethius’s book, connecting one song to another.

The results were thoroughly enthralling, and many in the audience sat forward in the pews at St. Mark’s, listening in rapt attention. Rodenkirchen’s flute playing echoed melodic figurations from harp and voice, sometimes supporting the voices, sometimes leading them. Sequentia received a very well-deserved standing ovation.

At <https://youtu.be/w-tALWHHUaE>, the music faculty of the University of Cambridge (home of collaborating musicologist **Sam Barrett**) has posted a 13-minute video describing the “Lost Songs Project,” particularly in relation to the material from *The Consolation of Philosophy*.

A busy weekend approaches

Things began to heat up, both weather-wise and in terms of activity, on June 8. Amazingly, those who wandered into the exhibition as it opened found **Norbert Rodenkirchen** already there, trying out flutes—despite his late night concert of June 7.

By mid-day, concert-goers had to choose among overlapping concerts, with more to come later in the day. The earliest was **Los Angeles Baroque**—a no-audition community orchestra co-directed by two professionals, **Lindsey Strand-Polyak**, violin, and **Alexa Haynes-Pilon**, 'cello and bassoon. The group, which plays at A=415, welcomes violins, violas, 'cellos, tenor and bass violas da gamba, and this time two alto recorders.

The various pieces were orchestrated to bring out the sound of the recorders, where appropriate. Sometimes, as in the opening *Sinfonia in G major* by J. G. Janitsch, the recorders doubled the violin sections. Other pieces were revamped so that one or both recorders were soloists—as in the selection from J. B. Lully's *Le bourgeois gentilhomme*, with one section played by solo violin, then repeated by solo recorders, then moving to a different *tutti* section. All of the pieces were originally written for members of the violin family, so it was satisfying to see an early music community orchestra that has found ways to incorporate gambas and recorders.

Mere minutes later, across town at the new Rendon Hall of the California Jazz Conservatory, **Flauti Diversi** transported an audience seated at club-style tables to a “Garden of Delight” in its musical tour of the Medieval Mediterranean. Ensemble members are **Frances Feldon**, recorders/Medieval flute; **Allison Zelles Lloyd**, soprano/Medieval harp; **Peter Maund**, percussion; **Sarah Michael**, qanun (a traditional Middle Eastern cousin to the psaltery or dulcimer); **David Rogers**, lute/Baroque guitar/oud.

SFEMS official **Robert Dawson** (who mentioned later in casual conversation that he had loaned the group one of its percussion instruments) welcomed the audience to one of 74 Fringe concerts he had helped to situate in various venues of Berkeley.

This was a particularly lively program, with floating melodies of shifting pulses and harmonies. At times, Feldon offered intricate and lacy fast notes in instrumental selections such as the opening *Istampitta* of late-14th-century Tuscany; or she was featured, such as in an almost jazzy traditional Egyptian *Peshrev Rast Qadim*, playing a Baroque alto that blended with the older and more exotic instruments (hear it at <https://soundcloud.com/user-213886545/ensemble-flauti-diversi-rast>). Other times Feldon provided a drone or melodic reinforcement, as soprano Lloyd assumed the role of mesmerizing storyteller, then singer, then Medieval harpist (sometimes all three).

It was satisfying to see an early music community orchestra that has found ways to incorporate gambas and recorders.

This tradition, of the kinship between Western and so-called “Arabic” music, is widely represented across the Mediterranean in the 13th and 14th centuries, in both devotional (such as in the *Cantigas de Santa Maria*) and secular musical styles. This tour of those songs and dances was represented well by the 25-year-old Flauti Diversi. Sometimes rowdy, at other times contemplative in mood, the music was always the focus of the group's joyous adaptations.

In a spacious, bright alcove of the post-modern Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAMPFA), **Roy Whelden** led a program by the **Galax Quartet** (**Elizabeth Blumenstock**, violin; **David Wilson**, violin/viola; Whelden, viola da gamba; **David Morris**, 'cello) with guests **Cheryl Ann Fulton**, harp, and **Stephen Schultz**, Baroque flute. Works had been adeptly adapted or, in the case of a brand new work, composed for them.



Frances Feldon (r) chats with an audience member after the Flauti Diversi performance

**Judith Linsenberg (right)
with Cléa Galhano at Musica Pacifica's concert**

The opening piece comprised selections from Bach's *Art of Fugue*, scored without specifying instrumentation, and fitting nicely the core of Galax Quartet (violin, viola, viola da gamba, cello). They followed this with an arrangement of early-20th-century composer Ferruccio Busoni's two-piano version of the final *contrapunctus* from that same Bach work. In both pieces, the quartet emphasized the long, lyrical lines, making the elegant counterpoint clear and engaging for the audience.

Harpist Fulton, playing a single-action pedal harp built in 1780, stepped in to play Jacques Meyer's *Sonata No. 2* (1799) for string quartet and harp. Really more of a concerto than what we think of as a sonata, this work's missing parts had been ably reconstructed.

Carl Friedrich Abel's Adagio *ma non troppo* from his *Flute Concerto in E minor* gave Baroque flutist Schultz the solo role. His fluid playing was effective, though the timbre of the flute in that particular space made for some balance challenges. As pointed out in the notes, Abel (1725-87), the inspiration for the Galax Quartet, was known for playing viola parts on viola da gamba.

The final work on the program was a newly-commissioned piece for the Galax Quartet, plus Schultz, playing Baroque flute. Composer Nancy Galbraith created a lively texture in which minimalist harmonies and playfully driving rhythmic figures evoked the movement of air referred to in the title, *Rustic Breezes*. The ranges, articulations and colors of all the instruments worked marvelously together in that room. The relatively small space, nearly full with 35 or so audience members, rang with enthusiastic applause.

A second clump of performances near the dinner hour on June 8 presented concert-goers with another decision. Tucked among viol pieces by Marin Marais were selections from his

Pieces en trio pour les flutes, violon, et dessus de viole, featuring Baroque flutists **Lars Johannesson** and **Alissa Roedig** with **Amy's Friends** (the others being **Amy Brodo** and **Roy Whelden**, viola da gamba; and **Tatiana Senderowicz**, tiorba/lute). Also enticing was the premiere of a work by well-known recorderist and composer **Frances Blaker**, *Dark and Starry Night*, written for **Na'ama Lion**, traverso, with **Lynn Tetenbaum**, viola da gamba, and **Katherine Heater**, harpsichord. Favorable reports of this new piece were heard afterwards.

Recorder players were drawn at that hour to hear **Musica Pacifica (MP)** at the Parish Hall of St. Mark's, a large upstairs room with windows flung open to cool off the enthusiastic audience of about 65. A program of German and Italian music from the 17th century featured MP founder **Judith Linsenberg**, recorder, with the group's newest addition, **Ingrid Matthews**, violin (taking the place of the retiring Elizabeth Blumenstock); **Gretchen Claassen**, cello/viola da gamba; **John Lenti**, theorbo; and guest **Peter Maund**, percussion.

Several pieces by Tarquinio Merula were well-received by an attentive audience, which had been given the challenge to discern differences among the pieces by the German and Italian composers. The shifting accents, emphasized by Maund's tambourine, in Merula's *Balleo detto Eccardo*, followed by freeform soaring runs of Linsenberg's soprano in *Sonata Prima* of Dario Castello, were audience-pleasers.



The performance ended with what Linsenberg declared to be "some of my favorite pieces"—more Merula (again on soprano recorder), his *Ballo detto Pollicio*, and the concluding *Aria Undecima sopra Caporal Simon* of Marco Uccellini, in which all MP members sang a rousing refrain about the cavalry officer Simon. Like Linsenberg, the audience liked those pieces, demanding two bows.

One hopes that a future BFX will include Musica Pacifica in a featured concert (like at a recent BEMF), as this performance was certainly a high point for recorder players—as well as string players who are followers of the intense playing of newest member Matthews. Hear more at www.youtube.com/MusicaPacificaSF.



Saturday morning at the Berkeley Festival, and recorder players and other enthusiasts were at the ARS Great Recorder Relay, here showing some of the members of Consorte Paradiso (above); Three Trapped Tigers (right); Zephyr playing low recorders (below)





Dannorial (above, l to r): Alan Paul, oboe; Daniel Soussan, recorder; Nori Hudson, violin; (below) Hotte Ayre Duo—Mary Ellen Reed, left, and Glen Shannon



Nearing the final cadence

Time for a quick Saturday breakfast at Henry's, then down the street to the **ARS Great Recorder Relay** at Trinity Chapel, with its flattering acoustics for recorders and its pleasant morning light pouring through stained glass.

It was a great start for June 9, hearing cheerful tenor runs in William Boyce's *Symphony No. 5*, played by **Consorte Paradiso: Christine Bartels, Dan Bloomberg, Pat Marion**, recorders; **Glenna Houle and Deb Soule**, violas da gamba; **Irene Beardsley**, harpsichord. The audience was quite attentive to the contrapuntal and trumpet-like motives in its later measures.

Next came a contemplative haiku for two shakuhachi, *Aki* (Autumn) by Ryōhei Hirose, adapted for recorders by **Three Trapped Tigers—David Barnett** playing alto, and **Tom Bickley** playing a Mollenhauer keyed tenor designed by Maarten Helder. The gentle pitch bends, multiphonics, diffused sounds and chiffs, interspersed with consonant resolutions, showed off the recorder's many flexible attributes to advantage.

A quick handoff was made to **Madrina Duo, Drina Brooke and Marion Rubenstein**, both playing altos on several movements from Jacques-Martin

Hotteterre's *Prèmiere Suite de Pièces, Op. 4*. Their adroit French Baroque ornaments were skillfully executed—apropos, since Hotteterre is known for his *Rudiments treatise* that outlines fingerings, trills, vibrato and articulation for winds.

Favoring lower voices of recorders, **Zephyr (Nancy C. Grant, Cindy Keune, Nancy Kesselring, Steve Teel)** played music from the 16th century to Duke Ellington jazz. Stan Davis's arrangement of *Mood Indigo* (ATTB) was especially well-played, with its swinging rhythms over a walking bass.

Another quick reset brought on the mixed trio of **Dannorial: Daniel Soussan**, recorder; **Alan Paul**, oboe and traverso; and **Nori Hudson**, violin. Three movements from James Hook's Op. 133, No. 2, gave the audience a chance to hear these timbres in charming combination—especially in the closing Allegretto's recurring motives that sounded almost like a toy winding down and being wound to start up again.

Hotte Ayre Duo (Glen Shannon and Mary Ellen Reed) first played matching Renaissance tenors for the canonic-like entries of a quasi-organ-pipe *Bicinium* (from *ShannonDuos*, Vol. 1). They then switched to matching Baroque altos for the three-movement *Canonic Sonata* (his Vol. 4), with its soaring octaves in the middle movement. Hear this and other Relay segments at www.youtube.com/americanrecordermag.



Ensemble Trecento (l to r): Beth Warren, Mark Schiffer, Greta Haug-Hryciw; (below, center) Amaranta; (bottom) Seedy Jail

Relay organizer **Greta Haug-Hryciw** next joined other members of **Ensemble Trecento** (**Mark Schiffer** and **Beth Warren**) playing Prescott Renaissance recorders on appropriately early music of the 14th century. A selection by Jacob de Senleches was a *virelai* that is an example of Medieval eye music—as suggested by its name *La Harpe de melodie*, the written music was laid out to resemble the shape of a harp with notes placed on the harp’s strings. This piece, played AAB, had melismatic upper parts over a firmly anchored bass line.



Amaranta (**Pat Marion, Christine Bartels, Dan Bloomberg, Juliette Faraco, Owen Saxton**) next offered two pieces from contemporary composers or arrangers, the group’s focus in recent years. *Vuur* (Fire) by Pieter Campo, made popular on the recent goodbye tour of the Flanders Recorder Quartet, was played with aplomb.



Two players in Amaranta stuck around for **Seedy Jail** (**Faraco** and **Bloomberg** with **Chris Flake** and **Dan Chernikoff**), playing *Vitambo vyu moyo* (*African Suite No. 4*) of Sören Sieg. Deep and sonorous chords gave way to the *moto perpetuo* syncopations of the concluding joyful Jamboree.

The final group continued the contemporary momentum with a minimalist *Giorni Dispari* (Odd Days) of Ludovico Einaudi, followed by a popular arrangement by **Greta Haug-Hryciw** of Don McLean's *Vincent*—with the starry night harmonica melody played by **Jay Kreuzer**. SDQ recorder ensemble members were Haug-Hryciw, **Nancy C. Grant** (also playing glockenspiel), Kreuzer, **Daniel Soussan**, **Beth Warren** and **Mark Schiffer**, with pianist **Joy Wu** joining them for the opening selection. The whole morning ended with Lance Eccles's frantic dance, complete with visual aids, *Pigs in Gumboots*.

Among the audience of 35-45, ebbing and flowing during the hours of the Relay, at least one patron commented on the improved playing level of many of the quasi-amateur groups.

Overlapping the Relay were several other enticing offerings, including a second performance of the BFX centerpiece, *Dido and Aeneas*; and a concert by the **Peralta Consort**, several of whom play recorders or early winds: **Kraig Williams**, **Mike Megas**, **Breene Yuen**, **Marie Park**, **Kathleen**

Thompson, **Yu-Ting Wang**, **Romola Georgia**, **Amy Hunter** and **Dylan Librande**. A quick lunch later found some Peralta Consort members in a nearby sandwich shop, preparing to hear concerts themselves for the rest of the day.



Daniel Soussan (left in photo at top right) and **Mary Ellen Reed** visit at the Relay, which was digitally recorded by **Glen Shannon** (left in photo at center right) and **Barbara Prescott**



SDQ's performance on the ARS Great Recorder Relay employed instruments from piano to harmonica and glockenspiel, plus visual aids for Pigs in Gumboots: (l to r) Daniel Soussan (also inset), Nancy C. Grant, Beth Warren, Greta Haug-Hryciw, Jay Kreuzer



(above) A light moment at the Prescott Recorders table; (below left) Greta Haug-Hryciw helps a customer at Lazar's Early Music and (right) Roy Sansom helps a Von Huene Workshop customer





Scenes from La descente d'Orphée aux enfers: left, the orchestra's wind players (also below) Alan Paul (l) and Glen Shannon, playing sopraninos just before the start of a dance in front of the orchestra; below, flutes accompany during a chorus (Barry Cowan as Orphée stands at audience left on the stage)



Sally Blaker of Sal's Opera Company (left below, and also playing viola da gamba in orchestra, right) with audience member Priscilla Winslow



player **Frances Blaker** and Baroque 'cellist **Barbara Blaker Krumdieck**). Most of the 11 instrumentalists, seven singers and five dancing phantoms in **Sal's Opera Company**

A quick trek to the California Jazz Conservatory for "All That [Baroque] Jazz" provided another opportunity to hear bassoonist **Anna Marsh** with Baroque violinist **Aaron Westman**, and keyboardist **Henry Lebedinsky**. The early afternoon also brought another overlapping Festival concert, **Cantata Collective**—"Bach Sung, Bach Played," sinfonias, dances, cantatas and arias, some featuring oboist **Marc Schachman**.

Let's put on *La descente d'Orphée aux enfers*: it started last September with an idea from Bay Area fixture and viol player **Sally Blaker** (mother of recorder

were also available during BFX, so Marc-Antoine Charpentier's chamber opera production was repeated.

While the costumes and props were decidedly created on a budget (a stuffed cloth snake bit Euridice, consigning her to the underworld), the full ensemble's moments reflected balance and musicality, and showed what can be done with the right preparation and direction. **Celeste Winant** led the singers from the stage, with the orchestra conducted by **Jonathan Salzedo**, harpsichordist (of the Albany Consort).

This story of the power of music was reflected in the performance, where its sum was greater than its parts for the 65 avid audience members in the Parish Hall of St. Mark's, with windows again thrown open against late-afternoon heat uncharacteristic of Berkeley. Recorder players **Glen Shannon** and **Alan Paul** had to round up two low-pitch sopraninos to play them nimbly in a dance segment. Doubling on flutes for the rest of the opera, the two later played a short but tender trio, Baroque flutes above bass voice, supporting Pluton's aria answering Orphée's plea for the return of his beloved.

While the late-afternoon time of day and the textual content of the Festival's final **Sequentia** performance was notably different from that of their late night concert two days prior, the



completely full house of energized listeners, and the strikingly strong execution of the music, remained constant. The singing and harp playing by **Hanna Marti** and **Benjamin Bagby** (*center and right in photo above*) were joined by **Norbert Rodenkirchen's** playing on swan- and sheep-bone flutes made by Friedrich von Huene, as well as on wooden flutes.

The program title of “Medieval songs of heroes, gods and strong women” reflects the texts from mythological epics like that of Hercules—sung by Medieval monks both as entertainment (perhaps analogous to blockbuster action movies) and for their universal themes (reflecting humans wrestling with challenges in life). All of the texts, spoken and sung, were in Latin, with translations projected onto a screen beside the stage.

The singing and playing were superb, with the beauty of Marti's voice especially standing out. In declamations of texts, particularly by Bagby, the performance was so riveting that the translations became almost unnecessary. The audience responded with affectionate laughter at long catalogs of details of Hercules's labors.

Rodenkirchen used the bone flutes in the higher register, and the wooden ones for more of an alto range. His contributions were subtle and elegantly virtuosic. This Sequentia performance, emerging also from the “Lost Songs Project,” was even stronger than their Boethius concert. The audience responded with an enthusiastic standing ovation. A sample at <https://youtu.be/TWYomGR9J9o> provides an explanation of this program (note that the

bone flute appears here: <https://youtu.be/TWYomGR9J9o?t=3m44s>). For many in the audience, this concert was another high point of a Berkeley Festival that was full of strong performances.

There was still more to come, with a concert by the **Musicians of the Valley of the Moon Festival** (<http://valleyofthemoonmusicfestival.org>) offering a BFX concert on the last evening at First Congregational Church. In her welcome to the concert, SFEMS Board president **Joyce Johnson Hamilton** described a “stretching” of the idea of early music into slightly later eras at this BFX. One could hear this in the several rendition of Paris quartets, where Telemann's scoring foreshadows the Classical period—but it was also reflected

in the Saturday evening program of 19th-century compatriots Franz Schubert and Robert Schumann.



(above) **Greta Haug-Hryciw** at Lazar's **Early Music's** table; (left) **Leslie Gold** (r) helps a customer at the **PRB Productions** table in the **Exhibition**

The first half built to a performance of a Schubert song, *Auf dem Strom, D.943*, sung dramatically by tenor **Nicholas Phan** with fortepiano accompaniment from **Eric Zivian** and with the natural horn artistry of **Sadie Glass**. Playing a 19th-century horn, Glass used flawless hand technique (even while standing to play), allowing her to play so well in tune that the lack of valves did not deter her musicality.

Cellist **Tanya Tomkins**, of the Valley of the Moon core group, also recounted how recorder icon Frans Brüggen's Orchestra of the 18th Century inspired her in the 1980s, and led her to a repertoire embracing original instruments—although for her, those instruments are now from a later time period. Perhaps that is one facet of the 2018 Berkeley Festival that will stand out among others: the connections pulled forward, even from the Middle Ages, through pieces by Telemann and Bach into a later era of historically informed performance, “reimagining, reinventing, redefining.”

Coda on June 10

There were no recorders at June 10's first event, featuring various multi-instrumentalists **David Morris**, **Susan Rode Morris**, **Shira Kammen**, **Katherine Westine** and **Phebe Craig**. This is perhaps just as well, given the outrageous hilarity of this “La Foolia, a Morning-After Concert,” purporting to be a history of Western Music from the great apes to a Handel-esque “Honolulu Chorus.” Slide whistles, however, made an appearance in some fast scale passages from a drastically

Final hours at the Exhibition:
(top right) Susan Burns is still smiling at the ARS table;
(bottom right) last chance to try recorders, these made by Ralf Netsch

abbreviated version of Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*.

Near closing for the 2018 Berkeley Festival Fringe, **Nash Baroque's** mid-day concert featured elegant traverso playing by **Vicki Melin** in a program called “The Dancing Master.” In the first half, three costumed dancers gracefully demonstrated *minuets, gavottes, bourrées, passepieds* and *chaconnes* to the music of selected arias from Bach cantatas. The second half was given over to a performance of Bach's wonderful *Ich Habe Genug*, unusually inflected more to joy than sadness by the clear tones of soprano **Jennifer Paulino** plus the resonance of the dances just seen and heard.

Hearing the dance forms reflected in his other works illustrated clearly how Bach used dance as the basis for more than just Baroque instrumental suites. Most interesting was that the flutist often played a counterpoint or descant line. When asked afterward if those were her divisions, Melin said that the line she played was always original to Bach,

but sometimes it had been labeled as violin or oboe. This makes for a wonderful tool to learn ornamentation in this type of music.

Save the dates now for the 20th biennial Boston Early Music Festival & Exhibition, June 9-16, 2019!

And check www.berkeleyfestival.org for dates of the 16th biennial Berkeley Festival in 2020!

