

Music 170A
Topics in Research and Performance
The viola da gamba

Fall 2022
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:00 p.m.–3:30 p.m.
Morrison Hall 135

David H. Miller
Office: Morrison Hall 226
Office hours: Mondays 12:00 p.m.–1:30 p.m., Tuesdays 1:00 p.m.–2:00 p.m. (playing session)
and 3:30 p.m.–5:00 p.m., or by appointment
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Course description:

The sweet and reedy sound of the viola da gamba—a 6-string bowed instrument of various sizes—permeates Renaissance and Baroque music. In this course, students will learn not only about the history of this unique instrument, but also how to play it. Course time will be split evenly between classroom sessions focused on significant repertoire and historical figures, and hands-on sessions focused on individual technique and ensemble playing. Students will have access to Berkeley's collection of instruments; previous experience with string instruments is not required.

Texts:

You are not required to purchase any texts for this course. All readings will be made available in the “Files” section of the course website, unless otherwise noted. Scores can be accessed through Google Drive:

(<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1pz6u3lu2jRCRBabPi21yV70hwCuavlsI?usp=sharing>).

Audio and video recordings can be found on the course YouTube playlist:

<https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLCjLxVmAf7Fbq5zxAsPRfRDMYyLSXUexV>.

Course structure:

With the exception of the first week of November, Tuesday classes will be playing sessions and Thursday classes will be focused on history and repertoire. That means you should come to Tuesday classes ready to play, and come to Thursday classes with your laptop/readings/notes/etc.

Outline of topics (Thursday classes):

Introducing the viola da gamba (–ca. 1685)

- September 1: What even *is* a viola da gamba?
- September 8: The consort, part I (Byrd, Gibbons, Jenkins)
- September 15: The consort, part II (Lawes, Purcell)
- September 22: Divisions, ornamentation, and improvisation (Ortiz, Simpson)
- September 29: Viols and voices, part I: consort songs (Byrd)
- October 6: Tablature and character pieces (Hume)

Further possibilities (ca. 1685–2022)

- October 13: French Baroque, part I (de Machy, Marais, Sainte-Colombe)
- October 20: French Baroque, part II (Marais)
- October 27: Viols and voices, part II: church music (Gibbons, Buxtehude)
- November 1 (Tuesday!): The viola da gamba in the music of J.S. Bach
- November 10: Galant solo and chamber music (Abel, C.P.E. Bach, Telemann)
- November 17: “Death” and rebirth

Other dates to note:

- Thursday, November 10 at 7:30 p.m. at First Congregational Church (corner of Durant and Dana in Berkeley)—Cal Performances concert, Jordi Savall and Le Concert des Nations (tickets will be provided free of charge)
- Tuesday, November 22: NO CLASS (Happy Thanksgiving!)
- Monday, December 5 at 4:00 p.m.—End of semester class concert
- Friday, December 9—Annotated bibliography project due

Attendance at the November 10 and December 5 events is mandatory; please let one of us know ASAP if you have a scheduling conflict with either event.

Course requirements and grading:

1. Attendance: 25%
2. Participation and engagement (including end-of-semester concert): 25%
3. Practice reflections (3): 15%
4. Research responses (3): 15%
5. End-of-semester annotated bibliography project: 20%

There are no exams or quizzes in this course.

Attendance:

Since a significant aspect of this course is making music together, attendance is especially important. Each student is permitted one unexcused absence over the course of the semester; additional absences will result in a deduction from your final grade.

That being said, we tend to be generous with excused absences, especially when given advance notice. *If there is a legitimate reason you cannot attend class (including but not limited to illness, mental health challenges, family commitments, job interviews, and travel for work or sports), please let me know at least a few days in advance. I will very likely grant you an excused absence, and your grade will not suffer as a result.*

Participation and engagement:

It is crucial that all of us are fully present and engaged during our time together. As such, “participation and engagement” refers not only to participating in class discussions, but also to your general level of attention during class, your willingness to fully commit to the unfamiliar modes of performances we will be engaging in, and your communication with me outside of class (e.g. emails, office hours, etc.)

Homework assignments:

There will be homework assignments, including reading, listening, a performance exercise, and/or a short written assignments, during most weeks of this course (see the end of this syllabus for week-by-week details). Written work should be submitted to bCourses *by the beginning of class on the assigned day.*

A note on writing, proofreading, and citations:

Please make every effort to ensure that your writing is clearly organized and free of typos. Before handing in any piece of writing, take a few moments to proofread what you have written. In addition, note that we will be using the Chicago Manual of Style in this course to format citations and references to musical works. For further details on this, please take a few moments to read “Music Writing Style Guide” (posted in the “Files” section of the course website) prior to completing your first writing assignment.

Technology policy:

Laptops and tablets are permitted during Thursday classes. Please do your best to use these devices only for referring to course readings and taking notes.

Disability accommodations:

Students with disabilities that affect their ability to participate fully in class or to meet all course requirements are encouraged to notify me so that appropriate accommodations can be arranged. Further information is available from the Disabled Students’ Program website at <http://dsp.berkeley.edu>.

Academic misconduct and plagiarism:

Any instance of plagiarism or other academic dishonesty will result in a referral to the Office of Student Conduct. According to the Berkeley Campus Code of Conduct, “Plagiarism includes use of intellectual material produced by another person without acknowledging its source.” Furthermore, “All persons engaged in research at the University are responsible for adhering to the highest standards of intellectual honesty and integrity in research.” This statement is available at the website on official campus policies and procedures at <http://campuspol.chance.berkeley.edu/index.cfm>, under the keyword “plagiarism.”

Homework assignments:

A few things to note:

- Assignments are subject to change and probably *will* change during some weeks; we will notify you if that is the case, but otherwise you can assume that the assignments will follow what is listed here.
- Reading and listening assignments are listed in the order in which we recommend reading/listening to them.
- Selections from *Oxford Music Online* can be accessed via the Berkeley music library website (<https://guides.lib.berkeley.edu/music>).
- Complete instructions for practice reflections and research responses can be found at the end of this document. Submit these written assignments to bCourses *by the beginning of class* on the due date.

September 1:

Listen:

- Peruse the course playlist and see what catches your ear. Come to class ready to tell us which work was your favorite, and why!

Read:

- Ian Woodfield—Sections 1 (“Structure”) and 2 (“15th-century origins”) from “Viol,” *Oxford Music Online*
- Ian Woodfield—“Posture in Viol Playing”
- Annette Otterstedt—pp. 84-89 and 141-150 from *The Viol: History of An Instrument*

September 8:

Listen:

- William Byrd—Fantasia a4 No. 1
- Orlando Gibbons—In Nomine for 4 viols
- John Jenkins—Pavan in D minor

Read:

- Ian Woodfield, assisted by Lucy Robinson—Section 4 (“England”) from “Viol,” *Oxford Music Online*
- Thurston Dart and Robert Donington—“The Origins of the In Nomine”

September 15:

Listen:

- William Lawes—Set a6 in C Major
- Henry Purcell—Fantasia Upon One Note (1680)
- Elliott Carter—*A Fantasy About Purcell's 'Fantasia Upon One Note'* (1974)
- Oliver Knussen—*...upon one note* (1995)

Read:

- Otterstedt—pp. 52-56 from *The Viol: History of An Instrument*

Write:

- Practice reflection #1 due today

September 22:

Listen:

- Diego Ortiz—Recercada primera and Recercada segunda, from *Tratado de glosas* (1553)
- Christopher Simpson—Division in E minor, from *The Division Viol* (1659)
- Francesco Rognoni—Diminutions on Palestrina's "Vestiva i colli"

Read:

- Frank Traficante—"Division," *Oxford Music Online*
- Otterstedt—pp. 130-134 from *The Viol: History of An Instrument*

September 29:

Listen:

- Byrd—"Come, pretty babe"
- Byrd—"An aged dame"
- Byrd—"My mistress had a little dog"
- Byrd—"Ye sacred muses"

Read:

- Philip Brett—Introduction to *William Byrd: Twenty consort songs for high voice*
- Mike Smith—"Whom Music's lore delighteth': words-and-music in Byrd's *Ye sacred Muses*"

Write:

- Research response #1 due today

October 6:

Listen:

- Tobias Hume—Selections from *The First Part of Ayres, French, Polish and Others* (1605):
 - “Love’s Farewell”
 - “Faine would I change that note”
 - “Tobacco”
 - “The Princes Almaine”

Read:

- Michael Rossi—“‘Muiscall Humors’: The life and music of Captain Tobias Hume, gentleman,” from *Defining Strains: The Musical Life of Scots in the Seventeenth Century*
- Frank Traficante—“Lyra viol,” *Oxford Music Online*

October 13:

Listen:

- Le Sieur De Machy—Suite in D minor, from *Pièces de Violle* (1685)—*This suite runs from the beginning of the track on the course YouTube playlist to ca. 17:35.*
- Monsieur de Sainte-Colombe—*Tombeau Les Regrets*
- Marin Marais—Chaconne in A Major, from Book V of *Pièces de viole* (1725)

Read:

- Otterstedt—pp. 75-83 and 139-141 from *The Viol: History of An Instrument*
- Mary Cyr—“Marin Marais, the basse continue and a 'different manner' of composing for the viol”

Write:

- Research response #2 due today

October 20:

Listen:

- Marais—“Tableau de l’Opération de la Taille,” from from Book V of *Pièces de viole* (1725)—*Note that there are two recordings of this piece on the course playlist, one in the original French and one in an English translation played on cello.*
- Marias—“La Sauterelle,” from Book IV of *Pièces de viole* (1717)
- Marais—“Dialogue”, from Book V of *Pièces de viole* (1725)
- Marais—“Les Voix Humaines,” from Book II of *Pièces de viole* (1701)

Read:

- Cyr—“The peasant and the grasshopper: Marin Marais and the *Pièce caractérisée*”
- James L. Franklin—“Surgery, note by note: Marin Marais’ “Tableau de l’Opération de la Taille”” (<https://hekint.org/2017/01/30/surgery-note-by-note-marin-marais-tableau-de-loperation-de-la-taille/>)

Write:

- Practice reflection #2 due today

October 27:

Listen:

- Gibbons—*This is the record of John*
- Dietrich Buxtehude—“Ad cor,” from *Membra Jesu nostri* (1680)
- Buxtehude—*Laudate, pueri, Dominum*

Read:

- David H. Miller—Commentary on *This is the record of John*, A-R Music Anthology
- Eva Linfield—pp. 163-169 of “The viol consort in Buxtehude’s vocal music: Historical context and affective meaning”—*The remainder of this article is optional.*

November 1 (Tuesday!):

Listen:

- J.S. Bach—Sonata for Viola da Gamba and Harpsichord in G Major
- Bach—First movement of Brandenburg Concerto No. 6 (1721)—*Note that the video on the course YouTube playlist contains all three movements.*
- Bach—“Komm, süßes Kreuz” from the *St. Matthew Passion* (1727)

Read:

- Jonathan Gibson—“Hearing the viola da gamba in ‘Komm, süßes Kreuz’”

Write:

- Research response #3 due today

November 10:

Listen:

- Georg Philipp Telemann—Fantasia No. 9 in C Major, from *Twelve Fantasias for Viola da Gamba Solo* (1735)—*Be sure to listen to all three movements.*
- C.P.E. Bach—First movement of Viola da Gamba Sonata in G Minor, Wq. 88, H. 510 (1759)
- Carl Friedrich Abel—Allegro in D minor

Read:

- Bettina Hoffman—pp. 288-299 from *The Viola da Gamba*

November 17:

Read:

- Peter Holman—Introduction from *Life After Death: The Viola da Gamba in Britain from Purcell to Dolmetsch*
- Ian Woodfield, assisted by Lucy Robinson—Section 8 (“The modern revival”) from “Viol,” *Oxford Music Online*

Write:

- Practice reflection #3 due today

Practice reflections:

In 2-3 paragraphs, describe your recent experiences learning to play the viol, both during our Tuesday sessions in class and during your own practice time. What have you enjoyed? What has been difficult or uncomfortable? In which areas have you improved? In which areas have you plateaued? Be as specific as possible, mentioning particular pieces, techniques, or perhaps even particular measures of music as appropriate. At the end of the reflection, set some goals for your next few weeks of practice.

Research response #1:

In 2-4 paragraphs, address the following:

- Identify any words or terms (especially musical terms) used by Smith with which you are not familiar. Look up the definition of each word and include it in your response.
- According to Smith, what makes “Ye sacred muses” such an effective piece of music? Summarize his arguments in your own words, citing specific musical examples as appropriate. Do you find his reading of the piece persuasive? Why or why not?
- Can you think of another piece of music (in any genre!) in which the links between words and music are important or significant?

Research response #2:

In 2-4 paragraphs, address the following:

- Identify any words or terms (especially musical terms) used by Cyr with which you are not familiar. Look up the definition of each word and include it in your response.
- In your own words, summarize the key points of Cyr's article. What is the "different manner" of composing referred to in the title of the article?
- Cyr's argument deals with compositional design and intent, which is to some degree unknowable in the absence of direct evidence from Marais himself. Given the absence of historical evidence, then, what kind of *musical* evidence does Cyr cite in support of her argument? Do you find it persuasive?

Research response #3:

In 2-4 paragraphs, address the following:

- Identify any words or terms (especially musical terms) used by Gibson with which you are not familiar. Look up the definition of each word and include it in your response.
- In your own words, summarize the key points of Gibson's article. What does he mean when he claims that Bach "was engaging in sophisticated genre play?" (p. 420)
- Gibson suggests that music by Marais (or music like it) may have been inspired "Komm, süßes Kreuz." Now that you've listened to music for the viol by both Marais and Bach, which do you find more appealing from the perspective of a 21st-century listener? Why?