

# Recorder Reporter

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

Chicago Chapter & the West Suburban Early Music Society

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## Chicago Chapter

For our October meeting Gail Gillespie provided a program of music by the "Lost Generation" of early Renaissance composers, between Josquin dez Prez (1450-1521) and the era of the Italian composers Orlando de Lassus and Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, who both died in 1594. We tend to think of the Italians dominating the European music scene, and they did, in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and later. Venice was the center of music composition and publishing; every court that wanted any respect had to boast of Italian composers and musicians. Musicians from around the continent moved to Italy to work and study, and sometimes changed their names to fit in, like Giovanni Coprario (John Cooper) and Michael Praetorius (Michael Schultz).

But before Italian rule, from the 1490s until the 1550s, most of the respected composers in Europe were Franco-Flemish. Sadly, much of the music of this era is rarely heard, but this is when the Baroque really begins. "The seeds of the Baroque are in this repertoire," Gail said. The genius of this music was to seek to capture the emotions of the words in the music, to look for ways to bring the harmonies close to the text, and thus to express the passions of the text. This effort laid the groundwork for opera as well. At the time, soft, gentle, or sweet words were rendered as flat notes, while sharps were used to convey meanings that were harsh.



We started with *Fuggi, fuggi cor mio* by Phillipe Verdelot (1480-1530 or 1540), an early madrigal composer in Florence, before Jacques Arcadelt. In fact Verdelot is considered to be the father of the madrigal, and he worked with Niccolo Machiavelli to produce his

comedy play *La Mandragola*. Yes, that Machiavelli. Machiavelli was well known as a poet and playwright in his time, music drawn from one of his plays. We also played *O dolce nocte*, "Oh sweet night," composed by Verdelot with Machiavelli as the lyricist.

Then we turned to *O pas si sparsi*, a piece by another celebrated madrigal writer, Constanzo Festa (1485/1490-1585), who's excellent name could be translated "Constant Party" if you have a liberal understanding of linguistics. In fact the sober Festa was one of the few Italians who sang with the Papal choir at the time, and was highly regarded and prolific composer. He created 125 counterpoints over "La Spagna" and his book of three-part madrigals survive.



Adrian Willaert (1490-1562), started out studying law, but fortunately he tired of that and spent part of his career in Venice, creating madrigals and choral works, including *Amor mi fa morire*, or "Love makes me die." Francesco de Layolle (1492-1540) provided a sacred piece, *Inter nato mulierum*, composed in honor of St. John the Baptist, the patron saint of Florence. Layolle was also an Italian composer influenced by the Franco Flemish style, but he died in a Florentine community in Lyon, France. He fled Florence after harboring conspirators in a rebellion there, and was never welcome to return.

We played a work by Jacques Arcadelt (1505-1568) as well. Perhaps the most famous work of Jacques Arcadelt is "his" *Ave Maria*, which was actually written in 1842 by Pierre-Louis-Phillipe Dietsch (1808-1865). Dietsch attributed the piece to Arcadelt in an effort to borrow some of the earlier composer's frame. But he should have

read the notes; this hymn to the Virgin is based on Arcadelt's *Nous voyons que les hommes*, which was originally about the sexual double standards of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Finally, from Jacob Clemens non Papa we played *Si par trop boire* and then a piece we are familiar with, "*Ego flos campi*" "I am the flower of the field, the lily of the valley," a work drawn from the Song of Songs.



### Coming up

For the November Meeting, Lisette continues her "Molto Espressivo" theme and leads the group in works by among others, Henry Purcell and Ludwig Senfl, as well as Glen Shannon's *Friendship Canzona*. Also, we will rehearse a selection from September's or November's meeting for the Yuletide concert. There was talk of playing the Rheinberg piece as a chapter. It is time to think about what you would like to play for December 15.

Andy Schultze leads us on March 15 with music from the French Baroque, with plans to mark the 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the collaboration between two 17<sup>th</sup> century forces of nature, composer and performer Jean-Baptiste Lully and playwright Moliere, in "*Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*." He plans to bring singers and provide dialogues from the play, and invite recorder players to read them out loud.

## The Recorder on YouTube

By Peter Beck



For the recorder player, YouTube represents a shining castle, full of marvels. The castle, alas, is surrounded by an immense moat that's filled with all sorts of crimes against music and sensibility.

Rather than warn you against specific denizens of said moat, let's pretend we've helicoptered over the obstacle and landed in the castle courtyard. Whew. Now I'll introduce you to Sarah Jeffery, the recorder player who operates the site that is the crème de la crème of YouTube recorder goodness, **Team Recorder**.

Ms. Jeffery is a young but very experienced guide to pretty much everything recorder-related. An English-born graduate of the Conservatorium van Amsterdam, she has a thriving professional solo career. Her debut album, "*Constellations*," was released in 2018. It took no more than a few moments of watching my first Team Recorder video for me to become convinced that Ms. Jeffery's sense of humor and infectious delight in the recorder (and music-making in general) was a perfect counterpoint to her talent as a performer and clarity and empathy as a teacher, and I hope you'll take a look and have the same impression.



Since its start in 2015, the Team Recorder channel has grown to 50,000 subscribers and features over 200 videos:

- **Intro:** The Handel sonatas, improvisation, the garklein, Quantz.
- **Tutorials:** the Bach Badinerie, microtones, hearing the difference between instruments at 415 Hz and 440 Hz, arranging for recorders
- **Playalongs:** Für Elise, the Telemann canonic sonata in C major, Christmas Carols, an Irish folk jig
- **Recorder Fun:** footage from a trip to Brazil, "What's in My Tour Bag?" behind the scenes at the Princess Christina competition
- **Chatty Videos:** Top 5 Renaissance Pieces, Juggling a Music Career and a Baby, Michaela Petri interview
- **Performances:** Bach trios, Steve Reich's "Vermont Counterpoint," The Royal Wind Music
- **Recorder Basics:** History of the Recorder, which method book to buy, choosing a plastic recorder



Ms. Jeffery usually posts a new video to Team Recorder once a week. “Which Recorder Should You Buy?” has notched 114,000 views, and “How to Learn ‘Flight of the Bumblebee’” has had 115,000. Both are dwarfed by “How to Play ALL the Notes on the Recorder.” Since September 2017 it has received 509,507 views.

I’ll conclude by recommending some personal favorites (and admitting that there are tons I haven’t seen yet). The one that made the biggest impression—entertaining and informative—is the tour of the AAFAB recorder factory (“See how a recorder is made!”). I also learned a lot from “Intro to Van Eyck: Der Fluyten Lust-Hof,” and I appreciate that Ms. Jeffery is keeping up with technology and developments in the instrument, so she’s producing videos about, for instance, using a looping pedal, and has reviewed resin recorders, the eCorder, the Mollenhauer “Modern” instruments, and the Dolmetsch one-handed series.



### West Suburban Early Music Society

Laura Osterlund directed our October 13 meeting. We had a long list of music for October, and another long list approached for our next one. We didn’t get through everything planned for October, but we played works by Francisco Guerero, Hans Leo Hassler, Arvo Part, and Claudio Monteverdi. We also played *Sinfonia I* by Cristoforo Malvezzi and *My Song is Love Unknown* by John Ireland. In November, Dennis Sherman directs on the Music of Anthony St. Pierre, a modern composer.

### Invitation to Yuletide Concert 2019

It’s time to start planning for the annual Yuletide Concert at the Chicago Chapter, on Sunday December 15 at 2 PM. All are welcome to perform, or just listen. To be included in the program, send the name of your group, the names of the participants, the names of the pieces you plan to play, and the composers, to Larry Johnson at [ljohnson1239@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ljohnson1239@sbcglobal.net).

We encourage everyone to take advantage of this opportunity to perform a piece in public. It’s fun to work on a piece you enjoy and then play it for your recorder friends. And there will be no more sympathetic audience than our chapter members. Feel free to bring some snacks to share, and plan to stay after the concert

and holiday festivities to join in some jamming. A great way to finish up another year playing recorder together!

The **Milwaukee Area Recorder Society** (MARS) plans to host the spring meeting of the national board of the American Recorder Society in 2020. They are inviting the Illinois chapters to join them on **Saturday, April 25th** for a pot luck supper & playing session, starting at around 5:30 at Trinity Episcopal Church, 1717 Church Street in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin. Find parking in back. The church is close to Milwaukee and about two hours from Chicago. We can organize ride-sharing convoys for anyone interested, to avoid driving the distance without company.

### Local Recorder Activities

On Sunday, Oct. 27, the Oak Park Recorder Society performed at Montgomery Place senior living center in Hyde Park, to an appreciative audience of residents and friends. The program presented music from a wide range of styles and time periods, including Scottish dances, Renaissance songs (with questionable lyrics) by Senfl and Certon, two selections from Grieg’s Peer Gynt Suite, two fairly well-known pieces by J. S. Bach, a tango, variations on the tune of Dives and Lazarus and more.

With Nancy Chabala conducting and playing, along with seven others, the concert went well. The audience was very kind, expressing much appreciation and hopes that we would return soon to play again. We were invited to coffee in the lounge after the concert. One of the residents pointed out a large portrait hanging on the wall, of former Episcopal Bishop James Montgomery. It turns out that Montgomery Place was named in his honor, and he had just died a few days earlier. So our concert was an unplanned memorial for Montgomery Place’s namesake.

### Random thoughts from the President

In our November meeting, we’ll be revisiting Glen Shannon’s *Friendship Canzona* that we liked so well in September. It must have been a hit with other groups, also, since by request, Glen is working on a reduction for an SATB version. I really enjoyed the big orchestra sound from the nine-part version, but I’d also love to hear the result on SATB only.

After sending a note to Glen to let him know how much we liked the Canzona, he sent me a new piece to try out, titled *Fippalicious*. During the summer, it was auctioned off as a fundraiser for the San Francisco Early Music Festival, and can be played on ATTB, with optional great bass or contra bass. I tried it out with an ATTB quartet, and it is somewhat challenging, but as Glen intended, it’s also very engaging, even for an advanced group. Glen says the structure follows Baroque dance form, with influences from Holborne to Bach to Sören

Sieg. I would recommend this as a thoroughly enjoyable, and entirely doable, piece for anyone in our chapters. (Available online at Glen Shannon Music.)

On another (musical) note, I recently attended a concert by the Newberry Consort, featuring music from the Habsburg court of Maria Teresa, 17th century empress of the Holy Roman Empire. The first half presented music composed by her husband—Emperor Leopold II! You may recall we performed a suite of dances, arranged by Andrew Schultze and composed by Leopold I, in our March 2019 meeting. The Newberry Consort did the same, opening with a series of dances, and continuing with a short comic opera. I'm not sure if we played the same pieces, but the suite played by the Newberry included Intrada / Ciaccona / Bouree / Canario; all of these are names of dances we played in March.

## Music coming up

**Ars Musica** offers “Bach to Bach” on Friday November 8 at 7:30 PM at All Saints Episcopal Church, 4550 North Hermitage. This candlelight concert features the composer's sonatas for viola da gamba and harpsichord, featuring Anna Steinhoff and Jason Moy. Donations are accepted, a reception follows.

The **Marion Consort** offers “A Little Byrd Told Me” on Saturday November 23 at 7:30 PM (\$20) at St. Mary of Perpetual Help in Bridgeport, an evening of sacred English choral works by William Byrd, Thomas Tallis, John Taverner, John Sheppard, Thomas Morley, Christopher Tye, and more. The church is at 1039 West 32<sup>nd</sup> Street in Chicago, <https://www.marionconsort.org>.

The **Senior Suburban Orchestra** offers a free concert on Tuesday, November 19 at 2 PM at St. Paul's United Church of Christ, 5739 Dunham Road in Downers Grove. The SSO includes two members of the West Suburban Early Music Society, Darleen Kay and Linda Schub, and the performance will include a piece that Darleen composed for recorder quartet and orchestra.

The program commemorates the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Apollo moon landing by featuring pieces such as *Star Trek through the Years* and *Mars*, the first movement from the orchestral suite, *The Planets*, composed by Gustav Holst. The Senior Suburban Orchestra, awarded the 2018 Community Relations Orchestra by the Illinois Council of Orchestras, was founded in 2000. To learn more visit their website, [seniorssuburbanorchestra.org](http://seniorssuburbanorchestra.org).

## Chapter Information

Our chapters are open to anyone, regardless of musical training, who wants to cultivate appreciation of the art, history and use of the recorder and related instruments. Our meetings, programs and publications help members to

come together with others with similar interests. Chicago Chapter Dues begin September 1, and West Suburban dues cover June 1 through May 31 and are due in September. Both groups include membership in either chapter and in the *American Recorder Society*. Members are listed in the ARS directory, receive *The American Recorder* magazine and this newsletter. The *Recorder Reporter* is published monthly, September to May by the Chicago Chapter & the West Suburban Early Music Society.

## Chicago Chapter ARS ([ChicagoRecorders.org](http://ChicagoRecorders.org))

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**Chicago Chapter meetings:** The third Sunday of each month, September through May, 2 PM, at Covenant Presbyterian Church, 2012 West Dickens, Chicago.

Enter either door of the parish building west of the church and go to the large fellowship hall.

## West Suburban Early Music Society ([westsubems.org](http://westsubems.org))

Convener/Chapter Representative:	Christopher Culp (cg.culp@gmail.com)
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**WSEMS meetings:** Second Sunday of each month, September through April, first Sunday of May, 2-4:30

PM at the Downers Grove Friends meeting house, 5710 Lomond Avenue in Downers Grove. The church is located near Maple Avenue and 355. From 355, take the ramp and go east on Maple for 4/10 miles and turn right (south) onto Lomond street. The church is on the right.

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<https://www.facebook.com/ChicagoARS>

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