

## COMMUNICATIONS



### REPORTS

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ANDREW ASHBEE (Snodland, Kent) and PETER HOLMAN (University of Leeds) write:

The Viola da Gamba Society's *Thematic Index of Music for Viols* has now been added in its entirety to the Society's website at <www.vdgs.org.uk> and comprises all additions and corrections to November 2008. In future it is intended to update the work annually. Some of the files are large and will be split into smaller units at the next update. Copies on CD-ROM can still be made for those who would prefer this format.

Volume 2 of *The Viola da Gamba Society Journal*, online at the same site, is devoted to topics from after the 'golden age' of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Bettina Hoffmann conducts a semantic investigation into the words used for the viol in Italy from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries. She concludes that the news is mostly bad for those who want to play Italian music on the viol, but she succeeds in throwing much-needed light on a murky area. Her paper needs to be read by all those who label instruments in museums, edit Italian music of the period, write about it and, above all, perform and record it. John Robinson provides us with the first detailed study of the Leyden *lyra* viol manuscript, now in Newcastle University Library, and a nineteenth-century partial copy of it, now in the National Library of Scotland. It is an important source of Scots tunes arranged for the viol, although it also contains English music, by Henry Purcell and his contemporaries. Peter Holman surveys what is known of the musical activities of the novelist Laurence Sterne, routinely said in the Sterne literature to have been a bass viol player. This serves as an introduction to Claire Berget's study of the links and parallels between Sterne and Charles Frederick Abel. She argues that both were leading exponents of the period's cult of sensibility, and that Abel's playing had its counterpart in 'musical' features of Sterne's novels.

So far, the *Thematic Index* has neglected eighteenth-century composers, but it is hoped to expand coverage of them from 2009, including more on Abel, C. P. E. Bach, Franz Benda, Carl Heinrich and Johann Gottlieb Graun, Franz Xavier Hammer, Johann Gottlieb Janitsch, Christoph Schaffrath and Joseph Benedikt Zyka.

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ERIN HELYARD (McGill University) writes:

The Arte Musica Foundation, in collaboration with the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts and McGill University's Schulich School of Music, organized four days of concerts, lectures and film presentations in Montreal from 18 to 22 March 2009 to commemorate the bicentenary of the death of Haydn. Central to the festivities was a complete performance of Haydn's sixty-eight string quartets by a variety of ensembles. Each concert included a representative selection of quartets from different periods of Haydn's career, and on all days there were free pre-concert talks, films, lectures and other educational activities.

Ten concerts in Schulich School of Music's Pollack Hall formed the backbone of the festival, with sterling performances by the Alcan, Arthur-LeBlanc, Brentano, Claudel-Canimex, Festetics, St Lawrence, Super-Nova and Ying String Quartets. 'Marathon' concerts featuring student ensembles from Canadian and American universities and conservatories took place at the Museum of Fine Arts, with audience members being admitted on the hour and half-hour.