

# The Marais Project

In 2007, ABC Classic FM initiated the Lute Project and commissioned four Australian composers to write for him. Tommie Andersson appears on more than 35 CDs and lectures in Lute at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. He is a founding member of The Marais Project.

**Daniel Yeadon** has a worldwide career as a cellist and viola da gamba player; his repertoire ranges from renaissance to contemporary. His regular chamber music collaborators in Australia include Neal Peres Da Costa, Genevieve Lacey, Ironwood, Romanza, Kammer, Elision and The Collective. He has appeared as soloist with the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra, tours frequently with the Australian Chamber Orchestra, plays every year with Pinchgut Opera and records regularly for

ABC Classics. Daniel has performed and recorded with "The Marais Project" on several occasions.

**Jennifer Eriksson** completed her initial musical studies at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. She subsequently studied the viola da gamba with Jaap ter Linden at the Rotterdam Conservatorium where she completed post-graduate studies in baroque music. She founded The Marais Project in 2000 and also directs the Musica Viva in Schools ensemble, Sounds Baroque. Jennifer is widely recognised as one of Australia's best known and most versatile viola da gambists having released several CDs and recorded frequently for the ABC. She has also commissioned numerous new Australian compositions for The Marais Project.

## Like to know and hear more about the music we play?

A good place to start for background information is The Marais Project www site and Blog which contains many useful articles and links ([www.maraisproject.com.au](http://www.maraisproject.com.au)).

**Une jeune fillette** – there are a number of recordings of this beautiful song. The best known is by Jordi Savall and appears on the sound track from the film "Tous les matins du monde" which was released by the Valois label (V4640). The Marais Project has recorded a lute and voice version on "Viol Dreaming" (PARD3505001).

**Marais suites for two viols in G major** – try the CD by my teacher, Jaap ter Linden on the Harmonia Mundi label (RD77146). Danny and I recorded the suite in D minor for two viols on our second CD, "Love Reconciled" (MCD424).

**Sainte Colombe** – the soundtrack from "Tous les matins de monde" has some wonderful examples of Sainte Colombe's music. Les Voix humaines have also done a beautiful recording on ATMA (ACD 22276).

**Schenck** – "Le Nymphé di Rheno" was recorded by Les Voix humaines on the budget label NAXOS (8.554414).

## Thank you

Thanks to –Alice Chance for her beautiful new piece; Dan Walker for "The Ossenbrunner Express" arrangement; Jan Marshall and her team at the Sydney Conservatorium; The Weekly Times, Ryde; The Northern District Times; Libby Grieg from Elizabeth Grieg Public Affairs (promotion and marketing); 2MBSFM; Copiworld North Sydney (program design and printing); Dr Richard Millner (for his support over many years and for kindly videoing today's concert); Jayson McBride (recording engineer); The Australian Viola da Gamba Society; NSW Early Music Association; Margi Doyle and The Leading Partnership (for administrative and marketing support).

[www.maraisproject.com.au](http://www.maraisproject.com.au) or join us on Facebook

## The Ossenbrunner Twins

3.00pm Sunday 23rd October 2011 | Recital Hall East, Sydney Conservatorium of Music

*Daniel Yeadon & Jennifer Eriksson – viola da gamba | Tommie Andersson – theorbo  
"The Marin-ettes" featuring Belinda Montgomery, Narelle Evans & Mara Kiek – voice*

### Welcome from Jennifer Eriksson

Our final Marais Project concert for 2011 is a celebration of our instruments as much as the music we are presenting. Back in 2002 I became the proud owner of a viola da gamba by Reinhard Ossenbrunner, one of the world's finest living instrument makers. Reinhard is a wonderful human being and when I flew over to pick up my new instrument he and his wife made me so welcome. I was the first Australian they had ever met and simultaneously the first Australian, I believe, to own an Ossenbrunner.

It is difficult to convey Reinhard's elite status amongst professional gambists but perhaps one story will illustrate what I mean. Several years ago Wieland Kuiken, who alongside Jordi Savall is arguably the greatest living gambist, toured Australia.

He was travelling without his viol and borrowing instruments each time he was due to perform. When Wieland arrived in Sydney it had been organised for him to make use of my instrument. I had played in master classes for Wieland several times in Europe so I delivered it to him one evening. He took up the instrument, began to play and almost immediately his face looked puzzled. "This is a lovely viola da gamba," he muttered under his breath. He then looked at the label and exclaimed, "I don't believe it, an Ossenbrunner in Australia. Now I am very happy to play this concert!"

Recently Daniel Yeadon also purchased an Ossenbrunner and of course we wanted to put the "twins" on stage so as to hear them together. Both our instruments are copies of an original ca. 1695 viola da gamba made by Michele Colichon, a

renowned 17th century French maker.

We have chosen some of our favourite music for two bass viols to show our instruments off. We are also excited to be premiering a new work for two viols by young composer and gambist Alice Chance. The final work for today, "The Ossenbrunner Express" is an arrangement of a song specifically chosen by Reinhard himself. I asked him earlier this year what he would like to us to play in his honour and we have fulfilled his rather unusual request!

Finally, special thanks are due to Danny, Tommie, Belinda, Narelle and Mara for appearing with The Marais Project. I can't say how much I appreciate your contribution both today and over the many years we have journeyed through Marais together.

### Background to Marin Marais and The Marais Project

Marin Marais (1656-1728) was one of the greatest viola da gambists of all times, a virtuoso and composer whose music is still performed more than 350 years after his birth. The son of a shoe maker, Marais rose to great heights based solely on his musical talents. He was employed as musician at the Court of Louis XIV in Versailles during the great era of the "Sun King", and wrote more than 600 works for the viola da gamba

that are published in five books. I formed The Marais Project in 2000 with the aim of playing Marais' complete works as well as music by Marais' contemporaries and other music for the viola da gamba. We are currently about 80% through our task of presenting all of Marais, but then we have taken many delightful detours along the way! The Marais Project has released two CDs and will release a third titled "Mara! meets Marais" later in 2011.

# Program

## • Sonata IX from “Le Nymphé di Rheno” (The Nymphs of the Rhine) - Johann Schenck (1660–1712).

- Adagio
- Aria (Allegro)
- Tempo di Sarabanda (Adagio)
- Giga
- Bourée

## • Une jeune fillette – traditional popular 16th century melody. Arranged by

Tommie Andersson drawing on an arrangement by Jordi Savall.

## • Concert XXI “Le Villageois” - Monsieur de Sainte-Colombe (1640 – 1690).

- (Ouverture) Le Villageois
- Menuet
- Courante
- Sarabande

## • Fantasia for two bass viols and organ – John Coprario (1570-1626).

• O Pastor Animarum – Alice Chance (1994- ).

## • Suite in G major for two viola da gambas and continuo (1er Livre – Paris 1686) - Marin Marais (1656-1728).

- Prélude
- Allemande
- Courante
- Sarabande
- Gavotte en rondeau
- Chaconne

## • The Ossenbrunner Express – Music by Harry Warren (1893-1981), words by Mack Gordon; arranged for The Marais Project by Dan Walker (2011).

sacred and reflective title, which translates to, ‘O Shepherd of Souls.’

*There are several qualities of the gamba I have aimed to nurture in this piece. One of them is the fact that, in my view, it is an inherently modal instrument. I find that the instrument relaxes and sings when I improvise around the ancient church modes such as the Dorian (the white keys on the piano from D to D) and Mixolydian (the white keys on the piano from G to G). It is as if the viol feels comfortable and snug when wrapped in reminders of its ancient origins. I would emphasise that although I have drawn upon a 12th century plainchant, O Pastor Animarum is a product of the 21st century. My aim was to create a fresh, contemporary piece which, of course, references the instrument’s ancient lineage.”*

Evrard Titon du Tillet, a French music historian from the time of **Marais**, wrote of him, “he brought the viol to the highest level of perfection”, being “the first to make known all the potential and all the beauty of the instrument.” A musician and composer at the Court of Louis XIV, Marais was a favourite of King’s most senior arts leader, the composer Jean Baptiste Lully to whom Marais dedicated his publications for the viol. The suite in G major for two viols and continuo concludes the first book of Marais’ five volume “Pièces de viole”. We are performing the work today accompanied by the theorbo or bass lute, Marais’ preferred continuo instrument.

*Program notes by Philip Pogson, Jennifer Eriksson and Alice Chance.*

# The Music

**Johann Schenck** was born in Amsterdam. He was well known as a virtuoso viola da gambist and composer. Around 1696 he accepted an appointment to the court of Elector Palatine Johann Wilhelm II in Düsseldorf where he served for most of his life. His compositions include music for a Dutch Singspiel, Bacchus, Ceres en Venus, which was the first opera in Dutch, as well as works for the viola da gamba. “Le Nymphé di Rheno” Opus 8 is a set of twelve sonatas or suites for two viola da gambas. Although Sonate No. 9 (the sonate we will play today) has Italian titles it is very much in the style of a French dance suite.

**Sainte-Colombe** was a bass viol virtuoso credited by H. le Blanc the Elder, a writer of the time, as imitating “the most beautiful ornaments of the voice, from the sigh of a young lady to the sob of an old man”. Sainte-Colombe

added a 7th string to the viola da gamba and was highly influential in the instrument’s development. He was the teacher of Marin Marais, a relationship explored in the beautiful novel and film, “Tous les Matins du Monde” (All the World’s Mornings). It appears that Sainte-Colombe did not have the same taste for fame as his student. He rejected the formal posts and titles so sought after by the ambitious Marais. Despite entreaties from admirers, Sainte-Colombe chose to remain an amateur in the best sense of the word, performing mainly in private salons accompanied by his two daughters who were also highly skilled



Alice Chance & Jenny Eriksson

viol players. His music has a deep, mournful sadness about it that still resonates hundreds of years after his death.

**John Coprario**, alias John Cooper, spent his last years as an employee of the English court and was appointed to the position of composer-in-ordinary to Charles 1 in 1625. He was a prolific instrumental composer which was the result of his good fortune in being patronised by some of the most illustrious figures of all time. He wrote 12 Fantasias for 2 bass viols and organ composed between 1610 and 1615 most likely for his royal pupils. These fantasias were the first example of chamber music in England where the organ had an independent accompaniment that filled out the harmony and occasionally used imitation. Although Coprario titles this collection of pieces “fantasias” they actually have more in common with dance movements such as the pavan.

**Alice Chance** writes: “When I came to compose “O Pastor Animarum” my goal was to write a piece that was specifically designed for the viola da gamba and its special characteristics. I was first inspired by a plainchant (O Pastor Animarum) by German nun, Hildegard Von Bingen, who lived in the 12th Century. The plainchant was composed so tenderly and with such passion that when I first heard it, I felt like Hildegard was sitting right next to me, singing it in my ear. Thus, my piece gained its initial working title: “The Hildegards are alive”. Sadly, whilst this title got many laughs, I figured laughter was not the ideal audience reaction, so I changed to the original, more

# Biographies



**Belinda Montgomery** graduated in 1997 from Sydney University with a Bachelor of Music (Honours) in Voice. She later studied with Emma Kirkby and Evelyn Tubb in England and has since established a freelance career in Sydney, where she

is particularly active as an early and contemporary music specialist. She has recorded music for radio broadcast and has appeared on many CDs for the labels Tall Poppies, MOVE, Walsingham and Celestial Harmonies. Belinda is a founding member of “The Marais Project”.

**Mara Kiek** is acclaimed worldwide for her distinctive voice and is an Australian authority on Bulgarian vocal technique, song and folk music. Mara holds a Master of Applied Science in vocal research from the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. She has studied Bulgarian folk music through the Plovdiv Institute, Bulgaria, Turkish classical singing with Ihsan Ozgen of the Istanbul Conservatorium of Music, and drama and modern dance at the Flinders University under Moshe Kedem. With Sinfonye, Mara toured in India, the USA and extensively in Europe, winning the Brugge Early Music Festival Jury prize in 1986. Founder director of Bulgarian style women’s choir Martenitsa, Mara has directed choral projects for Berlin LiteraturWERK Festival, Ten Days on the

Island Festival, Brisbane Festival, Meryl Tankard’s ADT, One Extra Company, and Sydney Children’s Choir among others. Mara has previously sung and recorded with “The Marais Project”.

**Narelle Evans** completed her Bachelor of Music performance degree at the Tasmanian Conservatorium of Music. Theatre credits include Les Miserables (Cossette), The Pirates of Penzance (Mabel), The Secret Garden (Rose) and Dido and Aeneas (Dido). Narelle has been guest artist with the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra and was twice nominated for an ACE award for her one-woman cabaret show. Narelle has been part of the early music ensemble “Sounds Baroque” since 2002 performing Baroque Opera to children throughout NSW for Musica Viva. She teaches voice at St Andrews Cathedral School, Sydney.

**Alice Chance** is currently completing her HSC at MLC, Burwood. For her HSC music exam Alice is majoring in composition with a minor in performance on the viola da gamba. She is the first HSC student in more than 25 years to sit the HSC on the viol. Alice studies composition with Dr Paul Stanhope and viola da gamba with Jennifer Eriksson. She hopes to undertake arts and music at University in 2012.

**Tommie Andersson** is highly sought after both as a soloist and as a continuo player and performs with Opera Australia, Sydney Philharmonia, the Song Company, Pinchgut Opera, the Orchestra of the Antipodes, Sydney Chamber Choir, Halcyon and the Australian Chamber Orchestra amongst others. He is a founding member and principal player of the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra.