

Issue 6  
Winter AS XXXX  
July, 2005

# The Muse



Two men playing the hurdy-gurdy  
Cantiga 150 from the E codex of the Cantigas de Santa Maria

Newsletter for the Performers and  
Entertainers Guild of Lochac

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## From the Chronicler

Greetings and welcome to the long awaited Muse for this winter. Sorry it has taken so long for it to come out, but as with a lot of people around the Kingdom things have been busy and time has really flown this year! Ack! This is my first ever attempt at chronicling so this issue will be brief. I would love dearly to hear from everyone what they would like to see in the Newsletter and to also receive articles and information from people as well.

I hope everyone is keeping warm and well this Winter and the muses are smiling happily upon all. Thanks in particular to Katherine, Crispin and William for their contributions

In Service,

Lady Finneamhain an Einigh inghean ui Chonchobhair

[wenchilada@fastmail.fm](mailto:wenchilada@fastmail.fm)



***Finn (in green) with Jouyessance at Soiree in Stowe, October 2004***

## Counterpointing By Numbers

By Crispin Sexi, AS 39

*(This article assumes familiarity with reading music, an understanding of the basic triad chord containing the 1st, 3rd and 5th (eg CEG), and with the modes or at least the major and minor keys.)*

The rules of 16thC composition are many and varied, and they take a lot of study to get right. Or you could take note of Thomas Campion's short, but cunning treatise on the subject.

### ***According to Campion:***

The bass part is fundamental, all other parts stem from it. Pick a mode/key and time signature, and write a bass part that starts on the tonic, moves by leap (3rd, 4th, 5th) more than by step, and ends by leaping from the dominant to a full bar on the tonic. Avoid melodic repetition and keep the range of the line to a 9th or less. It is generally best to use minims and crotchets, and make the piece an even number of bars long.

Next: Select the starting note for the soprano, alto and tenor with respect to the starting note of the bass:

Sop	8		3		5
Alt	5	or	8	or	3
Ten	3		5		8

*(Note: 8 = octave, 5 = perfect fifth, 3 = major or minor 3rd, and these numbers include the same interval an octave further apart).*

Now for each part in turn consider the following chart and rules for determining every note thereafter:

<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>

- ♪ Check by what interval the bass part moves.
- ♪ If the bass moves by more than a 4th, transpose the interval by an 8ve. (Eg a rising 5th is treated as a falling 4th, Descending 8ve as a unison, and so on.)
- ♪ If the bass rises, look on the bottom row of the table. If it falls look on the top row.
- ♪ Look in the given row to find the last interval that your part has with the bass.
- ♪ Now look in the row below or above that number and you will find the next interval your part should have relative to the bass.

### ***Examples:***

- 1) The soprano has an 8ve above the bass and the bass rises by a 3rd. Your next soprano note will be a 5th above the bass.
- 2) The tenor has a note a 3rd above the bass and the bass rises by a 5th (which you must treat as a falling 4th). Your next tenor note will be a 5th above the bass.

### ***Further Rules:***

Special case 1: If the bass stays on the same note, the other parts can do the same OR they can all rise to the next note of the chord OR they can all fall to the next lower note of the chord.

Special case 2: When you have a 3rd of a chord and the next note of that part is a step above, make the first interval a major 3rd.

Special case 3: If the table says your next note is a 5th relative to the bass, but it would be a diminished or augmented 5th due to the mode or the previous note is an accidental (due to #2 above), make the 5th into a 6th instead.

Special case 4: The last two chords (the dominant and tonic) should be major, regardless of the mode. The Dominant chord should also be major as often as sounds nice. For ionian (major), this is inherent in the key. For aeolian (minor), dorian and myxolydian just use accidentals (ignore phrygian, we won't go there today).

And lastly; to finish off the piece you may smooth out the parts by inserting passing notes here and there as you may find pleasing.

### ***Bibliography:***

Campion, Thomas, (Simpson, C (Ed)) "The Art of Descant, or Composing Music in Parts", William Godbid, London, 1670.

*With special thanks to Master Godfrey (Jeff Lee) for telling me all about this.*



### **A Toast to Absent friends by William Castille**

To Absent Friends whose memory we now renew,  
Remebered here by we happy few,  
So join me now one and all,  
In this most joyous and merry hall,

And fill you cup with your favourite blends,  
And drink a toast to absent friends.

## **Prix Jongleur**

**By Fineamhain an Einigh inghean ui Chonchobhair**

A little while back on the emailing list, someone asked who in the guild has a Prix Jongleur. It was suggested that the guild keep track somehow of recipients so that people can be recommended for recognition.

The Prix Jongleur is a non-armigerous award which is given to those who consistently entertain the populace.

I have looked around on Canon, Pegasus & the emailing list to find as many recipients of the Prix Jongleur in Lochac as possible, both guild and non-guild, to begin to give us an idea. (An asterix \* indicates Guild member)

Geoffrey of Exeter – given by Alfar & Elspeth, Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> August, 2002

\*Firkasse Digorskald – given by Alfar & Elspeth, Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December, 2002

Cillian an Sealgair – given by Alaric & Nerissa, Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> September, 2003

\*Fionbharr O’Niall – given by Aedward & Yolande, Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> March, 2004

\*Bartholomew Baskin – given by? When?

Baron Alaine – given by? When?

\*Steffan Glaube – given by Stephen & Mathilde, Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> June, 2005

\*Fineamhain an Einigh inghean ui Chonchobhair – given by Stephen & Mathilde, Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> July, 2005

Fergus (of Dismal Fogs) – given by Stephen & Mathilde, Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> July, 2005

There may well be some people missing from this list. If you or someone you know is not included here, please give me the relevant details and I will add them to the list. - Finn



## ***Entertainment at SCA Events - Tips for Stewards***

*These quick tips derive from years of organising entertainment activities and benefiting from the efforts of others, as well as from the contributions made by those who attended a Southron Gaard Entertainment Symposium.*

### **(1) Match your publicity/announcements to your event**

Entertainment can start right from the moment you announce your event. Consider how you are going to present the event to the populace, as that will affect their perceptions and expectations, and it can be used to heighten anticipation.

For example, the formal [\[Pas d'Armes\]](#) for Twelfth Night was announced with an equally formal challenge to the populace, which set the scene beautifully for how the stewards wished the event to be perceived - a chance to work within the traditions of high chivalry and pageantry. This distinguished it clearly, right from the start, as not being a basic tourney.

### **(2) Work with a theme in mind**

Many Stewards pick a theme for an event, often relating to a time or place such as the Field of Cloth of Gold, or 12th-century Crusader. Consider how much you can relate to that theme, whether hall decorations, attendance tokens, presentation of the food, table/menu settings, background music. Themes provide a backbone, but you have to add meat, and even small touches in presentation can make an event much more enjoyable and memorable.

For example, the subtleties for our Beowulf feast were worked in with the excerpts from the Beowulf saga read out between courses - the severed arm, the melting sword, the gruesome head. The vegetable dishes were presented on a round platter in the form of a shield (peas and carrots quarterly, a cross and boss of mounded spiced barley). The tourney was in a holmgang format with shieldmen.

### **(3) Make sure you have the basics covered**

Even if you're not interested in entertainments per se, there are some basic, readily organised things which you can easily do to help make an event, particularly a feast, more than just a fancy-dress party. These include:

- using banners to cover mundane items in a hall
- ensuring there is background music throughout a feast when appropriate
- providing a finger-washing bowl (eg rose petals, lavender, rosemary in warm water)
- having a herald announce the courses

Other things you might like to consider include:

- giving out simple attendance/payment tokens (eg a string of beads, a strip of ribbon, finger braid, a stamped plaster disk, a small candle)
- making table runners or menus reflecting the theme of your event
- providing dance music, particularly for the most common dances

#### **(4) Delegate, and take advantage of clearly defined roles and responsibilities**

It helps greatly if you can work with people who understand the nature and intent of the event. This is particularly important in the larger, more formal or multi-day events where various roles are played by different people (eg Head Steward, Chief Cook, Tourney Marshal etc).

If you do want entertainment as part of the event, it can be useful to have an Entertainment Steward who can co-ordinate activities, organise the related resources and, on the day, communicate between "front of house" (ie the hall for a feast) and "back of house" (ie the kitchen) to ensure that neither impinges on the other.

If you know someone is good at something, whether singing, making "stuff" or simply being helpful, ask them to help. People do like to be asked, especially if it is in an area where they have some skill or interest, and this can be much more successful in gaining a positive response than a blanket call for assistance.

#### **(5) Keep scheduled entertainments short and relevant**

Not everyone wants to participate in interactive entertainment or to listen to long sagas. Make sure your scheduled entertainments, whether quizzes or plays, quests or performances, do not dominate an event, unless it is clearly understood by all beforehand that that is the purpose of the event.

Some ways of ensuring entertainments remain entertaining are to:

- limit the number of actual presentation pieces and timetable them so everyone knows what is expected of them
- ensure that the type of entertainment suits the site (eg a quiet story-teller needs an intimate setting rather than a large hall)
- have clear "victory conditions" for quests or ways of ending them suitably at your will so they don't drag on or frustrate participants
- ensure that there is good communication between the various people responsible for an event (ie so the kitchen people know court is running late, or so that a fill-in item of entertainment is available if a course needs to be delayed)
- be prepared to abandon an entertainment or idea if it won't work; this could happen for a number of reasons - compacted timetables, inclement weather, ill health - so save the idea for another day

#### **(6) Look for ideas and keep notes**

The SCA has been around for 40 years, and many excellent entertainments have been developed in that time. Add to this records of period practices, historical novels, films, artwork, television documentaries, music, Scouting/Guiding manuals, craft books, Stephan's Florilegium, not to mention the boundless fields of the Internet, and there are myriad possible

### **Resources**

[How to Successfully Organize Entertainment for a SCA Event](#) by

Jheromyn le Bordar ben Mikiel

[Resources for Medieval & Renaissance](#)

[Entertainments](#)

[Medieval Entertainment](#)

[Stefan's Florilegium files](#)

sources for ideas. Make notes, brainstorm with others, think laterally and you may come up with the event that brings people that much closer to the Dream.

## Crown Paens

November Crown will be held in Rowany and WE WANT YOU!

Will you be going to November Crown?

Would you like to contribute to the Crown Paen's project?

If so, please contact Finn now at [wenchilada@fastmail.fm](mailto:wenchilada@fastmail.fm)

What are these crazy Crown Paens?

It is a way to immortalise the worthy deeds of the entrants into the list at Crown Tournays. These will be illuminated and placed in a book for presentation to the incoming Royalty at 12<sup>th</sup> Night. It's a fun challenge, so come on, step up to the plate. To see a previous paen, go to <http://spis.co.nz/kk/crown.htm#paens> and have a look.

Finn

## For the Next Issue...

Send me your bits!

### ***Suggested submission ideas***

#### **Research topics:**

Show us all what you have been researching

#### **Original Pieces:**

Showcase your latest work

#### **Funky finds:**

Things you have found that have made you laugh, cry, get goosebumps.

#### **WWWwhere is it?**

www. Links. What they are about, how you found them useful, etc.

#### **Reviews:**

Review a book, CD, etc.

#### **Photo Phinsh:**

Any pics relating to what we do that you can share with us all.

Please note: preference will be given to publication under *Research Topics* to topics that have supporting documentation and bibliography.

With Spring War coming up, why not send in an original piece you have written showing you devotion, love, patriotism and pride for your homegroup...something that will stir the very hearts of your local warband. All pieces will be produced in the next Muse.