

From: The Director, Victoria LSA Lute Festival West
To: Past attendees of Vancouver LSA Festivals

Dear Friend,

You may have heard recently that we at the Lute Society of America have decided to move our biennial Lute Festival West from its long-time location at the University of British Columbia to a new home at the University of Victoria in Victoria, BC. Since many of you have been regular and long-time attendees at our past Vancouver Fests, I thought I would write you personally and tell you a bit about our reasons for leaving Vancouver, and give you a glimpse of what we have planned for our inaugural WestFest at UVic.

As you may know, our host organization for many years, Early Music Vancouver, has come under new management. EMV Director Matthew White has been very accommodating to us since coming on board, but he has let us know that, going forward, his organization is no longer going to host educational programs such as ours. So we have known for a while that we would need to find a new location--a new home--for our West coast Festival.

We are confident that we have found that new home in Victoria. Since the fall of 2016 we've been working with Bill Jamieson, the founder and Director of the Ancient Music Society of Victoria, to sort out moving our Festival to UVic. Our accommodations, meals and classroom spaces are located centrally on campus, and we are close to lots of amenities, both on-campus and a short distance away, in the Cadboro Bay neighborhood. The City of Victoria is not only very beautiful, but it also has great community support for music of all kinds--and early music in particular. We think that Victoria is a very promising location for our Festival, and will welcome the music of our beautiful instrument, the lute.

Our faculty this time around brings some new faces, but also offers continuity from our days in Vancouver. Canadian virtuoso Sylvain Bergeron returns to the WestFest, as does baroque lute (and vihuela) favorite Robert Barto. New to the LSA Fest is British virtuoso Elizabeth Kenny, as well as me, your Festival director, Phil Rukavina. Travis Carey will again present the lute building class (with lots of opportunities for hands-on learning), and do repairs and maintenance as Lute Doctor. And in a late addition to our faculty, we are very pleased to announce that Ray Nurse will be in attendance throughout the Festival, and will give two one-hour afternoon talks during the week (the topics will be announced soon.) Those of you who have seen Ray in action know that his takes on the lute and its music are always original and stimulating--and not to be missed!

We sincerely hope that you'll choose to join us again at the LSA Fest this summer. We all remember fondly the close-knit feeling that we developed over the years of our Festivals in Vancouver, and we're hopeful that we can bring that spirit of camaraderie and musical friendship to our new home. Come help us make our inaugural Victoria Festival a success!

Yours sincerely,

Phil

PS--For further information about Victoria, UVic and the WestFest, please visit the website:
<http://lutesocietyofamerica.org>