



## BIOGRAPHY

### SUSIE NAPPER

Cellist, gambist, continuo player par excellence, Susie Napper is alternatively praised or admonished for her colourful and controversial performances of solo and chamber repertoire of the baroque.

A rebel to the core, from an artistic milieu in London, in her teens she played first performances of Ligetti and Stockhausen as well as performance-art productions in alternative venues. By contrast she studied at the Juilliard School in New York at the height of the Vietnam resistance and at the Paris Conservatoire at the end of the student riots of '68.

San Francisco followed, where, having had an epiphany on receiving a bass viol, she threw herself headlong into new-wave, HIP baroque music-making, teaching herself the viol by playing, reading treatises and creating new styles of performance inspired by old.

As well as co-founding the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra in San Francisco with her partner and inspiration, baroque oboist and writer, the late Bruce Haynes, they spent decades parenting delightful kids and musicing worldwide and in Montreal where she created the Montreal Baroque Festival, a vehicle to unite the multitalented, Montreal early music community.

Centre of her domaine and a constant pleasure has been her kitchen where colourful, flavourful, creative dishes have mirrored her musical taste to surprise, move and inspire. She has spent decades with a foot on either side of the Atlantic recording, performing, teaching in Montreal and Copenhagen and touring around Europe, the Far East and Oceania often with her musical partner-in-crime, Margaret Little as the viol duo, *Les Voix humaines*.

Amongst dozens of recordings, the complete *Concerts a deux violes esgales* by *Sieur de Ste Colombe* is a highlight. Their arrangements of music stolen from the wider baroque repertoire amuse them and their audiences. Either praised or criticized for her use of rubato, general freedom of expression, variety of bow strokes and undying preference for harmony over melody, she constantly searches for rhetorical meaning and eloquence to bring the printed page to life. Susie Napper was recognized as *Femme de Mérite*, (YWCA 2011) and *Personality of the year*, Prix Opus, in 2002.