

CALEXTONE BIOS



ABOUT CALEXTONE

Calextone specializes in the music of western Europe from the 13th through the 15th centuries, and has been performing regularly in the San Francisco Bay Area since 2013. The ensemble has performed both live and streamed concerts on the San Francisco Early Music series, and, in lieu of a pandemic-canceled live concert, a streamed concert for Early Music Hawai'i. Programs have included music from the time of Boccaccio's Decameron, the Roman du Fauvel, Carmina Burana, the French & German Renaissance, and the Ars Subtilior. The group collaborates frequently with diverse artists, such as Peter Maund, percussion, writer/poet/musician Lawrence Rosenwald, and singer Temmo Korisheli, among others.

Calextone takes its name from the 14th-century ballade of the same name, celebrating the Goddess Callisto. The members— colleagues and friends for decades, who have toured, taught, and performed all over the world, are Allison Zelles Lloyd, voice and harp; Frances Blaker, recorder and hammered dulcimer; Letitia Berlin, recorder, douçaine, voice, and psaltery; Shira Kammen, vielle, harp, and voice.

ALLISON ZELLES LLOYD (VOICE, HARP)

Allison Zelles Lloyd came out of the womb singing in Philadelphia, PA. She started piano lessons at six years of age which eventually lead to multiple degrees in music theory and performance at UC-Santa Barbara and Indiana University. For several years, she got side-tracked by a job in the medical devices field and quality assurance practices while she laser micro-machined polymers. The birth of her first child started her on the path of music education and has been teaching Music Together and Orff Schulwerk music programs in the SF Bay Area for the last ten years. Allison has toured and recorded, in the United States and Europe with Bimbeta [d'Note label], the Medieval ensemble [Altramar](#) [Dorian Discovery], Paul Hillier's [Theatre of Voices](#) [Harmonia Mundi] and minimalist, Steve Reich [Nonesuch]. She continues to sing locally with the [American Bach Soloists Choir](#), Shira Kammen and Ensemble SPAM. When not involved in music, Allison spends time with her husband, two children cooking, reading, playing games, camping, raising chickens, gardening and canning garden produce.

SHIRA KAMMEN

Multi-instrumentalist and occasional vocalist [Shira Kammen](#) has spent well over half her life exploring the worlds of early and traditional music, and studied medieval music and vielle with Margriet Tindemans. A member for many years of the early music Ensembles Alcatraz and Project Ars Nova, and Medieval Strings, she has also worked with Sequentia, Hesperion XX, the Boston Camerata, Fortune's Wheel, Anonymous IV, the King's Noyse, the Newberry and Folger Consorts, the Medieval Women's Choir of Seattle, the Oregon, California and San Francisco Shakespeare Festivals, the Balkan group Kitka, Rose of the Compass, and is the founder of Class V Music, an ensemble dedicated to providing music on river rafting trips.

She has performed and taught in the United States, Canada, Mexico, Europe, Israel, Morocco, Latvia, Russia, Abu Dhabi and Japan, and on the Colorado, Rogue, Green, Grande Ronde, East Carson and Klamath Rivers.

Shira happily collaborated with singer/storyteller John Fleagle for fifteen years, and works regularly now with several groups, in addition to playing as a guest with numerous ensembles: the early music groups Sitka Trio, Calextone, Cançonier and In Bocca al Lupo; an early music choir Gallimaufry, a new music ensemble, Ephemeris; an eclectic ethnic band, Panacea, among others. She frequently collaborates with performers from many different artistic disciplines, including the California Revels and The American Repertory Ballet Company, and has accompanied many diverse artists in performing and recording projects, among them singers Azam Ali and Joanna Newsom, poets Jane Hirshfield and Kay Ryan, storyteller/harpist Patrick Ball, clown Jeff Raz, and medieval music expert extraordinaire Margriet Tindemans.

She has worked with students in many different settings, among them teaching summer music workshops in the woods, coaching students of early music in such schools as Yale University, Case Western, the University of Oregon at Eugene, USC, Boston University, MIT, and working at

specialized seminars at the Fondazione Cini in Venice, Italy and the Scuola Cantorum Basiliensis in Switzerland, and recently joined the music faculty of Mills College in Oakland, CA.

She has played on several television and movie soundtracks, including 'O', a modern high school-setting of Othello and "The Nativity Story". Some of her original music can be heard in an independent film about fans of the work of JRR Tolkien. The strangest place Shira has played is in the elephant pit of the Jerusalem Zoo. www.shirakammen.com

FRANCES BLAKER, RECORDERS AND HAMMERED DULCIMER

Frances Blaker performs on recorders of all types and sizes as a soloist and with [Ensemble Vermillian](#), [Farallon Recorder Quartet](#), [Calexstone](#), Sitka Trio and [Tibia Recorder Duo](#). As a member of Ensemble Vermillian she explores, transcribes, performs and records chamber music of the 17th and 18th centuries. She has performed as soloist with the North Carolina Baroque Orchestra, with the North Carolina H.I.P. Festival 2013, with Atlanta Baroque Orchestra, and others. Performances with numerous other groups have taken Ms. Blaker around the U. S., Denmark, England, France, Italy and the Netherlands. She is conductor and music director of the North Carolina Baroque Orchestra, and of BABO (Bay Area Baroque Orchestra), a community orchestra for accomplished amateur players.

Ms. Blaker received her Music Pedagogical and Performance degrees in recorder from the Royal Danish Conservatory of Music in Copenhagen where she studied with Eva Legêne. She also studied with Marion Verbruggen in the Netherlands. As co-director of Tibia Adventures in Music, she organizes workshops for small groups of adult students in the U. S., France, Italy and Great Britain. She has been co-director of both the SFEMS Medieval and Renaissance workshop and the Baroque workshop, and is now director of the Amherst Early Music Festival. She teaches recorder privately, both in person and long distance via Skype, and is a sought after instructor at workshops all around the U. S. Ms. Blaker is the author of The Recorder Player's Companion and the "Opening Measures" column in the American Recorder, and a collaborator and performer on the Disc Continuo series of play-along recordings.

As a composer, Frances Blaker has been awarded month-long residencies focusing on music composition at the Sitka Center for Art and Ecology in Otis, Oregon in April 2003, 2006, and 2011. She has received commissions to compose works for Hidden Valley Music Seminars in Carmel Valley, CA, and the Oregon Coast Recorder Society. She is currently working on a number of pieces, and is pondering how to depict in music the crystalline structures found in certain meteorites. Her compositions have been published by PRB Productions and Lost in Time Press. Ms. Blaker can be heard on Ensemble Vermillian's two-volume survey of German 17th century chamber music centering around Buxtehude's opus 1, Stolen Jewels, and Buried Treasure, and with the Farallon Recorder Quartet in works Ludwig Senfl, and music from England, From Albion's Shores.

LETITIA BERLIN, RECORDERS, DOUÇAINE, AND PSALTERY

Tish Berlin performs with the [Farallon Recorder Quartet](#), [Calexstone](#), [Bertamo Trio](#) and [Tibia Recorder Duo](#). Ms. Berlin has performed as a soloist with the Atlanta Baroque Orchestra, the San Francisco Symphony, and the North Carolina Baroque Orchestra.

Ms. Berlin received her Bachelor of Music in piano performance from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, and her Master of Arts in Early Music Performance Practices from Case Western Reserve University. She enhanced her formal education with private lessons and master classes with Marion Verbruggen, Paul Leenhouts, and Saskia Coolen. She is a sought-after instructor at early music workshops around the country. As co-director of Tibia Adventures in Music, she organizes workshops for small groups of adult students in the U. S., France, Italy and Great Britain. She directs the Hidden Valley (Carmel Valley, CA) Early Music Road Scholar program, and co-directs the Winds and Waves recorder workshop at the Sitka Center for Art and Ecology in Otis, Oregon. She was the director of Music Discovery, the San Francisco Early Music Society's summer workshop for children, for 10 years. She has been awarded the recorder residency at the Sitka Center three times.