16 Days of music and more

The 2002 World Festival of Sacred Music - Los Angeles (WFSM-LA) is a 16-day, 55 event, multi-faceted festival committed to promoting ethical values and bringing the community together. The Festival opens on September 14, 2002 until September 29th. Events will take place in churches, temples, community centers, theaters, museums, parks and universities. The artists involved are culturally and ethnically diverse and represent a wide array of styles. They bring music, movement, spoken word and visual art to the Festival. The Festival does not promote or endorse any political or religious agenda, nor is it a commercial entertainment event. It provides an opportunity for people to come together to artistically consider the spiritual, ethical, and ecological questions of our time and city. Broadly defining “sacred” to encompass a wide range of traditional and modern music, dance and other forms or artistic expression, the World Festival of Sacred Music is founded on the belief that sacred music has the ability to bring forth the shared human values on which humanity’s future depends: peace, understanding and respect for all living things. The Festival is a collaborative project that encourages people to work with others outside their normal community and present messages that grow out of deep social concerns. Following in the footsteps of the first World Festival of Sacred Music in 1999, this year’s festival is also a grass roots effort, without a board of directors, built on a self-sufficient structure, relying largely on volunteer efforts, individual donors, and community partners. The Festival was developed as a project that would bring our city together for a common cause, encourage people to cross boundaries, and develop greater understanding across race, culture, class and religion.

For 2002, WFSM-LA will reunite many of the community partners and artists whose commitment, enthusiasm, and hard work made the 1999 Festival a success. Choosing September 2002 for the next Festival marks one year after the tragic events of the Twin Towers, the Pentagon, and Pennsylvania. The year 2002 also marks the ten-year anniversary of the L.A. Riots. And in between are all the wonders of the diverse and a wide array of other traditions that, separately and together, will transport you to an “inner sacred place.” So many of the problems in the world come from a lack of understanding. The WFSM is one is an umbrella under which artists and venues share cultures and beliefs to transcend our differences.

One way to think about this Festival is that when you see/feel these events, remember: it is not entertainment. You are there to be a part of it, to bring your own personal views and learn about the different ways to express music and dance – to find eschatocastely in the gospel at AME and the Whirling Dervishes, and even the jazz of Duke Ellington. Learn about the city you live in and the people who populate it. Celebrate our differences! And in the process you will find our common humanity.

www.festivalofsacredmusic.org
In the past few issues of FolkWorks we have had a few dedicated to festi-vals and camps. You may or may not have had the experi-ence of attending one of these events. Choosing which festi-vals to go to or whether or not to go to a camp depends on your interests and the nature of the event. Being a casual fan of folk music and dance will lead you to making different choices than if you are an avid fan. Being a musician at any level will lead you to yet different choices.

Perhaps you’ve never heard of such an event as a music and/or dance camp. Typically this is a weeklong experience that is in a location that is relatively isolated from cities. You drive there, park your car and leave the “real” world behind.

At the beginning of August we went to Lark in the Morning camp in the Mendocino Woodlands. This is a camp for lovers of world music, with a heavy emphasis, though certainly not limited to Irish and American music and dance. There are hourly workshops included everything from Tex/Mex and Tololoche Mexican music to African drumming to Chinese music to Uilleann pipes and reed making. There are also dance workshops cover-ing everything from Irish step and set dancing, to clogging, Cajun and Zydeco, Swing and Balkan. For early birds, there are even yoga exercises at 7:00 in the morning. In the evenings there are concerts, dances, storytelling and lots of jamming. Sleeping (what is there of it!) is done in tents, campers or cabins. Concerts are available at specified times, though coffee, tea and goodies are often available pretty much around the clock.

If you think that this is an intense experience, you are right. However, it is also very relaxing. There are no scheduled times, though coffee, tea and goodies are often available pretty much around the clock. Your mind will remind you that this will soon be coming to an end and that, come Monday, it is back to the grind. What you take home from the experience varies. You are an experienced musician, you will have learned some new tunes or songs. Perhaps you will have tried something that you had never tried before, but had always been interested in. Or, perhaps you listened to some great music, enjoyed some great dancing, and met some interesting folks.

Festivals, on the other hand, are usually a day or weekend long event. Festivals generally have a focus but often encompass a wide variety of music, dance and even folk arts. Most have one or more performance stages that are run simultaneously. There is often a dance area or two and booths where vendors sell their wares. The events are usually tight-scheduled and you follow the matrix to figure out what you want to do. Some, like the Topanga Banjo Fiddle Contest and Folk Music Festival are centered around a particular event. Others like the CTMS Summer Solstice Folk Music, Dance and Storytelling Festival have an educational focus. Classes taught by experienced practitioners are given all day long. Most of the larger festivals have areas where folk music together and jam.

In the September / October timeframe, there are several festivals which look very interesting. There is a Tall Ships Festival and a Train Song Festival and a Festival of Dulcimers.

And then there is the Festival of Sacred Music. Unlike the previous mentioned festivals that are venue centric, this festival is theme focused. It includes music that ranges from classical to jazz to church music. It also encompasses a great deal of world folk music. The festival is a collage of different concerts, some free, others not, in different venues around the L.A. area and is spread out over a several week period.

Or, perhaps you listened to some new and experience the richness of the cultural offerings of Southern California.

BY LEDA & STEVE SHAPIRO

DESPERATELY SEEKING VOLUNTEERS

For more information visit the website: www.FolkWorks.org

by Leda & Steve Shapiro

FolkWorks is not responsible for accuracy of information. Call venue to verify dates, times and locations.

JULY 1-30

By Leda Shapiro

It’s a Grind (Atlantic Circle)

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(online only, no color)

Digital files can be sent via email or on a non-bootable CD or Zip disk (no exceptions)

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Michael Doucet: The whole idea of BeauSoleil back in the 1970's was to fill a void. At that time, there were hardly any young people interested in Cajun French music. We noticed that. We were just hanging around musicians our grandparents' age, and lucky to be hanging with them. Those folks were like forgotten heroes: they played music but never really made a living from their music. They just went on with their lives, but then had great stories to tell us and great music to share. And that's what we were interested in. We were just playing for the fun of it and we continue to do that. But, at the same time, I was awarded several NEA grants to go out and document this music, because I could see that it was slowly dying out with these individuals. The young wasn't exactly there.

Garelick: How did you do that? Did you ever revive it?

Doucet: I worked in the public schools, did a lot of concerts there with Dewey Balfa, as leaders and spokesmen. Then I got another grant to create a course at the University of Southwestern Louisiana, in Lafayette. It was called "Cajun music in Louisiana, Opera to Zydeco." I did that for about six years or so. And at the same time, we were promoting the music—teaching, performing, and recording—because we loved it.

Garelick: So were you playing all the traditional music?

Doucet: Well, in Louisiana, those lines of tradition and non-tradition aren't always that easy to draw. When I was growing up in Scott, Louisiana, near Lafayette, it was an all-music family. My family would get together and some of them were singers and they'd do a lot of ballads. But another side of the family would be playing jazz and swing. We were sort of surrounded with this cacophony of music. And like Louis Armstrong said, there's only two kinds of music: good and bad. But mostly, the music we heard was used as a form of social dancing. Dancing was a big deal, but also you had blues and soul singers all around you. At the same time, I was visiting a lot of the older musicians, people who had never recorded, or maybe recorded long ago, like Dennis McGee, who recorded in the late 1920's. That style was not played much anymore, but that was what I was totally enamored with. And I wanted that to continue. So I hung around Dennis and learned a lot his songs. And there were also some jazz musicians at that time, people like Bunk Johnson and Lorenzo Tio, who moved from New Orleans after they closed Storyville in 1917. They moved out to the bayous and there were many New Orleans jazz musicians, people like Thibodeaux or Harry Choates or the Hackberry Ramblers. The swing influence.

Garelick: Let's talk about those styles. See, the older style was the French music of Acadie, near Nova Scotia. That's the twin fiddles. Dennis McGee was the greatest proponent of that style. But in the big cities, with the influence of radio, which was very powerful. People heard the Grand Ole Opry, and instead of all fiddles, it became guitars, and then steel guitars and drums and bass. Western Swing.

Garelick: What about the Creole style? What does that mean?

Doucet: Creole, now that's a totally confusing term. And I'm glad you mention it. Creole just means "home grown." But it can be a Black Creole, Or a French Creole. Or even a Spanish Creole. It can be a planter 200 years ago. A plantation architecture. You can still find that in Martinique and Guadeloupe and And still remains today in Louisiana. There are Creole tomatoes. And there is a Creole language, spoken worldwide, from the Seychelle Islands to Africa to St. Martin's Parish. Creole is one of those ambiguous terms. So, that doesn't help, any does it?

Garelick: Maybe not. But what about the "Creole" fiddler, Canray Fontenot?

Doucet: Yes, well basically Canray was Black, he spoke French, his last name is Fontenot, which is an Indian name. Sometimes, he called himself a Creole, sometimes French, to differentiate himself from being a Cajun, from Acadie. Canray was not an Acadian, but he lived in the same area as the Cajuns.

Garelick: He was a French Creole.

Doucet: Let's talk a little about Mardi Gras, which is coming up soon.

Garelick: What was your reaction to BeauSoleil within the States, but outside of Louisiana?

Doucet: We've played in every state in the union. And people would say "I've never heard anything like this, but somehow I feel like I know this music." Because, this is really American music. It was created by the Cajuns, in Louisiana. In Canada, the fact it was created here, people feel they really should know it. On the other hand, Louisiana is a very different place. So you know. We do things differently. Our ancestors learned to be independent, to be left alone, to live the right way. And that's what they nurtured in us, that's what's within our music. And that's also the French Creole music, the beauty of it. I mean, we'd still be playing that music if it had never been "discovered," or if the fat man in New Orleans hadn't burned the fish! [Paul Prudhomme].

Garelick: But what about outside influences in the music? I'm thinking about fiddlers like Rufus Thibodeaux or Harry Choates or the Hackberry Ramblers. The swing influence.

Doucet: The Chanson de Mardi Gras is the oldest we have. It's got to do with the New Year, the Solstice, planting, harvesting, rejuvenation. Basically Mardi Gras is a day you can have fun, make fun of the politicians, priests, you know... people in charge because after that, you concentrate on fasting and planting. And sometimes you hoped you could survive till Easter, when some early crops would come up.

Garelick: I guess the popular conception of Mardi Gras comes from the wild parties in New Orleans every year.

Doucet: That's more of an urban celebration. It's great. It's worth going to when you're 18 or 19. It gets pretty wild, a big excuse to get crazy. But where we come from, in the country, it's more a community of people, like the song says. They go out and get food, live chickens, make a gumbo, have a party. And at Midnight, that's it.

Garelick: Are there other songs performed during the Mardi Gras season?

Doucet: Well, the Chanson de Mardi Gras is the oldest one. Back when I was young, during Lent you couldn't play any instruments, so people would sing unaccompanied. Those were called jures, or jury songs. Call and response. You could get by with them. No one would dance during this time.

Garelick: Is there much of that left in Louisiana?

Doucet: Not much. Alan Lomax and his father, John, went to Louisiana in the 1930's. They wanted to record non-commercial music. In fact, they were smuggled into a church near a town called Jennings, where people were singing these songs, And Alan Lomax got real excited and said that this was music from the Pygmies of Africa. He made a correlation. But it was a Creole thing, music of lamentation. Very rare to hear it today.

Doucet: This has been totally fascinating. I want to thank you for being on The Fiddling Zone. I'm looking forward to hearing you tonight.

Garelick: We'll see you down there. And come down to Louisiana whenever you get the chance.
The Tritone Paradox & Other Mysteries of the Musical Interval

Besides understanding the emotional impact of various intervals, it is also important to know what they sound like and how to produce them. Vocalists, for instance, must be able to “hear” the sound of an interval just by viewing it on the printed page. This can be a daunting task, especially for beginners. Here’s a trick used by sight singing students to help them remember various intervals: think of songs that begin with each interval and, by singing the first two notes of each melody, you can recall the sound of the interval. You really need to try this for yourself to get the feel of how it works.

INTERVAL CHEAT SHEET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INTERVALS UP</th>
<th>INTERVALS DOWN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>m2 Jaws</td>
<td>m2 Joy to the World</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stormy Weather (Don’t know why…)</td>
<td>Fur Elise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M2 F-r-e Jacques</td>
<td>M2 Hernando’s Hideaway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They Say, Ruby…</td>
<td>M2 Mary had a little lamb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Si-f-n Night</td>
<td>Three Blind Mice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She’ll be Camin’</td>
<td>m3 When Irish eyes are smiling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oh Suzanna (Oh I come from Ala.)</td>
<td>o-o say can you see?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m3 To dream the impossible dream…</td>
<td>This old man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greensleeves (Alas my love)</td>
<td>m4 You’re a grand old flag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M2 Kumb Ba Yah</td>
<td>m5 When hap-p-y little bluebirds fly…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From the halls of monteuma…</td>
<td>M3 Breathe!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oh when the Saints go marching’in Marines Hymn</td>
<td>Swing low, sweet chariot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4 Here comes the bride</td>
<td>Sum-mer time…and the livin’ is easy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taps</td>
<td>P4 Born free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M1 &amp; m-4</td>
<td>A mighty fortress is our God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Simpsons</td>
<td>Baseball hunk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5 Do you hear what I hear?</td>
<td>TT English Police Siren</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twinkle, twinkle, little star</td>
<td>P5 O, thou, that latest good tidings to Zion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H-E-R-E!</td>
<td>Mozart Minuet in G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Bonnie lies over the ocean</td>
<td>Erie Canal (I had a mule &amp; her name…)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shrotnin’ bread</td>
<td>m6 Nobody knows the trouble I’ve seen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m5 Theme from The Entertainer</td>
<td>Night time (Music of the Night)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m6 N B C</td>
<td>School days, school day, dear old…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Bonnie lies over the ocean</td>
<td>P7 There’s No Business Like Show Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhere (There’s a place for us)</td>
<td>P7 Yoda (Luke Skywalker)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Star Wars Theme</td>
<td>P8 There’s No Business Like Show Business</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* If you find tunes that exemplify these intervals, please send them to me, roger-goodman@earthlink.net. Thanks!

There’s actually more about intervals, but this is probably more than you ever wanted to know about them. You don’t need to use or even remember everything you read in this column but, in case you get interested later, your familiarity with these concepts will enhance your ability to apply them. So keep learning, keep playing and, of course, stay tuned.
THE VOICES IN MY HEAD
BY JOANNA CAZDEN

“LISTEN UP!”

I’ve been a Battlefield Band fan since I first heard them at the Vancouver Folk Festival, back in 1981. Their enthusiastic precision of fiddle and pipes stirred me to dance and shout — and then those unexpected synth chords swelled up, anchoring the harmony deep in my bone marrow as they redefined the modern Celtic sound.

It was painful on many levels, then, when I heard them at McCabe’s more recently — and could barely tolerate the show. The Band was as musically tight as ever, just TOO DARN LOUD! The melodies were schrechy, the bass lines and delicate details obscured at the edge of distortion. Maybe their gear didn’t fit that small venue. Maybe it was a monitor problem, or a bad mix. But when sound gets loud enough to make a listener wince, it’s hard to find much pleasure.

You’re probably thinking, Hey, noise damage is for rockers. Folksies are low-key and cool! Well, all ye’ high folk musicians are probably at lower risk for hearing loss than Towers of Power. But even a pennychwist can pierce your eardrum if it’s up too close. Bagpipes, accordion, and dobro were created to be loud. If you sit in front of the tuba in your Balkan dance band, you’re probably getting a regular overdose.

And how many of us are strict acoustic purists? Where there are mic’s and amplifiers, there’s a risk of feedback (ouch), or audiences getting blasted. Many musicians travel a lot, accompanied by trucks, trains, and airplane noise. Audio engineers who mix folk albums and concerts probably work more aggressive styles too. We live in a noisy world.

To review some science about all this noise: sound is fundamentally a pressure wave, which is why we sometimes feel it as well as hear it. The sound wave travels through the ear canal to the eardrum, which transmits it to a chain of three tiny bones in the middle ear.

The last bone in the chain sends the vibration into the fluid-filled inner ear, or cochlea (pronounced “COKE-lee-a”), which is coiled like a snail shell. Inside the cochlea lie about 30,000 microscopic hair cells, which generate electrical impulses that travel to the brain.

If the intensity of incoming sound waves is too great for too long, the hair cells can collapse or die, leading to permanent loss of hearing. Damaged hair cells can also trigger continuous, stray signals in the nervous system, causing tinnitus. Or they can become hypersensititive, so that even very soft sounds register in the brain as intolerable.

The amplitude of sound waves (perceived as loudness) is measured in decibels (dB). The decibel scale is exponential rather than linear; if amplitude goes up 3 dB, the sound is physically twice as loud. For reference: rustling leaves measure about 10 dB; normal conversation is around 60 dB; a loud bar with music is about 105, and a jet-engine or chain-saw hits 125. At about 130 dB, you feel physical pain.

Irreversible hearing loss is known to occur with long-term exposure to 90 dB or above. The higher the sound level, the sooner the effect accumulates. For example, a loud concert at 115 dB will destroy some hair cells in about 15 minutes. Worst of all, noise-induced hearing loss (NIHL) shows up first in the pitch region of 3000 Hz, where our hearing is most sensitive. If the intensity of sound is about 85 dB, the hair cells in the cochlea measure about 10 dB; normal conversation is around 60 dB; a loud bar with music is about 105, and a jet-engine or chain-saw hits 125. At about 130 dB, you feel physical pain.

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Here’s a quick test you can do, courtesy of www.hearnet.com: when driving to a concert, jam, dance, or recording session, tune your radio to a talk station. Park, and switch off the main engine but not the radio. Now turn down the radio to the softest level at which you can still understand the words. Leave it there, and turn off the car. After the event, see if you can understand the radio at the same volume. If not, your inner ears have suffered at least temporary damage.

Park, and switch off the main engine but not the radio. Now turn down the radio to the softest level at which you can still understand the words. Leave it there, and turn off the car. After the event, see if you can understand the radio at the same volume. If not, your inner ears have suffered at least temporary damage.

If you have questions about singing, or topics you’d like covered in this column, please e-mail me (Joanna@voiceofyourlife.com) or the Folkworks editors. May all our voices be heard!

Joanna Cazden is a singer-songwriter and licensed speech pathologist. Find her online at www.voiceofyourlife.com.
Altan, the Irish traditional music supergroup, needs no introduction. Since first emerging on the traditional music scene in the mid-1980's, they have become an Irish music institution. Named for a rebel loch. Altan have hidden in the hills of northwest County Donegal, Ireland, the group is widely known for their high-powered sets of Donegal-style dance tunes. Their songs, performed in both English and Gaelic, are instantly recognizable by the mesmerizing and distinctive voice of vocalist/fiddler Mairead Ni Mhaonaigh. Since their first album release in 1987, the group has become one of the most renowned Irish traditional music groups, second only to the Chieftains. They even overcame the challenge of continuing as a group when founder member, flute player Frank Kennedy, tragically died of cancer in 1994 at the height of his career and was gaining worldwide recognition. Today the veteran group still thrills fans with a continuous flow of brilliant albums and their powerful live performances.

The Blue Idol, Altan's 9th official release (excluding a "best of" and "live" albums), continues their successful, time-proven balance of songs and dance tunes. To keep this balance alive and fresh, they have once again included famous guest musicians. The Blue Idol offers Irish vocalist Paul Brady, the ever-present Donal Lunny, and Dolly Parton's angelic vocal interactions touch the heart. Songs of the sea have always been a staple of Celtic music and Altan includes the gem called "Uncle Rat." The heart and soul of Altan's music is still deeply rooted in the dance tunes of County Donegal, this use of exotic instruments, along with their modern arrangements, give them a contemporary edge and an almost "pop" sound that is widely embraced.

The Blue Idol includes Daily Growing, a traditional song also known as The Trees They Do Grow High made popular by Pentangle in the 1960's. Paul Brady sings the part of the father in this beautiful but sad old song. Next is the upbeat Uncle Rat, a version of Fingory Went A-Courting. In The Pretty Young Girl, Mairead Ni Mhaonaigh and Dolly Parton's angelic vocal interactions touch the heart. Songs of the sea have always been a staple of Celtic music and Altan includes the gem called The Sea-Supporter Boy. All artists in these music fields, whether established on major labels or independent, are welcome and acknowledge the group thunderously, as if an old friend has returned home years later from a long journey. Celtic music and Celtic culture seem to be growing somewhat of a household name in Spain. The realization of a pre-Roman ancient Celtic culture that existed in Spain has come to the surface of the current Spanish mindset in the last decade or so, especially in the provinces of Galicia and Asturias. The old piping traditions from both of these provinces blend flawlessly with the piping traditions from Scotland, Ireland and Brittany. An old fiddle tradition is again being reborn in Galicia, and the old folk tunes have Celtic styling that is undeniable. Skyedance alone is a musical pinnacle, but add seven guest musicians from several surrounding Spanish provinces, and look out! These musicians include Galician vocalist Mercedes Peón, Basque accordionist Kepa Junkeran, Asturian mid-piper and Latin Grammy nominee Hevia, Basque poet Mikel Labasa, Asturian piper José Manuel Tejedor, the Basque duo Oreka TX, and Basque accordionist Joxo Goikoetxea. The "live" collaborations celebrate a musical marriage made in heaven. It seems as if these musicians from Spain are reaffirming their ancient Celtic heritage. The entire album is a thrilling, emotional roller coaster ride. Charged with high-energy dance tunes, the live performance also includes percussive interludes, haunting airs, and poetry with musical accompaniment, all with Spanish-flavored original tunes written especially for this tour. All of the tracks are excellent, but stand-outs include the song "Marabilla" performed with finesse in the Galician language by Mercedes Peón, Chris Rigler original "Stony Run," with Basque percussion from the duo Oreka TX, and the Basque-flavored Paul Mchaís tune "Donastra." Other highlights include the stunning Alasdair Fraser solo air "Theme for Scotland." The "Spark," which begins on a slow air and then breaks into a jocular tune, and the show stopping 8-minute final track "Tail Toddle Finale," which is a medley of Scottish dance tunes that drive the audience wild.

Skyedance-Live in Spain is a great example of the inter-Celtic collaborations going on in the current Celtic music scene. Those who have been hesitant to explore the new Celtic music realms within Spain may find this album to be a good starting point. This is definitely the best Skyedance album so far.

CD Reviews

Ancient Chord Music
CD AND CONCERT REVIEWS BY DENNIS R. STONE

Ancient Chord Music is a great example of the inter-Celtic collaborations going on in the current Celtic music scene. Those who have been hesitant to explore the new Celtic music realms within Spain may find this album to be a good starting point. This is definitely the best Skyedance album so far.
Roadhog’s Laundry
WORD AND MUSIC ©FRED STARNER

ROADHOG’S LAUNDRY
Words and Music ©Fred Starner

Roadhog’s bag was a little rank, when he entered that Miami bank
He wasn’t there to do his laundry.
His purpose was crystal clear — driven by a basic fear:
Something was wrong in his human frame!

Chorus:
That’s the ticket ROADHOG, he shared a mulligan stow
That’s the ticket ROADHOG, he passed out General Grants too —
That’s the ticket ROADHOG, all the Bums said, “Thanks!”
Cause he packed a grip and took a trip, went cullin’ on them banks.

He was willing to do prison time; this was no “nickel and dime”;
It was a real Federal Number!
But when you’re down on your luck, and you ain’t got the bucks,
You just might jump from a moving train

So Roadhog held his Laundry Bag, he says, “I hate to be a nag,
You just might jump from a moving train."
He must go down to the seas again, for the call of the running tide
Is a wild call and a clear call that may not be denied;
And all I ask is a windy day with the white clouds flying.
And the flung spray and the blown spume, and the seagulls crying.

John Madfield

Page 7

Dick Holdstock Finds California Gold

By BILL HOWARD

I grew up by the sea. I love the smell of the ocean and the songs remind me of that time,” says Dick Holdstock, remembering his boyhood in Kent. “Once more, once more, you go to sea once more...” Dick recites softly. And to spend your teenage and adult life in California is to be faced with the longest coastline of any other state and with a history of Spanish galleons capturing riches for the king, east coast traders coming for hides, China Clippers laden with tea, silk, and innumerable shipwrecks. Holdstock’s interest in music, then, may have started with country-western and bluegrass, but it was California that led him to the music of the Gold Rush and back to the sea.

Taking a job with the Placer County Health Department pushed Dick toward both California traditions and a re-exam-ination of his own roots. His Health Department job placed him at the 1960 Winter Olympics where he heard the sharing of folk music from around the world, and Placer County was one of the focal points of the California Gold Rush. Soon he was playing in two groups that highlighted California music: The Foothill Five and Motherlode and the Four Diamond Stude.

“I guess that I started with an interest in California songs because I live here,” says Dick. “I was interested in the variety of songs that came from the Gold Rush. ‘Old Pat’, whose real name was John A. Stone, put books of songs together. He wrote songs like ‘Sweet Betsy from Pike’. Half the songs on my first California Sea Song album were by him. As in broadside ballads, he took current tunes and added topical words about mining and the way things were in those days. The songs give an accurate picture of the common miner and preserve a number of views of real life.”

In Northern California, Dick found pockets of British tradition amid the bluegrass. Working with the Health Dept., he brought him around to towns like Penryn, which had a cricket team that beat San Francisco’s in the 1800’s. “Not far from Auburn is a town called Grass Valley in which the miners were all Cornish. I saw the last two performances of the Cornish Men’s choir, which CBS had recorded singing one mile underground. There was still a couple of shops with the finest Cornish pasties you’d ever want to eat. Collectors have found hymns in Grass Valley that haven’t been sung in Britain for fifty to one hundred years.”

Performing Gold Rush material has brought Dick back to another facet of his British roots and another tributary of the California crossroads: sea songs. For some time Dick had been performing at Northern California folk festivals, sharing the stage with California singers like Sam Histon, and he had begun re-discovering the sea ballads. In the late 1960’s and early 1970’s Dick went to the San Diego Folk Festival and sang sea chanteys outside the auditorium. As a child he’d heard his grandfather sing them, the old sailors who built the Thames barges in his hometown of Sittingbourne had sung them and the songbook at school had several chanteys, and so Dick had sung them. “They are work songs and give me a feeling of the sea — almost a smell.”

Dick soon found that folks liked he way he’d sing chanteys, including a Scots singer name Allan MacLeod, with whom he has partnered for more than two decades. Dick along with Dick’s wife Carol and Allan, will perform together this September at the final Mountain Lion Folk Festival. Allan MacLeod, with whom he has partnered for more than two decades. Dick along with Dick’s wife Carol and Allan, will perform together this September at the final Mountain Lion Folk Festival.

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Both Fred Starner and Roadhog will appear at Mountain Lion Folk Weekend, at Camp De Benneville Pines, September 20, 21 and 22. For further information call (818) 248-1510 or email valleyfolk@earthlink.net.
This is going to be a shorter column than usual, mostly because it hasn’t been a great summer season so far for CDs. Even the Irish music releases are slowing down, but there is promise of a few good ones on Green Linnet in the upcoming months including new ones by Lunasa, the wonderful duo of Martin Hayes & Dennis Cahill, and best of all the new one by Chicago fiddler Liz Carroll with the most marvelous John Doyle as guitar accompanist. More about those next time, but meanwhile, here’s what I’ve been listening to late, featuring (for a change, you say?) some non-Irish music.

Salif Keita, known as “The Golden Voice of Mali” is one of the finest singers in the world from a country (and area) in West Africa (Senegal is right next door) with plenty of them. His new CD Moffo (Universal) (!) is helped by being completely acoustic and lacking the occasional overproduction of his previous releases. His voice is glorious as usual. There’s also Fight to Win ([MCA, 2001] (!), a fairly new release by Femi Kuti, son of late Nigerian music legend Fela (whose reissues are also available on MCA, and are highly recommended). Femi, like his father, is a great bandleader, an expert at guiding long grooves similar to what James Brown was doing in the early 1970’s, very percussion-heavy including multiple traditional “talking drum” players, over which he plays a fine jazz-influenced saxophone, and sings caustic lyrics critical of political corruption.

Meanwhile, there are a few new releases coming out of England that I’m quite excited about. These might be a bit hard to find if you don’t live near a Tower or Virgin Megastores (even they might not have these in stock, but could order them). The inventors of British folk/rock, Fairport Convention, have a new box set called unCONVENTIONal, [an English import from Free Reed] (!) a history from 1966 to date of the longest lasting folk/rock band I can think of. In some respects they’re the Grateful Dead of England, a road show that keeps going on and on. In their heyday, however, they really did invent a style of electrifying British folk music. There was no precedent for how bassist Ashley Hutchings and drummer Dave Mattacks, in particular, approached the tunes. Finding a continuity over four CDs that represent four decades, at least 25 lineups, and numerous stylistic shifts is a truly remarkable job. A good companion to Fairport’s Martin Carthy box set reviewed here a few decades, at least 25 lineups, and numerous stylistic shifts is a truly remarkable job. A good companion to Fairport’s Martin Carthy box set reviewed here a few decades ago. You might also wish to hear Grandson of Morris On (Talking Elephant) (!) a sequel to Morris On, a record from the 1970’s that featured some fabulous electric versions of Morris Dance tunes, featuring members of the above-mentioned Fairport, as well as Martin Carthy and John Kirkpatrick. The above return here, in addition to Jon Moore, former Tiger Moth and Edward II and the Red Hot Polkas guitarist (and a heck of a nice guy). Don’t make the mistake that many local record stores have made and put this up in your Celtic section. First off, the English are not Celts—ask an Irish person if you need clarification on that—and second of all, many of these musicians have made a conscious effort to play English rather than Irish traditional music, not out of nationalistic pride, but rather a sense that A) they couldn’t do it as well as the Irish could anyway, and B), their own country had many wonderful tunes that were being overlooked. I agree on both counts.

Lastly, though the summer’s almost over, there’s still some great free shows to be seen at Grand Performances in downtown Los Angeles. This is a wonderful place to see bands, with a luxurious outdoor space near MOCA, with a stage surrounded by fountains and pools. Check www.grandperformances.org, or call (213) 687-2150 for more information. See you next time, by which time I hope to have more to tell you about.

Dave Soars is the bass player for LA Celtic band Craicmore, an aspiring singer/songwriter, and a print journalist with over fifteen years experience. His column features happenings on the folk music scene both locally and nationally, with commentary on recordings, as well as live shows, and occasionally films and books. Please feel free to e-mail him at toomanyhatz@yahoo.com or write him c/o FolkWorks.

**RATING SCALe:**

[!] Classic, sure to be looked back on as such for generations to come.

[!] Great, one of the year’s finest. If you have even a vague interest in the artist, consider this my whole-hearted recommendation that you go out and purchase it immediately.

[!] Very good, with considerable appeal for a fan of the artist(s). If you purchase it, you likely won’t be disappointed.

[ X] Good/solid, what you would expect.

[ ] Avoid. Either ill-conceived, or artistically inept in some way.

**SEASONAL STAND-OUTS:**

**Tuesday September 10 7:30 p.m.**
Poet, actress, film maker, playwright, and political activist artist S. Pearl Sharp will read and perform her powerful work. Absolutely not to be missed! $5.00 Admission

**Saturday September 28 7:00 p.m.**
The Divas of Storytelling - Part One

Featuring

Barbara Clark - A great teller of personal stories
Vicki Juditz - Another great teller of personal stories
Debra Olson Tolar - A powerful teller of folk tales
And Kathleen Zundell - Another powerful teller of folk tales

Dinner at 7:00 p.m. & Show at 8:00 p.m. • $15.00 for Dinner and Show
For reservations call (626) 398-8654

And all these great events are taking place at the warm and wonderful, cozy and pleasant Cafe Culture located at 1359 North Alhambra Drive, Pasadena.
OGM: On-going Dance-page 12 • SE: Special Events-page 20

**FOLK Happenings at a Glance. Check out details by following the page references.**

**SCOTTISH (OGD)**

- Scottish (OGD)
- Scandinavian (OGD)
- Morris (OGD)
- Israeli (OGD)

**POLISH (OGD)**

- Polish (OGD)
- Scandinavian (OGD)
- Morris (OGD)
- Israeli (OGD)

**ARCO IRIS (SE)**

- Arco Iris (SE)
- Scottish (OGD)

**KARAN CASEY & MARCIA BERMAN**

- Karan Casey & Marcia Berman (SE)
- Scottish (OGD)

**BRIAN BOWERS (SE)**

- Brian Bowers (SE)
- Canadian (OGD)

**RICK BOWERS (SE)**

- Rick Bowers (SE)
- Korean (OGD)

**BALKAN (OGD)**

- Balkan (OGD)
- Greek (OGD)
- Contra (OGD)

**FAMILY SING-A-LONG (SE)**

- Family Sing-a-long (SE)
- Scottish (OGD)

**MUSIC FESTIVAL (SE)**

- Music Festival (SE)
- Scottish (OGD)

**SEBASTOPOL CELTIC MUSIC (SE)**

- Sebastopol Celtic Music (SE)
- Scottish (OGD)

**SEBASTOPOL CELTIC FESTIVAL (SE)**

- Sebastopol Celtic Festival (SE)
- Scottish (OGD)

**JANIS IAN (SE)**

- Janis Ian (SE)
- Scottish (OGD)

**TAJ MAHAL (SE)**

- Taj Mahal (SE)
- Scottish (OGD)

**TAJ MAHAL TRIO (SE)**

- Taj Mahal Trio (SE)
- Scottish (OGD)

**SUCCESS STORY (SE)**

- Success Story (SE)
- Scottish (OGD)

**THE PASSION OF SPANISH JEWS (SE)**

- The Passion of Spanish Jews (SE)
- Scottish (OGD)

**THE JOEL RAFAEL BAND**

- The Joel Rafael Band (SE)
- Scottish (OGD)

**THE JOE'S JAZZ BAND (SE)**

- The Joe's Jazz Band (SE)
- Canadian (OGD)

**THE PASSION OF SPANISH JEWS (SE)**

- The Passion of Spanish Jews (SE)
- Scottish (OGD)

**THE PASSION OF SPANISH JEWS (SE)**

- The Passion of Spanish Jews (SE)
- Scottish (OGD)

**MOUNTAIN LION**

- Mountain Lion (SE)
- Scottish (OGD)

**VOCAL TRADS OF EAST & WEST (SE)**

- Vocal Trads of East & West (SE)
- Scottish (OGD)

**WATTS TOWERS DAY OF DRUMS (SE)**

- Watts Towers Day of Drums (SE)
- Scottish (OGD)

**THE DIVAS OF STORYTELLING (SE)**

- The Divas of Storytelling (SE)
- Scottish (OGD)

**WATTS TOWERS DAY OF DRUMS (SE)**

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- Watts Towers Day of Drums (SE)
- Scottish (OGD)

**MUSIC FESTIVAL (SE)**

- Music Festival (SE)
- Scottish (OGD)

**FOLK MUSIC WEEKEND (SE)**

- Folk Music Weekend (SE)
- Scottish (OGD)

**FOLK HAPPIE-ENGLISH ELLA LOYNT (SE)**

- Folk Happie-English Ella Loynt (SE)
- Scottish (OGD)

**THE PARADISE OF SPANISH JEWS (SE)**

- The Paradise of Spanish Jews (SE)
- Scottish (OGD)

**TARGET DOG (SE)**

- Target Dog (SE)
- Scottish (OGD)

**SEBERG CELTIC FESTIVAL (SE)**

- Seberg Celtic Festival (SE)
- Scottish (OGD)

**GREAT HUI HUNGRY BROTHERS (SE)**

- Great Hungry Brothers (SE)
- Scottish (OGD)

**DE MEXICO (SE)**

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**JOHNNY COLEMAN (SE)**

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Folk Happenings at a Glance. Check out details by following the page references.

OGM: On-going Music-page 9 • OGD: On-going Dance-page 12 • SE: Special Events-page 20

**OCTOBER PICKS**

ODEY RAYS, BARRY SIMMONS, PHIL CHRISTIE (SE)

BLACKWELL, MICHAEL & HEISIG (SE)

CHEESE TARTIFLIONS (SE)

ANDRESA SHAMARRA (SE)

SMOOTH HARRIS (SE)

JOAN CHERRY BAGGIE & DAVE COLE (SE)

HOLDSTOCK & MURPHY (SE)

NAOMI HOBBS (SE)

DAN CRARY & BEPPE GAMETTA (SE)

**CONTINUED BELOW**

**FOLK WORKS OCTOBER 2002**

**SUNDAY**

**MONDAY**

**TUESDAY**

**WEDNESDAY**

**THURSDAY**

**FRIDAY**

**SATURDAY**

**1**

CHINA ALBIREXNO (SE)

BELA FLECK & THE FLECKTONES (SE)

MUSIC FESTIVAL (SE)

PARIS COMBO (SE)

**2**

Amirani (OOG)

Bakun (OOG)

Africans (OOG)

Center (OOG)

**3**

International (OOG)

Israel (OOG)

Ethiopia (OOG)

Sweden (OOG)

**4**

International (OOG)

Iran (OOG)

Ethiopia (OOG)

Venezuela (OOG)

**5**

iran (OOG)

Ethiopia (OOG)

Italy (OOG)

Greece (OOG)

**6**

Kulak’s Woodshed (OGM)

Viva Fresh (OGM)

Scottish (OGD)

Morris (OGD)

**7**

Kulak’s Woodshed (OGM)

Viva Fresh (OGM)

Scottish (OGD)

Morris (OGD)

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Kulak’s Woodshed (OGM)

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Kulak’s Woodshed (OGM)

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Morris (OGD)

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**31**

Kulak’s Woodshed (OGM)

Viva Fresh (OGM)

Scottish (OGD)

Morris (OGD)

**OCTOBER PICKS (CONT.)**

DAN CRARY & BEPPE GAMETTA. About 10 years ago, Beppe Gametta and Dan Cray joined forces combining their love of the guitar with the roots traditions of Italy and the U.S. Not surprisingly, this is a devastatingly popular duo and audiences are treated to a performance which are so rejuvenating as well as entertaining. BLACKWELL, MICHAEL & BRENNING. A great trio playing swing and Bluegrass. Mandolinist Kenny Blackwell, guitarist Dorian Michael and bassist Pepper Reynold have all the makings of a truly wonderful sound! CHEF’KYE PYLE (“Chef” Pyle’s music is kind, insightful, catchy, possessing a true hunger, but of folk imagery and stories of people and places he’s been.” — Jon/Mt. Chocorua, New Hampshire)
**FREE FOLK/TRAD CONCERTS**

FREE Folk/Trad events in September/October. They may be part of a festival or a special event with varying admission prices. Please look under Festivals, or Special Events for other concert listings.

### SKIRBALL CULTURAL CENTER

- **Cafe Z** ongoing series of free live music concerts every Saturday from 12-2pm
  - **Joey's World**
  - **Steph and the Wild Horses**
  - **Travis Merwin**

- **Ebenezer Baptist Church**
  - Inspirational Service from 6:00–7:30pm

- **Jewish Life in the American West**
  - Treasures, traditions, and storytelling of Jewish Heritage in Santa Fe, New Mexico, explores the inspiration to its audiences; and the natural embodiment of nightingale, the natural embodiment of Garip Bulbul—Turkish Music

- **Children's International Festival of Masks**
  - Noon-3:00pm
  - Rob Padilla
  - Participate in tales and contemporary themes in a magical, musical performance.

- **World Stage in CSUN Student Union Courtyard**
  - Noon-1:00pm
  - Grupo Folklorico Indigena Oaxaqueña
  - A colorful celebration of music and dance from Oaxaca, Mexico with a 40-member banda filarmónica (brass band) and dancers.

- **Los Angeles Theatre Center**
  - 514 South Spring Street, Downtown L.A.
  - Noon-1:00pm
  - Los Angeles Ballet
  - Argentinian tango.

- **In and Around CTMS Center for Folk Music**
  - 8TH ANNUAL SEBASTOPOL CELTIC MUSIC FESTIVAL
    - September 21-22
    - Saturday: Traditional ceilidh, ceilidh-band, and sea chanties, Louis Killen, Storytime, When Pigs Fly, Bill Graydon.
    - Sunday: All day workshops and evening concert devoted to traditional Scots, Irish, Scottish, French, Norwegian, Swedish, and children's music. 
  - JULIAN BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL
    - September 21-22
    - Saturday: Traditional Irish and American music.
    - Sunday: Traditional and contemporary bluegrass, train songs and whistles. Train-related vendors and displays, arts and crafts, and children's entertainment.
  - **JULIAN FOLK DANCE FESTIVAL**
    - Saturday, September 21-22
    - Folklorico and Folklorico with the shadow theater of Bali
    - Performance of classic Guatemalan marimba music.

- **San Diego Folk Heritage and City of Poway**
  - 2ND ANNUAL TRAIN SONG FESTIVAL
    - September 28
    - Saturday: Scottish, Irish, Bluegrass, Old-time, South American Harp, and a musical accompaniment of Pacific Asia Museum: Thai

**FANTASTIC FUN FOLK FESTIVALS**

**WORLD FESTIVAL OF SACRED MUSIC**

- September 21
- **9am-6:30pm**
- **6:30-9pm**

**DANA POINT TALL SHIPS FESTIVAL**

- Friday-Sunday, September 20-22
- **Sea Chanteys, Losis Killen, Storytime, When Pigs Fly**
- **Bill Dennyup and Connie Allen**
- **Percussive traditional music of Indonesia.**

**AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATIVE ARTS**

- **6:00-7:30pm Performers from the Greater Los Angeles Area**
- **Dance Company portrays the many states of Mexico through traditional movement.**
- **Sunday, September 22 1-5pm**
- **2:00-4:00pm Pacific Asia Museum presents a children's craft workshop.**
- **1:00-3:00pm**
- **3:00-6:00pm**

**CARNEGIE HALL**

- **Yuval Ron Ensemble featuring Najwa Gibran**
- **Rare collaboration between composer Yuval Ron and singer Najwa Gibran**
- **Saturday, September 28 10am-6pm**
- **WATTS TOWERS DAY OF THE DRUMS**
- **Saturday, September 28 10am-6pm**

**PLAZA DE LA RAZA**

- **Sunday, October 6 10am to 5pm**
- **Drama and Dance about people of two territories and the history of the Dia de los Muertos.**
- **2nd Annual Train Song Festival**
- **Sunday, October 6**
- **Train songs and whistles. Train-related vendors and displays, arts and crafts, and children's entertainment.**
- **Percussive traditional music of Indonesia.**

**AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATIVE ARTS**

- **Saturday-Sunday September 21-22**
- **9am-6:30pm**
- **Sunday, September 22 1-5pm**
- **10:00–10:25am**
- **10:25–10:50am**
- **10:50–11:15am**
- **11:15am-12:30pm AMERICAN FOLKLORE & FOLK MUSIC celebrate cultural diversity through movement and dance**
- **3:30-5:30pm Chin Shih Chinese Dance Ensemble**
- **Monday-Saturday 9am-12pm**
- **6:00-7:30pm Performers from the Greater Los Angeles Area**
- **2nd Annual Train Song Festival**
- **Sunday, October 6**
- **10:00–10:25am**
- **10:25–10:50am**
- **10:50–11:15am**
- **11:15am-12:30pm AMERICAN FOLKLORE & FOLK MUSIC celebrate cultural diversity through movement and dance**
- **3:30-5:30pm Chin Shih Chinese Dance Ensemble**
- **Monday-Saturday 9am-12pm**
- **At the end of Ocean Park Blvd**

**FOLKWORKS**

- **September-October 2002**
- **Folk/Trad events in September/October. They may be part of a festival or a special event with varying admission prices. Please look under Festivals, or Special Events for other concert listings.**
- **The listing here under the venue or producer rather than by date. All Special Events are listed by date on page 20.**
- **FREE FOLK/TRAD CONCERTS**
  - **Ebenezer Baptist Church**
  - Inspirational Service from 6:00–7:30pm
  - **Performers from the Greater Los Angeles Area**
  - **Treasures, traditions, and storytelling of Jewish Heritage in Santa Fe, New Mexico, explores the inspiration to its audiences; and the natural embodiment of Garip Bulbul—Turkish Music**

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Concertina History, Design, & Manufacture

The term concertina refers to several classes of instruments. In contrast to accordions, all concertinas have diatonic scale rows, and a concertina is designed to be played with bellows. Most concertinas are built with two rows of reeds; some are hexagonal ‘squeezeboxes’ with bellows and a merry, agile sound. It is a concertina—outside of the British Isles it is uncommon to see a concertina played live. You’re more likely to hear it in the hands of an expert player, the sound and effect are unforgettable.

Concertina History

The term concertina has several variations. It comes from the Italian concerto, meaning ‘rivalry’ or ‘competition’. By the 1830s, the word was used to describe a type of small, portable, hand-blown instrument. The concertina was developed in Europe in the early 19th century and became popular in the British Isles by 1850. The English makers took this design and began to build concertinas in a concertina shape, with low notes on the left end and high notes on the right, and was introduced to the U.S. and Canada after the 1930s. Folk musicians in the U.S. and Canada would often add a concertina to their repertoire, especially for song accompaniment. Today, Tim Laycock has used the concertina as his primary instrument to accompany many musicians, including Noel Hill, Jackie McCarthy, and Ewan Flook.

Concertina Design

Concertinas are diatonic instruments, meaning they only play the notes of a pentatonic scale. Concertinas are typically played with a set of bellows and a set of reeds. The reeds are made of metal or plastic and are driven with a bellows. The sound is produced by the vibration of the reeds, which are typically set in a resonator. The resonator is usually made of wood or metal and is designed to amplify the sound of the reeds.

Concertina Maintenance

Concertinas require periodic maintenance to keep them in good working order. Maintenance typically includes cleaning the reeds, checking the bellows for leaks, and checking the tension of the bellows. Some concertinas also require annual or semi-annual tuning, as the pitch of the instrument can change over time.

Concertina Prices

Modern concertinas can range in price from $200 to over $1000, depending on the quality of the instrument. Top-quality concertinas made by companies like Wheatstone (now owned by the Stagi company) can cost upwards of $2000.

Concertina Players

Concertina players are known for their ability to play fast and intricate melodies. The concertina is a challenging instrument to play, and players often spend many years perfecting their technique. Some concertina players are also known for their ability to play songs in different keys, and some players are able to play an entire concertina song in just one key.

Concertina Applications

Concertinas are used in a variety of musical genres, including classical, folk, and traditional music. Some concertina players are known for their ability to play fast and intricate melodies, while others specialize in playing traditional tunes. Some concertinas are also used in modern music, such as jazz and rock.

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The term concertina was introduced to England by 1850. The English makers took this design and began to build concertinas in a concertina shape, with low notes on the left end and high notes on the right, and was introduced to the U.S. and Canada after the 1930s. Folk musicians in the U.S. and Canada would often add a concertina to their repertoire, especially for song accompaniment. Today, Tim Laycock has used the concertina as his primary instrument to accompany many musicians, including Noel Hill, Jackie McCarthy, and Ewan Flook.

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FEAT URED ORG A NIZ ATION

CALTECH FOLK MUSIC SOCIETY

BY N ICK Smith

About twenty years ago, a Caltech graduate student attended those immortal words, “Let’s put on a show.” Brian Toby, a grad student in chemistry, had decided that the Caltech area was folk-deprived and that there really ought to be somewhere east of McCabe’s where you could hear folk music. (Bear in mind that the early 1980’s were the gloomy, desolate period when many older folk venues had gone dark.) Being the determined sort, Brian set about to accomplish three important tasks:

1. Convincing the Caltech community that there ought to be a folk music society.
2. Convincing the surrounding community that folk concerts were a good thing, and to be attended;
3. Convincing artists that the series would draw enough people to pay.

For the first season, the “Society” really did consist of one person and whoever he could talk into helping out. Brian put on some outstanding shows, including one of the last local visits by the late Stan Rogers. Slowly, as word filtered through the community, more of an organization took shape, but it wasn’t until Brian left, after the first few years, that people began to realize how much work he had been doing. He signed the artists, booked the hall, wrote the publicity, kept the books, set up the hall, did the sound, MC’d the shows, and in his spare time sold tickets and the recordings of the artists, or at least so it seemed. In fact, when he left, the work got divided up into an ongoing committee, a structure that continues to this day.

The Caltech Folk Music Society is a very loose organization of people from the greater Caltech/Pasadena area, along with friends and just about anyone willing to help out. In addition to a concert series, there is a bi-monthly newsletter that, until the advent of Folkworks, was the only regularly- printed calendar of events covering folk music, dance and storytelling in the area. The shows have used three different halls on the Caltech campus: Dabney Hall Lounge, a 1920’s wood-paneled room that was designed for the sound of strings; Winnett Lounge, a much more modern room for intimate concerts with individual performers or small groups, and Ramo Auditorium, for the really big shows. All are situated in the center of the Caltech campus in Pasadena.

What kinds of artists have played the concert series? Well...Stan Rogers, Utah Phillips, Peggy Seeger, John McCutcheon, Si Kahn, Dan Cray, Martin Simpson, Harvey Reid, Steve Gillette, Cindy Mangsen, Michael Smith, Tom Lewis, Chris Proctor, Katy Moffatt, Andy Irene, Rosalie Sorrels, William Jackson, Patrick Ball...then there are the BANDS: Marley’s Ghost, Iron Mountain String Band, Cache Valley Drifters, Acoustiscats, New West, Golden Bough, Danu, Teada, Churlra, Sully, Wafef, Banish Misfortune, Old Mother Logo, Laurie Lewis & Grant Street, Kevin Burke & Open House, Copperline, the Cyrus Clarke Band, Tarras, Bluegrass Etc., the Rincon Ramblers.

If that sounds unusually eclectic, it is, and deliberately so. The series has always featured a blend of the traditional and the original. The goal was always to bring musicians and audiences together, not as simple as it sounds. Every season, some of the shows feature musicians who have no real local following, but who are good. Sometimes the shows feature something a little offbeat, like a musician mainly known for blues or jazz, or a sea chantyman. Because the series isn’t a profit-making venture, the goals are different than for most commercial venues. It isn’t a matter of how much money changes hands, it’s about the audiences and the musicians coming away with the feeling that they want to return. Most of the ticket money goes to the performers, with the rest paying for publicity, equipment and other ongoing costs. At the end of each season, if the shows that made money paid for the shows that lost money, and if the audiences and the performers all went away happy, then it’s been a good year.

The fall 2002 season includes a very special event: Fairport Convention’s 35th anniversary tour includes only one weekend night in southern California, and it is at Caltech. Other concerts this season include Scotland’s Old Blind Dogs, guitarist Dan Cray and Beppe Gambetta, legendary songwriter Dave Mallett, singer-songwriter Cosy Sheridan, and a special Christmas concert with Brocéliande.

Nick Smith, who got his journalistic start by writing folk music reviews for The California Tech, is currently the concert coordinator for the Caltech Folk Music Society, and works with several non-profits in the folk arts, as well as being a storyteller.

CD REVIEWS

BY TOM “TEAKWAN” SCHULTE

Various Artists
Sounds & Ballads of the Bituminous Miners
Rounder

www.rounder.com  • info@rounder.com

With as many Rounder Select editions from the Library of Congress Archive of Folk Culture, Songs and Ballads of the Bituminous Miners is an encyclopedic look at the culture that spawned this music. This is a companion recording the Rounder’s Songs and Ballads of the Anthracite Miners. This album of mining songs came about through the work of folklorist George Korson, an Alan Lomax of the minefields. Korson has not heard this material from hardworking citizens of Alabama, Kentucky, Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia. The reasons for this are partly geological. This is because the bituminous (soft) coal lies in more widely scattered regions than the centralized anthracite coal. So, more regional influence is picked up as some tracks have a gospel-blues feel while others have a guitar-based old time feel. The 25-page booklet exhaustively details each track and the culture that spawned these songs. (4.5)

Various Artists
Deep River of Song: Bahamas 1935, Vol. 2
Rounder Records

www.alan-lomax.com  • info@rounder.com

At the age of 20 Alan Lomax had already collected voluminous amounts of folk song from the American South. At that time he arrived in the Bahamas to find another wealth of material. This is the second volume Rounder has released exploring the second volume. Featuring group vocals with handclaps and drums, this is a bouncing, lively compendium of game and dance songs from the subtropical paradise.

Tom “Teakwan” Schulte
POB 1350, Royal Oak, MI 48068-1350
T 313.584.4079  • www.deeprivermusic.com

Outsight Radio Hours Webcasts:
Sundays 6pm-8pm EST — www.new-sounds.net
T 24/7 — www.live365.com/play/94510

THE CALTECH FOLK MUSIC SOCIETY CONCERTS

All shows 8:00 pm
California Institute of Technology
1200 East California Blvd., Pasadena
Dabney Hall Lounge, except as noted.

RESERVATIONS:
(626) 395-4652 or (888) 2-CALTECH

Friday, September 6
OLD BLIND DOGS
A fine Scottish group that blends traditional and modern music from their Aberdeenshire home with rhythms from around the world. ($15 general, $5 children & Caltech students)

Friday, September 20
FAIRPORT CONVENTION WITH EQUATION
Fairport Convention has been a legend for its 35 years of recording and touring. Equation is a young folk-rock band with outstanding vocals. ($18 general, $10 children, $5 for Caltech students)

Friday, October 11
DAVID MALLETT
This legendary songwriter is making a rare visit. His songs have been recorded by Pete Seeger, Arlo Guthrie, Emmylou Harris and a host of others. Now hear how they were meant to sound. ($15 general, $5 for Caltech students & children)

Saturday, October 19
DAN CRAY & BEPPE GAMBETTA
Every season we try to present at least one outstanding guitarist. This time, we’ve managed to get two, sharing a stage to put on some dazzling displays of fingerpicking virtuosity. It’s been ages since Dan Cray last graced our stage, and the first visit for Beppe Gambetta ($12 general. $5 Caltech students & children)

Saturday, November 9
COZY SHERIDAN
Another first time appearance in our series, and a rare visit to the area for this sanger-songwriter. ($12 general, $5 Caltech students & children)

Saturday, December 21
BROCELIANDE
A special winter holiday show by this Celtic group from the Bay area. They are named after an enchanted forest in Brittany, and their music justifies the name. ($12 general, $5 Caltech students & children)

http://www.its.caltech.edu/~folkmusic/
The Song of the Loom

BY ANNE DINSdale

Singing to the Spider Woman for inspiration, Singing to pass the tedious hours, Singing for the joy of creation; and Singing of the beauty above and around her

Although the Navajo learned how to weave quite recently, the process of weaving has been with humankind since the Neolithic period, about 8,000 years ago. Learning to make fabric enabled people to discard heavy, smelly vermin-infested clothing from galls and gave them light clothing for warmer weather. The basic weaving method was essentially the same then as it is now. Numerous strong threads are laid out parallel to each other on some kind of frame that keeps them taut. These foundation threads are known as the warp. Next, the weft thread—which can be softer and less sturdy than the warp threads—is carried by a shuttle over and under the warp threads from one side of the loom to the other. On the next row the weft thread crosses under-over, alternating which warp thread it covers. These threads are packed tightly together as they are laid down, thus creating the woven fabric. This simple over-under pattern is called “plain weave.”

One of the earliest looms developed is the horizontal ground loom of Middle Kingdom Egypt, still used today by the Bedouin women. This loom is a wooden frame that is pegged to the ground. A weaver kneels at one side and passes a shuttle holding the weft thread from one side of the loom to the other. On the next row the weft thread is inserted between the warp threads and woven in while the weaver kneels on the opposite side. This person completes the row and passes the shuttle back to the other side. Another early type of loom is the warp-weighted loom, which spread across Europe and is still used by women in rural Scandinavia. On this loom, each warp thread is suspended from a beam of wood and weighted with a stone or clay weight. A weaver produces her cloth by weaving the warp across the warp and packing the woven threads upward.

In Europe, well into the 20th century, the women often sang or chanted ritual songs to set the rhythm for the endless repetitive motions of their handwork. A slow drone chant also has the interesting cognitive effect of blunting the workers’ awareness of aching muscles and the long hours spent at the task. Homer depicts the lady Calypso working alone on her desert island.

“’And she, singing indoors with a beautiful voice, Wove at her loom, walking up and down with the golden bobbin.’”

Being alone, Calypso had to provide her own entertainment. In her book, Women’s Work, the First 20,000 Years, Elizabeth Wayland Barber writes, “In a charming scene on a Hallstatt urn, we see one woman spinning, another weaving at a great warp-weighted loom, two others with their hands above their heads apparently dancing on a ridge or singing a stringed instrument similar to a lyre.”

In South America and Mexico women often weave on a backstrap loom. The backstraps are attached to one end of a belt that the weaver passes behind her back and ties around her waist. She ties the warp to a pole or tree then sits or kneels, adjusting her body to provide the necessary warp tension. She weaves back and forth with her shuttle and winds the finished material around a wood stick. More familiar to most of us is the table or floor loom that’s used by contemporary hand weavers. This is a frame that holds the warp tightly by winding it around a back beam and around a front beam after it is woven. The individual warp threads are threaded through heddles that are raised and lowered by foot pedals. More heddles, the more intricate and colorful the design can be. The warp threads are also threaded through a reed attached to a beater (or a hatters) that packs the weft tightly as it is woven. A shuttle holds the weft thread. By using her hands and feet to manipulate the threads and her eyes to follow a pattern (called a draft), the weaver creates a multitude of designs. These threading drafts tell the weaver which heddles to raise or lower, what colors to use and in which order. Most new weavers are struck by the similarities between threading drafts and musical scores in both of which certain repeats and patterns are more pleasing than others.

“Associating musical notes with colors has proven more successful for me,” says Tracy Kasnert in Handwoven Magazine, Sept 2000 - an issue titled Loom Music.”

Doramy Keasbey writes that “Written music bears such a striking resemblance to drafts for weaving that it can make an weaver feel at home. If you are familiar with music you may notice additional parallels between music and weaving. A full weave on a loom can become a marvellous stringed instrument with organ-like pedals capable of sustaining a rhythmic beat.”

Using music as an inspiration comes naturally to tapestry weaver Jennifer Koehler. He sang at an early age in a choir associated with the Vienna Boys Choir and was taken with the relationship between numbers and the beat in music. This led him to explore the geometry and proportion inherent in the artistic process of weaving. His designs with progressions based on geometry and arithmetic have produced weavings that pulsate with rhythmic and vibrational patterning.

Another blend of music and visual art is the series of silk scarves by Tomoe Edwards that she based on musical works by Byrd and Masters. She assigned the color red to the note “C” on the scale. The other primary colors are assigned to “F” and “A.” All other colors are arranged to represent the remaining notes in the same order they occupy on the color wheel. A simple shift in the color-to-note relationship changes the color order.

Although weaving comes from many different inspirations and takes many different forms, “You can tell if someone knows the weaver’s song just by looking at their weaving,” says Tiana Bighorse, Tuba City.

Local stores for weavers:

• Wildfiver
1453-e 14th street - Santa Monica, CA 90404 (310) 458-2748 info@wildfiver.com www.wildfiver.com

• Weaver's Cottage
15559 W. Sierra Hwy. Canyon Country, CA 91351 (888) 251-5033 sandy@weaverscottage.com www.weaverscottage.com

• Village Spinning & Weaving
425 Alisal Road, Solvang CA 93463 (805) 666-1192 www.villageweave@earthlink.net

• Southern California Handweavers' Guild
www.schorg

Suggested Reading:
The Song of the Loom — New Traditions in Navajo Weavings, Frederick Dockstader Handwoven Magazine, September/October 2000

Women’s Work - The First 20,000 Years, Elizabeth Barber
Dear FolkWorks Readers,

You’ve told us you like the paper. You’ve let us know you find it informative. You’ve said that it’s educational. You’ve complimented us on the way it looks. You’ve written to say it’s helped you plan your social life. You’ve left messages that it’s a great music & dance resource. You’ve recognized that it’s important to the L.A. folk scene. You’ve even helped with articles and distribution. You’ve done everything but write a check (and we know you’ve meant to).

Truth is, we can’t go on without your financial support. Just $55 a year from at least 200 people will keep us going! But, please, don’t leave it up to some other 200 people. We need YOUR $55 or $500 or $1,000. Your help will be greatly appreciated and assure that there will be future issues of FolkWorks.

We need your support. Please don’t wait. Become a member of FolkWorks now. Send in your check for a tax-deductible donation. With it we can continue. Without it we cannot. Help FolkWorks promote Folk and Traditional Arts in Los Angeles – from Appalachian & Irish fiddling to quilt making, African dance. It’s all happening here. Help us let folks know that the Folk and Traditional Arts are alive & well in LA! Thank you for making it possible.

Leda & Steve Shapiro & All the FolkWorks Staff

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P.O. Box 55051
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$18.00 FolkWorks Subscription Only
Thank you for making it possible!
Weekend to be held at Camp de Benneville Pines in the San Bernardino Mountains. Allan and Dick were to become fixtures of art which came from the 19th century's largest international industry and equal-opportunity employer. In order to get the job done and entertain his shipmates, the chanteysman must carry a large repertoire of songs and, if the job goes longer than the given amount of verses in a chanteysman, he must be ready to extemporize. The mix of nationalities, ethnicities and folk music traditions went to create the unique romance of the rolling sea, perhaps helped to lure many an out-of-work laborer into the maritime industry.

A major focus at Mountain Lion has been hobo life and lore, and among the California folks joining Dick are singer-songwriter Fred Stamer who has chronicled hobo life in his songs and Roadside U.S.A., crowned King of the Hoboes at the 1992 Hobo Convention at Britt, Iowa. Dick sees a connection between the sailor's life and that of the hobo: "In the nineteenth century there was a similarity. People were drifters, and for lack of something else to do, you went to sea. You get drunk and out of money, and out of poverty, you go to sea once more… [Later,] you can add the Wobblies, who drifted from town to town, looking for the 'boom.' The analogy is good between the Hobos, shanty boys and chanteysmen—[a] man falls on hard times and ships out. The life is miserable and he jumps ship and becomes a beachcomber. Then he gets another ship. The lumberjack does the same: he goes out to the woods and logs, and when his money in town and goes back into the woods. The hobo does the same."

In fact, according to Dick, there is a definite connection between British seamen, hoboes, and the form of the standard sea chantey: "A lot of guys came to New York in a ship, would jump a train and go to New Orleans to find a ship hauling cotton to England. This is why the chanteyes had call and answering—[the mixing of English sailors and Black stevedores]."

In his two-decade partnership with Allan MacLeod and more recently with his wife Carol, Dick has carried the mingled traditions of California, Britain, and the sea far beyond the borders of the Golden State. Holdstock and MacLeod have performed at Mystic, Connecticut for the past 20 years, and at myriad museums and festivals, and in the fall of 2000 Holdstock and Holdstock performed songs of California and the sea in Britain, Germany and Canada. Meanwhile, the producers of Mountain Lion folk Weekend are excited to have all three join Ken Claydon and Peter Sheeline (who own store of California lore is equally phenomenal), Ross Altman (a luminary in California topic and history) and other expo-

The Internet is a great support mechanism for concertina enthusiasts, whether they want to play or just listen. This is the place to check for details and links to dealers, repairers, classes, performances, and to find other players in your area. The concertina FAQ (www.concertina.info) is another great resource. Networking with other players is helpful to anyone learning to play or contemplating buying a concertina. I have seen as many as six players together in Southern California, which makes it one of the largest concentrations of American players outside of New England. Happy squeezing and listening!

Ken Coles, a native of Pasadena, lives in Indiana. He plays concertina, button accordion, and several brass instruments. He also produces and hosts "Acoustic Blend," a program on WRRB radio at Purdue University. He works as an Elementary school teacher.

CONCERTINA continued from page 14
Alan Lomax
January 31, 1915 - July 19, 2002

Alan Lomax, the folklorist, ethnomusicologist, author, film-maker, and photographer who spent nearly 70 years recording and preserving American roots music, died on July 19, 2002, of a heart attack at Mease Countryside Hospital in Safety Harbor, Florida. He was 87.

Along with his father, John A. Lomax, Alan helped establish the Archive of Folk Song at the Library of Congress. Armed with a 350-pound recording machine built into the back of their car, they embarked on field trips throughout the Deep South and the Southwest in the '30s and early '40s to search out authentic folk musicians and the stories behind their music. One of the people they recorded was a prisoner in Angola, Louisiana, named Huddie Ledbetter, or “Leadbelly,” who gained his release in 1934 thanks to a campaign waged by John Lomax. “It is the voiceless people of the planet who really have in their memories the 90,000 years of human life and wisdom,” Alan Lomax once said. “I’ve devoted my entire life to an obsessive collecting together of the evidence.”

Among the great artists Alan Lomax recorded are: Woody Guthrie, Muddy Waters, Jelly Roll Morton (writing the book “Mister Jelly Roll” in 1950), Son House, Mississippi Fred McDowell, Hobart Smith, and scores of others throughout the U.S. and abroad.

Lomax wrote several books over the years, including Hard Fighting Songs for Hard Hit People (a collection of labor and protest songs compiled with Peter Seeger and Woody Guthrie in 1967) and his National Book Critics Circle Award-winning The Land Where the Blues Began (Pantheon, 1993).


The music has inspired such artists as Bob Dylan and Moby. A recording Lomax made of a prisoner named James Carter singing a work song called “Pv Lazarus” opens the “O Brother, Where Art Thou?” soundtrack.

He is survived by a daughter, Anna Lomax Charetakis, a stepdaughter, Shelley Rottman, and a grandson, Odysseus Desmond Charetakis, all of Holiday, Florida; and a sister, Bess Lomax Hawes, of Northridge, California.

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**SPECIAL EVENTS**

**SUN SEP 1**
- MYSTICAL MUSIC OF THE MIDDLE EAST - 8:00pm
- THE WOODY GUTHRIE SHOW - 9:00pm
- HAZARAN BULBUL - 10:00pm
- LUNASA - 11:00pm

**TUES SEP 2**
- INTERVALS/BALESTRINI - 7:00pm
- NORMA JEAN BERNIER - 8:00pm
- SCOTTISH DANCE - 9:00pm

**WED SEP 3**
- THE PASSION OF SINESHI EKOW - 7:00pm
- PETER PAUL & MARY - 8:00pm
- JULY WILLIAM & BEAD TABIT - 9:00pm

**THU SEP 4**
- DAVE MANN - 7:00pm
- DAVE MANN - 8:00pm
- GREEK FESTIVAL - 9:00pm

**FRI SEP 5**
- THE DIVISION OF STORYTELLING - 7:00pm
- VENUS TRADITIONS OF THE EAST & WEST - 8:00pm
- JANET KLEIN & HER PARLOR BOYS - 9:00pm

**SAT SEP 6**
- WILLIAM PINT & FELICIA DALE - 8:00pm
- LAURENCE JUBER - 9:00pm

**SUN SEP 7**
- THE MOUNTAIN LION SOA MUSIC WEEKEND - 7:00pm
- JIM BELOFF & UKEtopia - 8:00pm

**MON SEP 8**
- THE MOUNTAIN LION SOA MUSIC WEEKEND - 9:00pm

**TUE SEP 9**
- DAVID MALLETT - 8:00pm

**WED SEP 10**
- JULIAN BLUERIDGE - 9:00pm

**THU SEP 11**
- JAY & JUDY MICHROM - 7:00pm

**FRI SEP 12**
- MEDIEVAL & MEDIEVAL - 8:00pm

**SAT SEP 13**
- GRIEG GIOVANNI - 9:00pm

**SUN SEP 14**
- MOUNTAIN LION SOA MUSIC WEEKEND - 8:00pm

**MON SEP 15**
- DEL KENYON & HER PARLIAMENT - 9:00pm

**TUE SEP 16**
- ALAN TAYLOR & THE BLUEBIRD - 7:00pm

**WED SEP 17**
- THE JOURNEY OF THE JESTER - 8:00pm

**THU SEP 18**
- SING-A-LONG FAMILY - 7:00pm

**FRI SEP 19**
- THE DIVISION OF STORYTELLING - 8:00pm

**SAT SEP 20**
- THE DIVISION OF STORYTELLING - 9:00pm

**SUN SEP 21**
- THE MOUNTAIN LION SOA MUSIC WEEKEND - 8:00pm

**MON SEP 22**
- DAVE MALLETT - 9:00pm

**TUE SEP 23**
- MEDIEVAL & MEDIEVAL - 9:00pm

**WED SEP 24**
- GRIEG GIOVANNI - 8:00pm

**THU SEP 25**
- ALAN TAYLOR & THE BLUEBIRD - 7:00pm

**FRI SEP 26**
- THE DIVISION OF STORYTELLING - 9:00pm

**SAT SEP 27**
- THE DIVISION OF STORYTELLING - 8:00pm

**SUN SEP 28**
- THE DIVISION OF STORYTELLING - 8:00pm

**MON SEP 29**
- CENTER FOR THE DANCE - 7:00pm

**TUE SEP 30**
- THE DIVISION OF STORYTELLING - 8:00pm

**WED OCT 1**
- THE DIVISION OF STORYTELLING - 9:00pm

**THU OCT 2**
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**FRI OCT 31**
- THE DIVISION OF STORYTELLING - 9:00pm