Too much black and white began to blur my vision. I looked up from the café table after hours of pouring over notes like an especially shy ostrich. I took a breath and spied pink. The pink neon sign trying to differentiate this eatery from all the others in Old Pasadena; the pink ruffled mini skirt on the young girl cantering by; the pink stripes of Victoria’s Secret across the street. All along Colorado Boulevard synthetic banners shout, “SALE SALE SALE,” also in pink— the kind of pink bright and shiny like wet bubblegum.

“Thank God,” I thought, there are spaces in Los Angeles free of plastic pop pleasures, the ones that so often cultivate an insidious laziness of the spirit and mislaying of the soul. That space is like consecrated ground for those who find beauty in the cultural permutations and ethnic expressions of the world. One of those spaces is the Skirball Cultural Center.

What makes Skirball special? As musicians and music devotees, we naturally think: the music and the artists who perform there, of course! Yes, you are right! But let’s not stop there. In fact, we should start much earlier. We should start prior to purchasing our tickets; sooner than the commute in our motorized enclaves; ahead of sitting in our seats; and definitely before we let out that long sigh, that signal to our heart to allow the joie de vivre of the rhythm and melody connect us back to ourselves.

What makes the Skirball special, and other spaces like it, are the people who program. Without the blood and sweat of their passion, artists would have far fewer gigs, and audiences would have less opportunity to commune with the
In July, we heard the music of Rizwan-Muzaamm with the first time. It was transporting—a meditative groove that made us recognize, once again, an other essential fact: music is fundamental and many religions and cannot be separated from its religious/spiritual aspects. Listening to Rizwan-Muzaamm in California Plaza with a cool breeze blowing, we forgot the problems of the world and heard instead the drums, voice and hand-clapping that bring people together.

We have published articles about Roots/Traditional music from many countries—and call it all Folk Music. But these classifications are becoming more and more unclear. Les Yeux Noirs is a klezmer, gypsy band with a jazzy sound. La Boutiné Sourianté, originally a quartet of traditional Quebecois musicians, now has a whole horn section. Many folk/tradition bands have incorporated instruments of other traditions, some more successfully than others. And Western and Middle-Eastern drums have been incorporated in many contraband bands, not to mention oboe, sax and even a bombard.

I do not know how “traditional” Rizwan-Muzaamm is, but I do know that some of the band’s CDs have added “techno” effects. Perhaps it is just a matter of taste. Perhaps strictly “traditional” roots music and instrumentation is not existing enough for our modern audiences. Perhaps it is just the folk process and other musical influences. But I do know that the best musicians of any genre are exciting and elicit a response from their audiences.

And we depend on presenters such as Yatrika Shah-Rais, Michael Alexander and Dave Pier—name a few—to find the best and bring them to us. FolkWorks mission is to tell you about it… yours, if you chose to accept it… is to go out and explore! Listen to the music, touch the woven baskets, turn your eyes toward the traditional Mexican murals that surround us in Los Angeles. Steep yourself in the cultural diversity. The rewards are enormous—you will discover two essential things missing in popular culture: community … and hope.

If you want to have FolkWorks delivered to your home, please contact us at mail@FolkWorks.org or call 310-828-4795.
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Supported by
But I AM STANDING!  
REFLECTIONS ON RESONANCE & STANDING WAVES

I
n the last issue, we amused ourselves by coining a musical note from a wine glass. Now, out of fairness to our readers that do not drink wine, we progress to the next logical item in our musical quest: the beer bottle. The sound produced by blowing over the top of a beer bottle, though not as delicate and sophisticated as the ethereal sound made by rubbing the rim of a wine glass, is no less musical and no less acoustically sophisticated.

To make a note by blowing air over the mouth of a bottle it must be just the right amount of air and at just the right angle. Flute players call this just-right-pucker the “embouchure.” When the embouchure is executed correctly, the air will flow past the leading edge of the opening and be cut in half as it meets the far edge of the hole. Actually the air is going mostly into the hole and, in the case of our beer bottle, only so much air can go in. Forcing this extra plug of air into the bottle compresses the air inside which then begins to press back. The pressure pushes the plug of air back out of the bottle deflecting the embouchure air away from the hole. You can visualize the plug of air now traveling out from the bottle. The momentum carries it farther out of the bottle than it was at the beginning but this also lowers the pressure inside the bottle and it begins to pull the plug of air back in. As the air gets sucked back into the bottle, the embouchure air is now deflected back into the bottle and this process will repeat as long as we keep blowing.

What actually happens is that various frequencies and amplitudes and other regularly re-occurring and repeating frequencies and then sends them on to a tuned circuit. Most frequencies pass inefficiently through the circuit and fade away, but frequencies that match the resonant frequency of the circuit get a great boost in amplitude and—ta dah—you have just made a standing wave. A standing wave is a perfect example of a reflected wave. A plug of air at the mouth of the bottle makes a wave that travels down the length of the bottle. When it hits the bottom, it is reflected back from whence it came. But as it travels back, it meets and interacts with the new waves still coming down from the mouth of the bottle. As we learned from our examination of beat-notes (see page 4-of vol.4 no.1 in the Archives at www.folk-works.org), sound waves interact in various ways that can either combine or cancel out their energies. Nothing special happens in our bottle until the frequency of the incoming wave matches the resonant frequency of our beer bottle. At this magical moment, the wave pulse takes just long enough to travel the length of the bottle so that the reflect-
ed wave returns exactly (180 degrees) out of phase. When two waves are of the same frequen-
cy and amplitude and are traveling in opposite directions and out of phase by 180 degrees they will combine to form what is called a standing wave. The first animated example on Professor Fred Skiff’s page at www.physics.uiowa.edu/~umalik/adventure/sound-skiff.htm is a wonder-
ful demonstration of how a reflected wave folds back upon itself to produce a standing wave.

Standing or stationary waves are characterized by static locations called nodes whose amplitude remains at zero. Mid-way between the nodes are points of maximum movement called anti-nodes where the amplitude or volume generated jumps up greatly. This is basically an amplifier and musical instruments are essentially res-
onators used to amplify musical notes. This same concept exists in the world of electronics as a tuned circuit. A radio antenna receives all incoming frequencies and then sends them on to a tuned circuit. Most frequencies pass inefficiently through the circuit and fade away, but frequencies that match the resonant frequency of the cir-
cuit get a great boost in amplitude and—ta dah—you have just made a note in a radio station.

Before you are tempted to make the observation that, “There is more energy coming out of this system than is going in,” and, “Isn’t that essentially perpetual motion?” and, “ Doesn’t that go against the conservation of energy laws?” let me point out that we have all experi-
cences a form of Simple Harmonic Motion when we pushed a child on a swing. The idea is that if you keep adding an amount of energy to a system — but at just the right time — it will add up and a marvelous thing will happen — the pro-
bial snowball effect. Every physical object has one or more res-
onant frequencies. This is usually a good thing but there are some examples of where it is not. For instance, some violins have a problem called a wolf-note. When a particular note is played, it matches a resonant frequency in that particular instrument andcomes out way too loud or “wolls.” The most extreme example of acciden-\ntal resonance has to be the Tacoma Narrows Bridge in the state of Washington. On November 7, 1940, this newly built bridge began to resonate in response to a forty-two mile-per-hour wind and destroyed itself.

You can read about it and see the amazing video clip at www.eng.uab.edu/cee/reu/nsf99/tacoma.htm.

One final observation: Many years ago, there was a guest on Johnny Carson’s Tonight Show. He had made a device that snapped onto the mouth of a beer bottle and it created the perfect aperture to make a note when you blew into its short tube. He then attached a small rubber hose to his device so that he could set the bottle down and still make a note. He then set up several bottles and ran all of the hoses to a holder so that he could play tunes like you would play a harmonica or the panpipes. Then he had Johnny walk with him to the stage where he had placed bottles on several plywood walls. These bottles ranged in size from a small medicine bottle up to a large Sparkleit bottle. He then sat down at a keyboard and played real music on this collection of bottles. I searched the web for this person and his bottle organ but could not find any information. There is, however, a modern incarnation of this concept in the Peterson Beer Bottle Organ. You can see it and hear it at www.petersontuners.com/news/bbo/index.cfm.

So save your beer bottles, keep making music and, as always, stay tuned.

Roger Goodman is a musician, mathematician, punster, reader of esoteric books and sometimes writer, none of which pays the mortgage. For that, he is a computer network guy for a law firm. He has been part of the Los Angeles old-time & contra-dance music community for over thirty years. While not a dancer, he does play fiddle, guitar, harmonica, mandolin, banjo & spoons. Roger has a penchant for trivia and obscure and sometimes tries to explain how the clock works, a set he has sat with him to the stage where he had placed bottles on several plywood walls. These bottles ranged in size from a small medicine bottle up to a large Sparkleit bottle. He then sat down at a keyboard and played real music on this collection of bottles. I searched the web for this person and his bottle organ but could not find any information. There is, however, a modern incarnation of this concept in the Peterson Beer Bottle Organ. You can see it and hear it at www.petersontuners.com/news/bbo/index.cfm.

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So save your beer bottles, keep making music and, as always, stay tuned.
**The Voices in My Head**

**BY JOANNA CAZDEN**

“We the voice of the people is the voice of god.” — Alcuin of York.

Earlier on the day of this writing, Saddam Hussein was arraigned in a Baghdad courtroom. California’s action-heroes-in-chief officially failed to get his budget in on time, and a space probe successfully slipped in between the rings of Saturn. Lacking the clairvoyance to predict the state of the nation/world/solar system come September, when you read this issue of FolkWorks, I can only join the swelling chorus that calls on you, the people, to accept your quadrennial role as the collective voice of god!

Vote on November 2, please; make heard your public voice, and help your neighbors get to the polls as well. Here are some assorted voices to inspire you until then.

**VOICE (noun) 2b. The right or privilege of speaking or voting in a legislative assembly, or of taking part in, or exercising control or influence over, some particular matter; a part or share in the control, government, or deciding of something.**

To give voice to: to vote for. …3. The expressed opinion, judgement, will, or wish of the people … as indicated or shown by the exercise of the franchise. …10d. To put to voice: to put to the vote. …10d. A right or power to take in the control or management of something. —*Oxford English Dictionary.*

People are speaking up for themselves. … what they say is very much the same the world over. They want a decent standard of living. They want human dignity and a voice in their own futures. They want their children to grow up strong and healthy and free. —*Hubert H. Humphrey.*

In asking for a voice in the government under which we live, have we successfully slipped in between the rings of Saturn. Lacking the clairvoyance of all. —*Erica Jong.*

Those against politics are in favor of the politics inflicted upon them. —*Bertolt Brecht.*

In a Baghdad courtroom, I would sing the harmonies of Liberty. —*Thomas Jefferson.*

Your own body (and with it your own voice), and that’s the most revolutionary activities, it’s because they lead to the knowledge that you own no voice, or representation. —*Carl Sandburg.*

In the very same music played by The Stanley Brothers, Jimmie Martin, and Larry Sparks to name a few. Old #7’s sound incorporates traditional three part harmonies and excellent instrumental influenced by The Delta Blues and Honky Tonk which gives Cliff Wagner & The Old #7 their unique sound. 310-831-0055 • cliff@oldnumber7.net • www.oldnumber7.net

Nick has been playing and teaching Irish flute and whistle for more than ten years. In 2003 he toured Japan as a traditional musician under the auspices of the Irish Embassy in Tokyo. Over the years he’s had the good fortune to perform with some of the most respected musicians in the Celtic world, including the Chieftains, Dale Russ, Pat O’Connor and the Black Family. He hosts a regular session at Finn McCool’s in Santa Monica. 760-935-4812 or nbuckmelter@hotmail.com

Joellen Lapidus is one of the pioneers of contemporary fretted dulcimer. After studying Tin Whistle, Mandolin, Bodhran, Transverse Flute and Celtic Song accompaniment. Cai has over 30 years experience as a teacher and performer of Celtic music. Many of her students have gone on to become professional musicians and recording artists in their own right. Cai focuses on technique, ornamentation, regional styles, phrasing, creating variations, playing “by ear” and having fun. Please write her at cairreed@aol.com, or give her a call at 310-543-1219. Her Web site will be up soon at www.cairreed.com.


Lift every voice and sing/ Till earth and heaven ring/ Ring with the harmonies of Liberty —*Abbie Hoffman.*
As summer concludes, fall brings its own offerings of festivals to Southern California. One of these is the Desert Song Music Festival, on Sunday, September 12, 11am to 7pm, in Lancaster. Formerly the Saddle Up Music Festival, it’s cosponsored by Garrison Keillor and brings medical training from the homegrown band Ashley Maher. This has been a full summer of musical offerings, and I found myself working temporarily in Seattle, where it just doesn’t get any better. To share the music dimensions of that, we’ll take a hiatus this time from the series on resources for songwriters.

There are four million people in the state of Washington, and you can buy them at www.kmtt.com. Proceeds from sales go to charities and environmental organizations.

Nancy Wilson of the homegrown band Heart was recently asked on KMTT about what makes the music scene so incredible in Seattle. She replied, “It’s two things. First, it’s a seaport, so the influence and the dynamism of the whole western world is here. Then, it’s the weather. It isn’t always sunny. I find that a dog and a fire is very conducive to reading and writing. A lot of great music gets written here.

There are three million people in the state of Washington, and 14 million in the L.A. basin. It must not rain enough in L.A.

Larry Wines is a writer, song writer, journalist and columnist, mountain climber, museum director and former political pundit. He has restored steam locomotives and enjoys long train rides, good music festivals, moonlight on water, river boats, Shakespeare and great songwriters. His work has appeared “in lots of obscure places” throughout America. He writes a column with weekly entertainment picks and concert and CD reviews, including lots of acoustic music offerings, available on www.mediumanetworkgroup.com/index.html. You can e-mail him at larrywines@hotmail.com.

Tried To The Tracks

BY LARRY WINES

So, your instruments everywhere. And of course there’s food. It’s all on the spacious campus of Antelope Valley College, a mile-and-a-half west of the freeway on Avenue K, and it’s an official part of the college’s 75th anniversary celebration. The event may still need some volunteers, as well, so check the web site.

This has been a full summer of musical offerings, and I found myself working temporarily in Seattle, where it just doesn’t get any better. To share the music dimensions of that, we’ll take a hiatus this time from the series on resources for songwriters.

A few issues back, I suggested a few must-attend festivals. One was NorthWest FolkLife held each Memorial Day weekend (four days) at Seattle Center, the former World’s Fair site. Little did I know I would be there for it, and it’s very conducive to reading and writing. A lot of great music gets written here.”

Bela Fleck, who had dropped in for the FolkWorks concert with the Duhks in Santa Monica back in June, returns.

Marymoor Park has an outdoor amphitheater that would remind you of Glen Helen. The week after he brought his troupe to the Greek Theatre in L.A., Garrison Keillor’s here for the live broadcast of A Prairie Home Companion. Mixed with the characterizations of Seinfeldes as rain-soaked caffeine addicts were the shots at Southern Californians — “How can they live there, with all that sunshine? You can’t even open the door without donning sunglasses and slathering-on the sunscreen!”

Leaving Marymoor early took me from northeast of Seattle to its southwest extremes, and two minutes to spare for the Fauntleroy ferryboat to Vashon Island. There, L.A.-resident Michelle Shocked played a sold-out charity benefit. It was the second appearance of her bold new “jam with Michelle” participation concert, begun the previous night in Milwaukee. It allows local musicians to register and has the set list on-line, then join her on stage for the performance. Hard to believe, but it worked so well she played the whole show with no improvisations. It wasn’t just the locals who rated it as a fine, solid and fun show. Locals included Andre Sapp of the Nettle Cats, and visiting fiddle player Sherry Thal of the Lava Jam Band, who brought recognition that all the “island” musicians were first-rate.

Come here for the live music, but don’t forget what’s on the air. Radio in Seattle can’t compare to L.A. Among the many public stations is KBCS, 91.3 FM, from Bellevue Community College, with its full-day of bluegrass, Americana, Celtic and jazz programming. Commercial radio is dominated by KMTT, 103.7, “the Mountain,” nominally a rock station, but with an inclusive music mix and format. So many acoustic musicians are featured in live performances from their Mountain Music Lounge studio that one DJ commented recently, “2004 is the year of the mandolin. Last year was the year of the banjo.” The station offers CDs of those performances, and you can buy them at www.kmtt.com. Proceeds from sales go to charities and environmental organizations.

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SOME THOUGHTS ON KOREAN FOLK MUSIC

“OH GIVE ME A HOME WHERE THE BUFFALO ROAM…”

BY LAUREN W. DEUTSCH (CONTENTS COPYRIGHT BY LAUREN W. DEUTSCH 2004. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED)

It’s been a long time since folks in our neck of the woods sat on the front porch of their homesteads in the vicinity of grazing buffalo. Despite the proliferation of agribusiness and Greenpeace, the traditional hums of human sweat-equity in synch with nature’s lifecycles have given way to predictable churning of the motors and the now-ness of consumerism. There’s no room for the old folks at home… unless it is at the old folks home.

In Korea, however, there are still places and opportunities to hear in situ the centuries old soundtrack which has kept a timely pace with the necessities: gathering or growing of food, pleasing 10,000 spirits and marking rites of life’s preeminence. Despite and because of Korea’s “recent” century-and-a-half stormy socio-political history, the people have a collective deep love of land and sense of Korean-ness. This despite efforts to be modern and Westernized, and in spite of their efforts to dissociate from peasant traditions. Bad phone reception and lots of dust not withstanding, urbanized Koreans are venturing out to the countryside, visiting the few “quant” mountain villages and sea-coast settlements that are still left. Regional pride remains a strong source of identity, and this is reflected in Korea’s folk music.

SAMULNORI: A NEW TRADITION SUSTAINS THE OLD

The most recent concert of the folk music series at the Ford Amphitheater in October, I have been asked to provide a background on the oldest known of the folk music instruments, the four percussion instruments (literally, sa - four, mul - objects, nori - play) and fashioning it as a stand-alone entertainment.

The samulnori instruments are kkwaenggvari (small gong), chim (large gong), changgu (hourglass shaped two headed drum) and puk (wide but short double-headed barrel drum). These instruments have been in Korea for millennia and remain to this day utilized in traditional ritual gatherings.

Each instrument has its “place” in a ritual system. The kkwaenggvari, held in the hand and struck with a long, thin wood mallet produces the shrill tone representing the sound of Heaven. The chim, originally used in military processions, is suspended by a cord from a stand and played while seated. When struck with a deerskin covered mallet this drum sound also represents the sound of Heaven. The puk, oldest known of the folk instruments, is usually placed on the ground or against the knee, and commonly associated with the sound of Earth. Finally, the changgu, capable of both high and low pitches dependent upon which of and how the distinct heads are hit, also represents the sound of Earth. Together, they offer the alternation of tension and release, and harmony of yin and yang, root principles in Korean culture.

One of Kim’s innovative contributions is to seat the musicians in a circle on the floor for stage presentation, a convention usually reserved for court or literati-class performances. Despite their pose, the program is always very, very physical and exhilarating. Kim has also encouraged his musicians to grow: by playing their instruments’ beyond their traditional range and to expand beyond the group’s traditional repertoire. They jam with musicians of other cultures and explore diverse musical forms, especially jazz. As a result of his notoriety, samulnori has become a much-embraced cultural artifact, much like the martial art Taekwondo. It has become a “heritage-instilling” skill which is required to be learned by Korea’s hyper-achieving, Western cultural assimilation-prone youth.

To this end, samulnori’s popularity resembles the evolution of Japanese Os-daiko in their Diaspora: the taiko (Japanese drumming) clubs at Buddhist temples and community centers (vs. the Korean samulnori clubs and classes at Christian churches and community centers); the presence of taiko and related instruments in other Japanese performing arts programs and community festivals (vs samulnori being included in most broad-spectrum Korean performing arts programs), and the creation of signature world-music superstars, most notably the group Kodo (vs. international tours by Samulnori, with a capital “S”). Impromptu samulnori jamming can be heard on weekends in city parks and college campuses, much like listening to guitarists in Washington Square Park in New York City’s Greenwich Village during the 1960’s.

FOLK MUSIC: ALIVE AND WELL

Folk music is considered a unique genre of Korean performing arts, distinct from other traditional modes which include court music and dance, the literati-delighting parlor gatherings (male and female separately) and Buddhist inspired works. This break-out reflects Korea’s distinct Confucian-imposed social class system patronized by the centuries of proud imperial lineages, the later of which ended abruptly and brutally with the Japan’s (second) colonization through the early 20th Century.

The most widely appreciated forms of Korean folk music today are essentially urban: pansori (epic storytelling through song), sanjo (scattered melodies for a solo instrument with a drum accompaniment), and samulnori (percussion quartet). Folk music reflects the life of the common people: simple villagers, peasant farmers, fishermen and others who lived in thatched roof buildings, as opposed to the tile roofs of their noble landowners and government officials. It also includes esoteric muga, or shaman songs (and dance) employed by the spiritually endowed or embraced to manage 10,000 spirits which impact everything from birth and death and in-between. In addition, there’s military band music and the balladeer-esque pansori repertoire, the latter an entertainment handed down by clowns and itinerant entertainers. The latter repertoire mixes reminiscences of countryside, current events and satire and a peek into the rarefied world of the literati classics. On the folk instrument side, in addition to samul, there are notably reeds / woodwinds and other percussion.

The living form of Korean folk art is embodied in the folk religion called mosaik, whose professional practitioners are called mudang. The songs that they sing are called muga, which deal with folk epics and legends about their gods. Muga is accompanied by music ensembles consisting mostly of wind and percussion instruments. The performances are often interspersed with dance. Minya, Korean folk songs, is derived from Min (people) and yo (song) refer to songs for which there are no recognized composers. A distinctive quality of these songs is its triple meter and dotted rhythms.

Korean folk music, like all Korean traditional art, varies from region to region throughout the full length of the peninsula. Variations in performance techniques, rhythm, meter, vocal texture and other distinctions will mark a piece and are part of the beloved regional sentiment still claimed as part of Korean sense of “home”… even if one lives in an apartment complex whose massive concrete block buildings resemble more a set of encyclopedia than a quaint village hut.

KOREAN FOLK continued on page 19
Tribute records have been around for decades now, but lately they’ve become more and more prevalent and seemingly needing less and less reason to exist. New York tributes with mostly West Coast artists are among the best tracks here. Myriad Carter Family and June Carter’s marriage and the generation that followed them, which also includes several performers. This CD includes the final recordings of both the maternal and paternal merged family, who sadly both passed away recently, and Johnny’s take on English One-Forty-Three and June Carter’s Hold Fast to the Right are among the best tracks here. Myriad Carters and Cashes appear on the CD produced by their son John Carter Cash, including Rosanne Cash and Laura Cash. Their new record, Fishes & Fine Yellow Sand, [Topic] (1) is made up of live recordings from last year. The songs are mostly traditional, though there’s a nice performance of the Greatful Dead’s Black Muddy River which Norma performed on a solo record a few years ago. The kind of long story-songs that Cashy is a master of feature prominently, as do a couple of their new ones like the love song Cherokee Maiden and the post 9/11 meditation, I Saw the Buildings.

So that’s it for this time, see you next time, when I hope to have lots of great new recordings to tell you about.

RATING SCALE:
[!!!] Classic, sure to look 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.
— Good/solid, what you would expect.
[X] Avoid. Either ill-conceived, or artistically inept in some way.

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323-296-9555

SUNNY SHORES VALLEY STORYTELLERS
3rd Sundays • 7:30 pm
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949-305-7857
Los Pochos Release Their "Relentlessly Festive" Music

By Enrico Del Zotto

Conjunto Los Pochos will be sharing their "relentlessly festive" music with us at a fundraiser for Folkworks on October 3, 2004. They'll be playing music from their new CD Margie’s, which is a lot of foot-tapping Spanish and English lyrics about life, love and loss. Conjunto Los Pochos was formed in Los Angeles by Ottilo Lujan (button accordion) and Elliott Baribeault (bajo sexto). In 1999 Ernesto Molina came on board on bass and Lorenzo Martinez has joined them on drums for Margie’s. The album features original tunes and standards of conjunto, as well as their version of I Fall to Pieces. Margie’s offers a variety of rhythms, demonstrating the ability of conjunto music to incorporate aspects of other musical genres and create something new. This ability to imitate, innovate and invent new sounds is an important part of the story.

A Little History

Conjunto is often called norteño, referring to its creation in Northern Mexico and Texas (which, of course, was also Northern Mexico at one time). But to Tejanos it’s known as conjunto, meaning group. This name may have been given as way to distinguish the small groups that played working class dances from the conjunto tipicas that would perform at more upper class affairs. The working class roots of the music are an important part of the story.

In the years following independence, the elite of Latin American nations looked towards Europe as a cultural model, often at the expense of their indigenous cultures. Mexico was no exception to this imitation, with European dance styles enjoying popular acclaim. These styles filtered down to the working and peasant classes in part because the musicians who played at the upper-class parties would learn the styles and innovate on them for their own communities’ social functions. In the case of the frontera region (Texas and Northern Mexico), European dances like the waltz, schottische, polka, quadrille and mazurka were especially popular because of the presence of German immigrants. In New Braunfels, German dances like the Waltz, Schottische, Polka, Quadrille and Mazurka were especially popular because of the presence of a large number of German, Bohemian and Polish immigrants. Monterey, Texas was the industrial capital of Northern Mexico and drew a number of immigrants to work as engineers in the beer industry. On the other side of the border, towns like Fredericksburg and New Braunfels were another way Martinez and his contemporaries made a living in the early days of conjunto.

In addition to the genres imported from Europe, the other major contribution from German immigrants to conjunto was the bajo sexto, a twelve-stringed guitar. These labels had success recording regionally known African American musicians and selling the records fun and relief - for celebration - to contrast the hard life that was the reality for working-class Mexicans in the frontera region.

In the 1940’s Valerio Longoria added vocals to conjunto and slowed the tempo, making dancing more accessible to a wider audience and setting the standard for the modern conjunto style. These labels had success recording regionally known African American musicians and selling the records fun and relief - for celebration - to contrast the hard life that was the reality for working-class Mexicans in the frontera region.

With the onset of World War II and the limi- tations on recording this brought, the major labels pulled out of the conjunto recording market. But the demand was still there and growing. As Tejanos and Mexicanos found more employment with the end of the Depression, there was more money in the hands of conjunto fans than ever before. Enter Armando Marroquin and Armando Ramirez. Marroquin founded IDEAL records and Ramirez founded Falcon records. They were the first Mexican-Americans to record and distribute conjunto music. Their enterprises were successful in the U.S. and Mexico with Falcon records becoming the dominant label in conjunto music in the 1960’s. Armando Ramirez even created a syndicated television program called Fantasia Falcon. This show was shown in 244 cities across the U.S. as well as in Mexico and Central America.

In the 1940’s Valerio Longoria added vocals to conjunto and slowed the tempo, making dancing more accessible to a wider audience and setting the standard for the modern conjunto style. Lyricst also meant that conjunto players could adapt other styles of music such as rancheras (music from Mexican musical films) and corridos (ballads) to their repertoire. This also made conjunto an important vehicle in telling the stories of working-class Mexicans and Chicanos in the Southwest. With the advent of Rock and Roll in the 1950’s conjunto again innovated. Tony De La Rosa brought the electric bass and drum set into conjunto, which is now the standard instrumentation for the genre.

So if you want to hear both traditional and innovative conjunto, pick-up Conjunto Los Pochos’ Margie’s and check-out the show and their website. www.lospochos.com. To learn more about conjunto check-out Manuel Peña’s The Texas Mexican Conjunto: History of a Working-Class Music or pbs.org/accordion dreams.

Conjunto Los Pochos will be performing Sunday, October 3, 2004. See page 3 for details

Enrico Del Zotto is an educator and musician who lives in Fullerton. He recently completed his M.A. in Music and Culture at San Francisco State University.

Percussive accordion, driving beats and soulful vocals make up Conjunto Los Pochos’ full length album. For these songs about love and loss...grab a bottle of your favorite and put on your dancing shoes and join Conjunto Los Pochos...”

- Adam McKibbin, Entertainment Today

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Conjunto Los Pochos
CDS, BUDGET AND SUCH:

There are lots of reasons to make your own commercial released CD. Mostly you want to be rich and famous. But chances are that you’re smart enough to know that’s unlikely, especially in folk music, so do it because it’s cool, because it will impress your Aunt Ethel and maybe get you a few better music playing jobs. Here in Southern California, a CD is almost mandatory. Even a people booking low paying catering gigs expect a CD in the packet.

WHAT TO RECORD:

If you don’t have material, you shouldn’t be thinking about doing a CD. If you are doing cover songs, you need to pay the people that wrote the songs in some form or other. Hit the ASCAP and BMI and Harry Fox Agency websites and get your education. If you write your own material and you don’t know about copyrights and performance rights organizations and publishing and mechanical rights and payments, then go back to those websites and learn about it. If you’re going to be a professional, you have to act like one. Invest time in knowing what you’re doing, where you’re going, when you’re going, and what you plan to spend. If you’re not confident with your material, drop the idea to do a CD until you are. The sad fact is that there are far too many bad CDs being released now. Don’t add to the rub- bble... make sure what you’re doing is good. And then maybe someone will actually like it.

STUDIOS:

These ran the gamut from high end professional to your neighbor’s computer based system. Costs, obviously, run the gamut too. Talk to others that have done CDs in your area, and find out where they recorded and what they paid. Recording at your home or computer or a hard drive digital recorder, or an old cassette multi-track are all options. If you hate the technical process of record- ing and you want it to be something you can do at home, it may be best to find someone to go a good job on mastering your finished recorded project. It’s the difference between a cloudy and a sunny day. Your studio or duplication costs, and mastering, should be a write off. Just don’t use the card for other non-business stuff and muddy the waters. Again, keep good records of what you do, and let your tax accountant show you how to do.

IN CONCLUSION:

With only a small amount of money (well, as much as the cost of a beat up used Toyota or a decent old Martin guitar) and several months of incredibly hard labor, you too can have a closet filled with CD’s in boxes. Or become a star and live happily ever after.

HOW TO MAKE YOUR OWN CD AND BE A STAR AND LIVE HAPPILY EVER AFTER

REED’S RAMBLINGS: CD REVIEW BY DENNIS ROGER REED

Dennis Roger Reed is a singer-songwriter, musician, and writer based in San Clemente, CA. He is the author of several books on Gram Parsons, with his writings on the subject having been featured in Mojo and in God’s Own Singer, A Life of Gram Parsons by Jason Walker. Writing about his music has appeared in Acoustic Musician, Bass Player, Bluegrass Now, Bluegrass Unlimited, Blues Access, Blues Revue, Blue suede News, Dirty Linen, the LA Times, Living Blues, and Sing Out! He is still decidedly not famous.

Art & Design:
The big duplication houses, like Oasis, can do it all for you... mastering, duplication, art and design. You just hand them the finished recording, tell them a bit about yourself, and they’ll do a nice, profes- sional looking CD for you. If you have your own designer, it’s cheaper. If you have your own art stuff, and do it yourself, it’s cheaper still - but a bit more dangerous. Things can go wrong, and now they’re your fault, not the company. Decisions, decisions...

The artwork should either be something you own or something that’s public domain, legally pur- chased clip art stuff or your A+ art project from night school. If you’re doing the art stuff yourself, or using your talented sister-in-law, get some second opinions from someone you trust. What looks like Van Gogh to you may look a lot less to everyone else, and they just won’t admit it. Designing music CDs is pretty esoteric, but most duplication houses have templates that you can have your designer adhere to. And adhere they must. Always check and re-check the artwork. Once it’s at the printer and you’ve got 1000 of ‘em, they’re yours. Not a mistake after the inserts are done can require re-printing, with all the resultant costs. Proofread everything 15 times, and have several other people proof it too. Stay simple, it will benefit you.

PROMOTION:

There’s a 1000 paths to take. Take about 8 or 10 of them to start. Get on the Net, do searches for radio stations that play the kind of music you are doing. Email them to see if they want it, then mail them one. You can just send them cold, but postage is expensive. Email, write or call before you send any- thing.

You can think about postage costs when you decide if you want the traditional jewel case for your CD. The new cardboard ones can look a tad cheesy, but often serve as mailers and save you some bucks on postage. At least consider these if you plan to mail out a lot of CDs. If you go with the cardboard, it is better to have all the info you need right on the cardboard jewel case, because if you have to mail an information packet too, you’ve defeated the purpose of the cardboard mailer.

REVIEWS:

Send it to every magazine, and website that reviews the kind of music that you play. You have to do your homework, though. Don’t send your blues CD to a Celtic maga- zine. Great reviews may not sell any copies, but it’s nice to be appreciated.

Radio:

Radio play also doesn’t necessarily translate into sales, but it’s very nice to know that you’re being played in South Africa, Michigan or other exotic lands. Again, this may be more for your ego than for your pocketbook, but the thought that some guy in the Netherlands is tapping his toe to one of your songs may make the process worthwhile. And today, radio play in Outer Mongolia might actually translate into sales, because with the Internet, your recordings can be found, and purchased, like on amazonmongol- lia.com

Promotion work takes hours and hours and hours. And for most people, it isn’t much fun. Keep track of whom you’ve mailed to. It’s futile to send more than one CD to the same station or magazine. Follow up is important, but remember that the fine line between being a persistent professional and a nattering nag is indeed fine. Bear in mind that doing a CD without promotion doesn’t really make much sense, unless you’re doing it as a vanity project. If you don’t like the business/promotion end of doing a CD, either find someone that will do it for you or seriously consider NOT doing a CD.

THE WEB:

A website is important in the promotion of your CD. A good simple website serves the pur- pose of listing upcoming gigs, and maintaining an email list to keep your fans up-to-date. Of course you can spend a lot of money on websites, but you can also consider joining any one of the myriad of com- panies that have formed to promote independent CDs. Most sell you a site, and some will distribute your CD to internet retailers like amazon.com and to retail stores. Do a search, but there’s theorchard.com, Folkweb.com, CDbaby.com and tons of others. However, if you have a brother-in- law that designs websites, run it with as long as it’s halfway attractive and easy to use. Get a good domain name that makes sense for what you’re try- ing to do. Include a way to not only listen to some of your CD from your site, but also to purchase it as well. For the consumer, there’s nothing more frustr- ating than wanting to buy a CD but not being able to find out how.

BUSINESS AS USUAL:

Look at this as an investment in your career. Music is/can be a business. Keep records of what you do, and you may be able to write off (depreci- ate) your instruments, computer and the cost of CDs. Talk to your tax accountant if you aren’t doing this as a business. When you make money, the IRS will demand some. It’s better to be prepared and use it to your benefit if you can. If you use a credit card to pay for the costs of your CD, even the interest may be a write off. Just don’t use the card for other non-business stuff and muddy the waters. Again, keep good records of what you do, and let your tax accountant show you how to do.

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SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 25 • 7:00 PM • $12.50
Reservations are suggested
It’s very rare when you receive a recording that uppercase you when you bell-upright at attention. It’s more rare when it is something as stripped down and direct as a trio of fiddle, guitar and piano. Danish violinist Kristine Heeboll’s Trio Mio is one such exceptional recording. With Swedish guitarist and bouzouki player Jens Uvström and Danish pianist and accordionist Nikolaj Busk, rounding out the trio, Heeboll and company do startling things with their simple tools. The opening polka, Dad’s 60th Birthday, could have been straight out of a Nordic folk-dance text book, but with bright, clear melody and unstoppable rhythm, they proceed to show that this is far from a folk-only endeavor. The Lusty Waltz is a roaring tour de force of ensemble playing that dances around a jazzy riff. A scratching bouzouki lays down the beat, the violin carries both melody and harmony roles, and a complex but sparing piano figure sets this magnificently apart from the ‘thump-beat’ the instrument is usually relegated to in Nordic dance music. The solos are spectacular, the full trio stunning in its synchronicity, and the whole four minutes is one of those moments you will keep walking back to after your first full and pleasing listen. This is only three songs into a 13 work recording that moves from vibrant folk through semi-classical elegance and round again to creative and unusual technique and expression. Trio Mio is designed to be one of those recordings you pass on to your friends, and they to theirs.

Listen to Ilios on www.rootsworld.com/audio/bodjal.ram or the The artist’s CD available at cdRoots www.rootsworld.com/amigo-bodjal.html

Nancy MacMillan started contradancing five years ago, and two years ago began playing piano for dances. During American Week Camp in Mendocino this past July, she had a chance to ask Jeremiah McLane about Three and would like to thank him for giving a generous amount of his time. Nancy works as a speech-language pathologist.

Artist: KRISTINE HEEBOLL
Title: TRIO MIO
Label: GO DANISH FOLK MUSIC
By CLIFF FURNOLD
(REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION OF THE AUTHOR)

CD REVIEWS

Artist: ALE MÖLLER BAND
Title: BODJAL
Label: AMIGO
By NONDAS KITSOS
(REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION OF THE AUTHOR)

There are people who are only happy when they seem to start anew every single day; Ale Möller is one of them. Bodjal is a record that could have gone horribly wrong. The six members of the band come from six distinct cultures. People on the photo shoot dressed in traditional clothes. A fifty-something virtuoso player is trying to find himself, with declarations of global brotherhood, Bangladesh and Uygur freedom songs and quasi-rap. Sometimes, though, these stories have a happy ending. These six distinct artists have worked hard and under the leadership of Ale Möller they fit together seamlessly, delivering songs that never appear awkward or half-thought out. Möller has been working with local musical traditions for almost twenty-five years and he seems to have a very good idea of who he himself is. Global brotherhood is a great idea, when it’s done without too much self-consciousness or self-righteousness. The freedom songs are melodic and poignant, not pedantic. The quasi-rap is actually very funny. They rap, “The one has to borrow money to drink a glass of wine, the other flies in his private jet to Paris to have a decent cup of coffee,” while Möller on the backside delivers random Greek words. Wait till the Greek radio producers get their hands on this: it’ll be the summer hit of the year.

Sebastian Dubé is a Québécois who plays the bass with great pizzazz. Rafael Sida Huizar used to be the drummer of a Mexican rock band in the Seventies; you can tell. Swedish fiddle player Magnus Stinnerbom is a member of Huv and Hedningarna; I think he tease him a bit, otherwise why would they name a Waltz for him The Nasty One? Mamadou Sene is behind such great tracks as Bodjul and Nye Pajem. He is also credited as an "acrobatic dancer" but I haven’t seen him live to know, although I would love to, if his dancing were on par with his singing. Maria Stellas is probably the second most visible member of the band after Möller himself. This is not so strange, given Ale’s knowledge of the Greek music scene (as he has spent a long time living and working with the Mikis Theodorakis orchestra). What I find most amazing is that she is equally capable of singing a traditional song from the mainland, one of the islands and a rebetiko. The modes of singing those three repertoires are so different that it usually asks for three distinctly singers to be able to achieve this. Stellas does that all on her own and she leaves us all awe-struck as a result.

But of course, the star of the record is Möller himself. He is behind every track, leaving an indelible signature, although rarely coming to the forefront. He has no reason to. This is his record and he knows it. His compositional skills show the mark of an almost thirty year career but his joy of playing shows the sparkle of someone for whom this is, as far as humanly possible, the first CD. It has been eight years since the last recording (Sometimes When the Moon is High, the first CD was entitled The Coming Dawn). Three is worth the wait.

Fans of the Vermont-based trio Nightingale have had to wait a long time for Three, the band’s third CD. It has been eight years since the last recording (Sometimes When the Moon is High, the first CD was entitled The Coming Dawn). Three is destined to be one of those moments you will keep tracking back to after your first full and pleasurable listen. This is only three songs into a 13 work recording that moves from things that it usually asks for three distinct singers to be able to achieve this. Stellas does that all on her own and she leaves us all awe-struck as a result.

Nightingale is an extremely popular contradance band, and their CD is likely to get listeners moving. However, contradance tunes make up a small proportion of the music. There’s also a Swedish polska, a French mazurka, a strathspey and two schottisches; there are a number of dance tunes from Britain. There is similar variety in the tunes Keith sings. The opening song is about Vermont’s hills. The words were written in 1935 by Arthur Guiterman, who became Poet Laureate of Vermont, and set more recently to music by Vermont’s Pete Sutherland. There are traditional songs from Newfoundland, Quebec, and Louisiana, the lovely Psalm of Life combines a traditional tune with words by Longfellow.

Rhythmic strength is what unites the material on Three. It’s not that the tunes are rhythmically similar to one another; some are lyrical and flowing, some meditative, some lively, some driving and intense. Tunes are in meters of two, three, four, five, or six. But it’s consistently evident that the band has worked out the rhythmic character for each part of the tunes, and each player is soldly within the right groove. An example: one medley starts in a meditative mood, developing into a lilting strathspey (Battle of Naseeg), composed by Jeremiah. The next tune in the medley, another of Jeremiah’s, is played first as a strathspey and then as a reel that gets continually faster. The medley is sounding very Cape Bretonesque, when there’s an abrupt change: the band tears into The Flying Tent, a tune composed by Keith after gale-force winds ripped apart a tent being used for a dance event in the Caribbean. Listening to the power and intensity of the rhythms, I can almost feel the whipping of the wind. On another cut, Nightingale took The Green Buses, a Newfoundland folk song in simple waltz time, and composed an exciting, complex accompaniment using interweaving notes of the piano, mandolin, and fiddle to create a rich rhythmic texture with a three-against-two feel. Keith’s piano accompaniment to his waltz, Peregrination, is highly syncopated and could energize the most exhausted dancer.

Nightingale’s harmonic approach is creative and intriguing. The song Hills is played with two tunes of harmony, one original and one the tune of the Irish reel Malqueens, played in a different key from usual but melding perfectly with the song. Jeremiah’s tune Rosali is inspired by Persian music and is highly chromatic. This is stimulating stuff to listen to.

Hear the music the rest of the world is dancing to!
The French Antilles – We Will Play Love Tonight is a part of Rounder’s Caribbean Voyage series of Alan Lomax’s field recordings made in 1962 throughout the Lesser Antilles and Eastern Caribbean. As the liner notes remind us, there has been a great deal of social and political change in that area of the world since 1962, some for the better and some of questionable benefit to the islands’ population. Many of the old ways and old songs were lost in the process of that change, making these recordings even more valuable.

This particular CD covers the music of only three islands, Guadeloupe, Martinique and St. Barthelemy. The first two have relatively common histories that include French occupation and an influx of African culture during the slave years. St. Barthelemy, though occupied by the French, was never involved in the plantation system. Instead it became, and remains today, a free port. With the help of the liner notes, a listener with even a moderately experienced ear can hear the regional variations in the music of the separate islands. From Guadeloupe and Martinique come the sounds of the native population mixed with French and African traditions, and in the case of Guadeloupe we hear the addition of Indian sounds as laborers from that country arrive in later years. The music of St. Barthelemy lacks the influence of Africa, but is distinctly French in flavor, with added influences from the sailors who frequented its port.

I wouldn’t recommend this CD for drive-time entertainment or party music, but that isn’t its purpose. Lomax never intended for us to be entertained, in the casual sense of the term, in listening to his recordings. These tracks were scholarly—and to an extent political, as he hoped to further the cause of a united West Indian Federation. The liner notes are thorough and intriguing, and I did find it fascinating reading along while listening. As is always the case with well-documented field recordings, this album represents a chance to learn about the music of a time and culture that are gone forever.

Musicologists will find it interesting to hear the differences in the music of the three islands, and to spot the influences on some of the music we hear and play today. Percussionists in particular will be intrigued by the variety and intricacy of the rhythms Lomax was able to collect as well as the nature of the instruments that were used to create them. Anyone interested in the musical or cultural heritage of the Caribbean will, I think, be pleased by what they find on this CD.

Linda Dewar is a singer and a player of various instruments with strings and keys. She can be heard playing mostly Celtic music at small gatherings and large festivals here and there in California. Her first solo CD is currently in development, which means she’s thinking about it a lot and will start doing something about it real soon.

CD REVIEWS

Artist: VARIOUS, COLLECTED BY ALAN LOMAX
Title: THE FRENCH ANTILLES – WE WILL PLAY LOVE TONIGHT!
Label: ROUNDER RECORDS
By LINDA DEWAR

The French Antilles – We Will Play Love Tonight is a part of Rounder’s Caribbean Voyage series of Alan Lomax’s field recordings made in 1962 throughout the Lesser Antilles and Eastern Caribbean. As the liner notes remind us, there has been a great deal of social and political change in that area of the world since 1962, some for the better and some of questionable benefit to the islands’ population. Many of the old ways and old songs were lost in the process of that change, making these recordings even more valuable.

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CD REVIEWS

Artist: WHAPWEASEL
Title: RELENTLESS
Label: WHAPWEASEL CD WW05
By BROOKE ALBERTS

This popular and high-energy English dance band are my former housemates, but (to my knowledge) do they advocate any such activity. Whapweasel takes their name from a small stream that flows through Hexham, Northumberland (in the northeast of England near the border of Scotland) where they are based. In February of this year they were on the short list for the Radio 2 Folk Awards in the “Best New Act of the Year” category, and in March they were included in Topic Records’ compilation, Stepping Up: A History of the New Wave of English Country Dance Music alongside the likes of Oysterband and The Eliza Carlyle Band.

Whapweasel consists of founding members Robin Jowett (melodeon) and Brian Bell (bass, guitar, melodeon, mandolin), with Mike Coleman (cittern), Stuart Finlay (tenor and soprano saxophone), Fiona Littleton (tenor, alto, baritone and soprano sax), Bob Wilson (percussion), Heather Bell (keyboards) and Rick Kemp (guitar). Rick Kemp (of Steeleye Span fame) produced the first three Whapweasel CDs (Skirl Naked, 1998; Burn, 2000 and Relentless, 2003). When their guitar player Dave Ainsley left after Burn, Kemp joined the band (adding his own distinctive rhythm emphasis), as did Brian Bell’s daughter, Heather. If you can’t decide whether you want to hear some energetic electric celtidil music or ska, then look no further—there’s both in one package here. It may not be “Strictly Traditional” English music, but it certainly has an infectious beat and you can dance to it. In fact, you may not be able to keep yourself from doing so.

The first (and title) track lets you know right off that you’re in for some folk-rock. It starts by layering a dance-y cittern groove (slightly reminiscent of Stevie Wonder’s Superstitious) over a keyboard drone, the melodeon comes in with its opening chords. Then, the guitars and saxes join.

All of the tunes on this CD are composed by members of the band (Jowett, Finden, Coleman and Littlewood), and exhibit a distinct flavor of English country dance music, particularly in the melodeon lines. I particularly love the lovely jig Badunga and the demented Jessica’s Welcome. Kemp’s contribution is particularly emphasized on The HT Polka, where his sliding and quivering notes complement the cittern and melodeon, and Scotty’s heavy rhythm guitar.

While most of the tracks display what has been described as a “Brass Monkey meets Madness” fusion, (more overly ska on The Final Last Banana/The Sleeve in the Cheese and Bus to Bombay), one set (Sunset, Skiens/ Raiders Rough) starts out in a South African Township vein and moves into a tune with a more Irish feel. There were two tracks (The HT Polka and Italian Bell Muffler) that I felt might have been better left with the ska-grooves, but all in all it’s fun stuff. If you find that you really must learn some of their tunes, they have published a Relentless tune book, which they sell on their website ( www.whapweasel.com ).

Brooke Alberts writes a regular column for FolkWorks (see page 23).
## FOLK HAPPENINGS AT A GLANCE

### Check out details by following the page references:

- **OGM**: On-going Music - page 13
- **OGD**: On-going Dance - page 16
- **SE**: Special Events - page 28

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**OGD**: On-going Dance - page 16

**SE**: Special Events - page 28

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CD REVIEWS

Artists: THE HOT FRITTATAS
Title: INVITATION TO THE DANCE
By KURT MACINNIS

The first and most important news: this CD is a GOOD one! It has already brought me a lot of listening pleasure, and it's forward-looking to several of the selections that are new to me. The highest compliment I can pay to fellow musicians is to learn what they do.

This is Italian music; it makes no reference to the Anglo/ Irish tradition, nor to old-time or Bluegrass styles. It comes through the nostalgic Italian American tradition of the ‘teens and ‘twenties in New York, from sources ultimately European. As a mandolinist, I find this CD to be particularly valuable in understanding any and all interpretative, expressive and compositional new expressions in style will find it valuable as well. The disc concentrates on the mandolin and violin melodies played by Gus Garelick, with careful melodic statements and accompaniment from the accordion (Dennis Hadley) and guitar (Don Coffin).

This is the second Hot Frittatas CD I’ve heard, and it shows many improvements over the first, Caffè Liscio (which, by the way, is lots of fun on Death Don’t Have No Mercy; on the back cover of the CD. TV producer Bruce Lamb hired the three to play music at his bash at a hotel in Las Vegas; their main gig was immediately after the Las Vegas Hilton hotel show with the chrome saxophone player, the rest of whom I hadn’t heard of but who were excellent at their jobs). The CD delivers some tasty tunes with an extra helping of fun, but not at the expense of the musical product. That’s the best of both worlds.

Kurt MacInnis is a mandolinist and guitarist living in Santa Monica. He enjoys a variety of styles, from Eddie Lang to Giovanni Viciari, but nothing seems to make him happier than a good Mexican march.

Artists: JOHN CEPHAS, WOODY MANN and ORVILLE JOHNSON
Title: TOGETHER IN LAS VEGAS
Label: SELF PRODUCED, c/o ACOUTIC SESSIONS
Release Date: SPRING 2004
By DENNIS ROGER REED

Well, first of all, this wasn’t recorded in Las Vegas. And it’s not a live album, per se. But there is a Vegas connection beyond the photo of John Cephas, Woody Mann and Orville Johnson sharing the remainder of the selections that are new to me. If you are interested in this style and enjoy reading music, look for the out-of-print editions from Odi Bella and Pagani, two defunct New York publishing houses. Related listening might include: the first Hot Frittatas CD, Caffè Liscio; Ricardo Testi’s Il Balle Liscio; B. Gambetta and Carlo Anzoni’s collaboration, Italian Strings Virtuosos on Rounder; and two Global Village CDs, Speranzon Perdue and L’Appuntamento.

Hats off to the band!

John Cephas is a seventy plus year old blues musician from Washington, DC. His virtuosity with the 1930s Washburn guitar II Phil Wise has earned him international notoriety, and he is considered one of the premier Piedmont fingerstyle guitarists today. Recently he’s become well known for his love of Skip James’ music, and Together in Las Vegas features a nice take on James’ Illinois Blues. Woody Mann studied under the Reverend Gary Davis and is also a consummate jazz guitarist. Orville Johnson is a Seattle based musician adept at guitar, Dobro and about every other stringed instrument, as well as possessing a startling singing voice somewhat reminiscent of the late Ray Charles.

This year’s fall lineup includes Tom Russell & Andrew Hardin, Jim Messina, Holly Near, and Silly Wizard alum Andy M. Stewart with Gerry O’Beirne. This year’s fall lineup includes Tom Russell & Andrew Hardin, Jim Messina, Holly Near, and Silly Wizard alum Andy M. Stewart with Gerry O’Beirne.

Listening rooms are rising in popularity these days, perhaps in response for people’s need for more intimacy in their musical experiences. One of the foremost listening rooms in the Los Angeles area isn’t really a room at all, but a series of the Acoustic Music Series, which presents concerts at Pasadena’s Neighborhood Church and Noma Concerts Auditorium. In addition, each year the series sponsors several small house concerts at the Abode home of one of the organizers. This year’s fall lineup includes 11 concerts.

Audience for favorite songs? Does it matter when you’re sharing so many stories about the roots of his songs or the traditionals he’s worked into his repertoire? Who can forget the remarkable moment when Texas leged Butch Hancock included the backyard cicadas in his performance during a house concert? Or Iris DeMent seating herself on the Neighborhood Church’s white piano to accompaniment on her heart-rending, ballad? Or Kevin Welch and Kieran Kane swapping stories and accepting requests from the audience for her upcoming “Country’s Gold” tour? Your ears, your heart, your soul and your heart will find this recorded sanctuary sharing so many stories about the roots of his songs or the traditionals he’s worked into his repertoire.

Visit www.acousticmusicseries.com
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I used to hang around with a bunch of singers. It was fun, one of the things being benefits of working for a brilliant, quirky, young man who worked out of his home. His friends loved to sing together so much and knew so much about music. It was fun exploring new songs that the most minute thought or happenstance caused them to burst into song. If age came to mind, they’d sing “Time has made a change in the old home place . . .” If the garden whirligig started wheezing, it crowded into the shower, and sang and sang. A distant voice called always listening to how the sounds changed. They turned the water on and notes fracturing against the tiles into new, unimagined harmonies. There was something magic in the middle of the air . . .” Harmony of Ocean Park choir. When I gave them Folk Legacy’s singers in fact, able to sing many a line on one breath. Someone else gasped the next line and another began a harmony and soon they were all singing with nary a wheeze or gasp, even though we were still climbing the hill. They were mountain climbers in song only, but practiced in fact, able to sing many a line on one breath.

They leaned heavily toward gospel songs for they’d met in the Church of Ocean Park choir. When I gave them Folk Legacy’s Sharon Mountain Harmony tape they went into a singing frenzy. They loved the harmonies, analyzed them endlessly, and began improving on them. Soon they formed a performing group and often rehearsed, if I were lucky, in the room next to my office.

One weekend we went to a Songmakers’ camp-out at someone’s home. I was out by the pool, sorting song sheets, when the two women hurtled out of the house, calling me and the men, “Come! Come!” We followed them past the pot luck preparations in the kitchen, past the singers in the living room, and into the master bedroom, ignoring the odd noises we drew as they cried “Hurry! We’ve got to try it in the bathroom!”

The bathroom was tiled floor to ceiling and had a deep tub and an enclosed shower. All those hard surfaces looked hostile to me but, from the first inviting note to the final resolving chord an hour later, it was pure magic. “De Canaan’s land I’m on my way . . .” they sang, their individual notes fracturing against the tiles into new, unimagined harmonies. There weren’t just four voices in that bathroom but dozens, and the sounds shimmied, splashed, danced, and clanked. They tried every kind of harmony they knew and they moved around, stood, sat, and faced different directions, always listening to how the sounds changed. They turned the water on and off, crowded into the shower, and sang and sang. A distant voice called “Dinner!” They ignored it. Silver and china clattered; they heard nothing. I left, unnoticed, and returned with a plate of tasty potluck fare. They didn’t see it but, eventually, the smells drew them away from their unearthly delights. It had been, for them, the magic and beauty; for me, it was mostly fascination and envy. I just don’t get harmony. I love hearing it but haven’t drawn them away from their unearthly delights. They didn’t see it but, eventually, the smells drew them away from their unearthly delights.

Another time we went to a music festival in Bishop. On the return, I insisted that we stop and swim at Dirty Socks Hot Springs. This big round pool, fed by a natural warm spring, used to be a resort with wind-breaking fences and changing rooms. Now, in full view of the road but divested of its old structures, it is invisible till you’re upon it. You can smell it before you see it and, if that doesn’t put you off, the slippery green algae on the bottom will. My hesitant but trusting friends inclined their way in while I swam around and around. Almost immediately they found where the warm water bubbles to the surface and formed a circle around it. Gleefully, they sang “When I get to heaven I know the rule – skip on down to the bathing pool” It was a far cry from the tile bathroom. The only hard surface was the distant granite of the Sierra Nevada but they played happily with the breeze, the bubbles, and the wake I made.

This time, in my element, on my beloved desert with the perpetually blue sky, I felt no envy, just a great harmony that encompassed music and the other things I love and live for. Just as we were getting out, all pruny-skinned and happy, a local arrived in a pick-up and I handed him my camera. I still have the picture he took – four friends, smiling and giddy from singing, and me, smiling and giddy from sharing it.

Valerie Cooley lives in West Los Angeles and loves folk music, dancing, and crafts. She co-chairs the Banner Committee for the CTMS Summer Solstice Festival where she is able to indulge her love of pretty colors, fabrics, and the enthusiasm of the people who put them together.
KOREAN FOLK continued from page 7

The farmers music called nongak (literally agricultural recreation travels) and varies with the agricultural cycles, yet the instruments tend to be the same. In addition to the samulnori, sometimes dancers use a small handheld double headed drum-on-a-stick, sogo. Members of the audience if so inclined, at appropriate moments, may join the musician-dancers, and a good time is had by all.

ENDANGERED SPECIES

It is possible that more Koreans know Beethoven’s 9th than their traditional folk music; the exception is the song Arirang, with some 3000 researched variations. Employed for cultural resistance to invasion and colonization, enjoyed as a roots relic or enjoyed in the diaspora as a world-class performing art form, Korean folk music needs champions like Kim Dok-su to keep it alive for generations to come.

At the FORD AMPHITHEATRE on Friday, October 8, 2004 you can hear Traditional Music and Dance of Korea in an intimate outdoor setting. Kim, Duk Soo’s Samulnori shares the program with Kim, Eung Hwa’s Los Angeles based company. Check out www.fordamphitheatre.org for details.

The Korean Culture Center, an arm of the Korean Consulate General, has occasional performances and traditional music classes (www.kccla.org). There are a few local professional organizations and schools which teach music and dance and Koreatown’s Flower Factory Uptown Nursery tea room (2941 West Olympic Blvd., L.A. 213-382-9777) offers monthly concerts as well as traditional herbal teas in a “folk” setting. Read more about Korean folk music in Keith Howard’s Folk Music & Folk Bands in the Koreana / Korean Cultural Heritage (Vol III, Korea Foundation, Seoul, ROK, 1997) online at: www.koreana.or.kr/search_db/main.asp?flag=f&volumn_id=38.

Lauren W. Deutsch, director of Pacific Rim Arts, is an arts / culture producer and promoter living in Los Angeles California, USA. She presented Korea’s National Shamn Kim Jongmin on the 50th anniversary of the LA Riots (2002), and supported presentations at France’s Festival d’Automne a Paris and New York City’s Lincoln Center Festival. She is a consulting curator for the first international shaman conference in Seoul, Korea. Fall 2004. Lauren is a contributing editor to Kyoto Journal, has produced programs for National Public Radio's KCRW and National Geographic TV. On the home front, she has worked on festivals of the California Traditional Music Society Dulcimer Festival and the Topanga Banjo and Fiddle Contest. In folk music as a performer (guitar, singer) she began at the Philadelphia Folksong Society in the 1960s – 70s. She may be reached at lwdeutsch@earthlink.net
MOURNING FOR THE MOURNING DOVE

(OR: “MR. LOMAX, HERE’S AN OLD ELIZABETHAN SONG I WROTE LAST WEEK!”)

I have a confession to make. I am not really a nice person. At least, not all the time. I am often guilty of a crime I will call, “Musical Revenge.” Let me explain:

Some forty-seven years ago KPFK went on the air for the first time and what a strange, wonderful, hectic and wild place it was! (It hasn’t really changed all that much!) During that first year I was working with an acting group producing a radio version of Chekhov’s The Seagull. We also had a folk music program hosted by a somewhat self-important and prematurely grumpy young man whom I shall identify only as EC.

One day as we were rehearsing the scene in which my character, Nina, and in my best Library of Congress voice I crackled:

“Mourn, mourn, mourn with me; mourn the bird flown from the tree,
Mourn, mourn, long gone love; Mourning for the mourning dove.”

I didn’t expect EC to respond. After all, it was perfectly cumulative and included a great line! “Wrong!” yelled EC, “That song is not from Wisconsin. It’s a Smoky Mountain song!” His voice was smugly triumphant.

“Did she teach you any others?” EC asked, his voice tremulous with hope.

“Well, yes,” I answered, “but you probably already know Tad Timbley.”

He could barely conceal his excitement. “No, no I don’t! Sing it, sing it!”

I sang it.

Tad Timbley, play your fiddle, Tad Timbley sing that tune!
Tad Timbley ain’t been ‘round my door—not since the last full moon!
Tad Timbley, you was here in May, Tad Timbley; now it’s June!
And the four day pain ain’t come to me—not since the last full moon!
Tad Timbley and his fiddle’s gone, and me, a mother soon.
A girl what never done no wrong—not since the last full moon!
Another Smoky Mountain song!” declared EC, and I told him how honored I was to know a true musician.

I am only revealing the highlights of my musical rap sheet here, so let’s move way ahead in time to the summer of my sixtieth birthday. My friend Beverly and I signed up for an Elderhostel week in Oregon, where the main draw for me was a class in “Folk Songs of the Northwest”, taught by, (again, initials only) HK, an earnest soul whose face gave a new dimension to the word “dour!” Many of the hopeful seniors brought their guitars to the class, some of which had less than 200 verses. We learned which verses were inauthentic, which lines were corruptions of the original line, and how to correctly pronounce the name of the State whose sea shanties would enhance the sex life of any masochist. “OreGUN, for God’s sake! Not OreGAHN!” growled HK. Occasionally a brave student would break the general torpor by inquiring if we were ever going to be allowed to sing. Three days and four shanties later we did, indeed, sing a tragic tale of a ship that took the drunken crew two hundred and seventeen stanzas to drown. (We were asked to sing only on the chorus, which went something like yo ho ho whack folfdiddle day.

It was during this endless activity that, in revenge, I wrote the first song on The Mystery of Time (my adult album): The Authentic Folk Song. To this day HK does not know how much I owe him!

It was in 1832 our ship pulled out to sea
Though the Library of Congress says the year was ’33.
But in Volume Eight it does relate, so we’re led to understand—
There was no ship, no sea; in fact, we traveled overland!
(chorus) Oh, we are singing the authenticated version of this song.
We have done a lot of research, not a single word is wrong!
So many folk songs sung these days are tainted and corrupted,
But, we sing here, without the fear that we’ll be interrupted!
(and the last verse)
Oh, seventy point five men died, as we did march along
We sang to keep our spirits up, six variants of each song.
It was a scorching summer, we froze with every breath,
And those who tried to improvise were quickly put to death!
Alas! So many fake folk songs, so little space. No room for my New Authentic Folk Song dedicated to Ross Altman, or my current Work in Progress:
O, sing we here of Leda, fair,
With teeth so bright and even,
Who ran away to sea to be
With her dear lover, ………(still working on this one).

Uncle Ruthie is a singer, songwriter, storyteller, recording artist, Special Education music teacher for blind children and a poet. Her radio show can be heard every Saturday morning at 10:00 am on KPFK 90.7 FM. In her spare time she will be writing this column and sharing her thoughts on music and life with our readers.

“My take is that the world of music and dancing and fellowship is reality. The world of jobs and “careers” and traffic and TV is an artifice. And that we forget this at our peril.”

-Gary Shapiro
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Susie Glaze, Home on the Hill
Green Man, Green Man

Kristina Olsen, The Truth of a Woman
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Dennis Roger Reed, Little King of Dreams
Jane Jordan, Round the House
Kristina Olsen, Keep This Coupon

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The Irish Rover

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2 tickets to one concert annually

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None of the newly added members’ names are repeated, they are just a list of artists who have donated CDs for FolkWorks members.

Keep reading!!!
higher states that living in the moment of music often induces. Suooest of all, there would be little chance to get acquainted with our global neighbors outside the noise and politics of corporate media. Those who program do much more than provide entertainment, they are cultural agents presenting gifts that embody the best of humanity.

One such agent is Skirball’s Music Director, and Wednesday host of KPFK’s Global Village show, Yatrika Shah-Rais. I spoke with Yatrika about her background, her tenure at the Skirball, and of course, about presenting music. In the midst of a gentle breeze we sat in a cobblestone courtyard bordered by a large lily pond. I was delighted to discover that the pond doubles as a stage for Skirball’s Summer Sunset Concerts. The setting was reminiscent of Yatrika herself, whose presence is like the sweet ease of a Sunday afternoon. But don’t mistake her warmth for meekness; in the musical world of enchantment, enrichment, and perhaps even enlightenment.

YATRIKA continued from page 1

YSR: Oh boy, I took a risk because it was a calling and I could not ignore it. I have always gone after my heart. One of the best ways to learn and to prove oneself is to volunteer or to seek an internship. Many organizations prefer hiring a good volunteer or intern with whom they have experience. But today I would probably study in the field from the beginning. I had an awakening in the middle of my other career. I always loved music but never thought to make more of it. I wouldn’t say that is the way to do it – to change mid-way. Still, it’s how I got here!

FF: I can maybe say “hello” in five languages…but seriously…which ones do you know and which ones do you have a burning desire to know?

YSR: I speak English, Farsi, French, Spanish, and a little Portuguese. If I had the quickness of my youth I would learn Sanskrit, Hindi, Arabic, and good Portuguese! Oh, and Italian….But if it came down to only one choice, it would be Sanskrit. The Vedas, the ancient wisdom, are in Sanskrit in beautiful metrical form. It’s the language of prayers, mantras, and of the soul.

FF: You got into this whole world music business by volunteering at a radio station in New York City. Gave up everything. Would you do it the same way today?

YSR: Oh boy, I took a risk because it was a calling and I could not ignore it. I have always gone after my heart. One of the best ways to learn and to prove oneself is to volunteer or to seek an internship. Many organizations prefer hiring a good volunteer or intern with whom they have experience. But today I would probably study in the field from the beginning. I had an awakening in the middle of my other career. I always loved music but never thought to make more of it. I wouldn’t say that is the way to do it – to change mid-way. Still, it’s how I got here!

FF: How do you approach programming? What is your style?

YSR: I look for quality and diversity, these are really the two things that are very, very important to me….I also champion lesser-known but extremely talented artists.

FF: How did you come to work at the Skirball?

YSR: I was riding downhill on Sepulveda…and saw the Center…though at first I didn’t know what it was about! I was self employed doing artist management and booking, but it wasn’t right for me. There was too much of a risk factor and I felt isolated. I had been a presenter in the past and wanted to get back into it, so I just called–cold called! I was told to send my resume in and two weeks later the Program Director called me to come in for an interview.

FF: In your 7 years at Skirball (mostly as their Music Director) what do you feel you have taught them, and they you?

YSR: I think that I have brought with me a more international feel to the cultural center and more variety. I have never been completely able to identify with one single culture but have a bit of everything in me. I certainly opened the doors of the Skirball as a world music venue. I feel that by trusting me and assigning me to tasks I had never done before, they taught me a greater sense of responsibility and accountability and put me in situations where I had no choice.
Haitian Vodou Flags and An Exploration of Botanicas at the Fowler

By Brooke Alberts

Brooke Alberts is a songwriter and has a Masters degree in Medieval Studies.

Fifty Drapo Vodou, approximately 3”x3” sequin- and bead-decorated flags, used in Haitian Vodou ceremonies, are being displayed in the Fowler Museum of Cultural History exhibition, Saluting Vodou Spirits: Haitian Flags from the Fowler Collection. The exhibit will be running from August 8th to December 12th. Along with works dating from the early 1900’s to the 1980’s, five newly-commissioned Drapo have been added to the collection that have been made by women, a relatively recent phenomenon.

The word Vodou comes from the language of the Fon people from what is now Benin in West Africa. It literally means spirit, and refers to rituals pertaining to a family of spirits known as Loa. In these gatherings, the Drapo are presented to call the attention of certain Loa and to focus the energies of the participants. Ceremonies include dancing call-and-response singing, drumming and prayers. The images on the Drapo are either portrait images, like (and in many cases drawn from) the iconography of Catholic saints, or more abstract geometrical designs symbolizing the particular Loa.

During the period of slavery in Haiti, the elements of West and Central African spiritual traditions were merged with that of the native Taino people and Catholicism. This way, they were able to maintain the appearance of praying to saints that they had synthesized with their own revered spirits. For example, the two images here are both dedicated to Ezili, a female spirit (earth mother, love). The first one resembles a woman and contains elements of the Catholic iconography of the Virgin Mary. The second one is more abstract, making use of the mirror-image symmetry and cross-forms that are used in the art of veve (sacred symbols and designs drawn in cornmeal, flour or coffee). The cross-forms symbolize the juncture between the material world and the spirit world, and the mirror is a pervasive image in Vodou dealings with Loa.

In August of 1791 there was a religious ceremony in Bois Caiman (or Bwa Kayiman in Haitian Creole), that inspired the uprising that became the Haitian Revolution (1791-1804). The Drapo selected for this exhibition were chosen for their connection with this revolution, including Ogou (associated with metal, fire and war), Dambala (serpent patriarch), and Ezili Danto (earth mother and divine warrior). This exhibition provides some background for the next show, Divine Revolution: The Art of Eduard Duval Carrie (October 10, 2004 to January 30, 2005), in which some of his works are presented in sequined form.

If you are interested in turning your hand to beads and sequins, there will be a chance to try it out at A World of Art Family Workshop: Vodou Beaded and Sequined Flags on Sat. September 18, 1-4 pm at the Fowler. It’s free for members, otherwise there is a $5.00 materials fee. (Reservations are required: 310-825-8655).

Also at the Fowler, Botanica Los Angeles: Latino Popular Religious Art in the City of Angels (September 12 to February 27) will be mounted in conjunction with a site-specific installation by the San Antonio-born, NY-based artist Franco Mondini-Ruiz, Infinito Botanica: L.A. (September 12 to January 30). The Botanica exhibition will explore what characterizes a Southern California Botanica (a shop where you can buy healing herbs, devotional materials, and have spiritual readings done, for example, and patronized by a broad cross-section of the citizenry). It will include five altars/shrines showing the diversity of local practitioners (one for the Guatemalan San Simon, a few for African spirits, a Puerto Rican altar) and their clientele. There will also be a recreation of a Botanica including items for sale from shrines, prints, and sculptures to candles, potions and incense.

Franco Mondini-Ruiz was a lawyer before he was an artist. He purchased a Botanica in his native San Antonio, Texas and transformed it into a combination of folk-healing shop, random stuff store, and art and craft gallery. He was intrigued by the juxtaposition of high art and “junk,” and the intersecting of different types of people who would come in, and whom he considers to be an integral aspect and component of the project itself. His installation, Infinito Botanica: L.A. will also be created with a broad spectrum of materials, from the wares of local Botanicas to thrift-store and street-vendor whatnot to items from the Fowler’s collection. The Fowler Museum is open Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5pm, and Thursdays from noon to 8pm. Closed Mondays and Tuesdays. It is located in the north part of the UCLA campus. Admission is free, though parking on campus is $7 in Lot 4. 310-825-4361 www.fowler.ucla.edu.
but to learn! More importantly, the value of human relationships and caring is much emphasized at the Skirball and it has become for me like a second family. So, Skirball and my career have both grown together from the experiences and opportunities that have come to us.

FF: Do you audition the lesser nationally or internationally known bands, or rely mostly or solely on CD submissions?

YSR: If I have the opportunity to see them perform live, of course it is ideal. Also, I do go to various national and international showcases and festivals such as APAP, and WOMEX etc. where I can see many artists (both known and unknown) perform. At times, I have only relied on the CDs and the press kits and trusted that the performance will be as good as the recording. I also rely on the recommendations of other presenters I trust.

FF: How does the music you select for your radio show compare with what you select for Skirball? Are you more apt to pick according to artist or music genre first?

YSR: Often the music played on my radio show and presented at the Skirball has crossed paths. But the music played on my program on the Global Village is much more eclectic simply because I can play music from maybe 20 different places and from various styles in two hours on a weekly basis but I cannot give all of this music a platform at the Skirball….My radio program has greatly educated me and that has benefited the Skirball tremendously. I select both by genre and artist the music that I play on the air.

FF: At the Skirball, how do you balance reaching out internationally for traditional music groups versus using American bands that play – or interpret – the music of a given culture or region?

YSR: For the most part, we have presented international bands that are deeply rooted in the music of their homeland. We have also presented American bands that play non-American music as long as their performance is well informed and authentic. I try to go with authenticity. After all, I owe that to the community. For traditional music, I like to go to the source or to those artists that have gone to the source. Fortunately, the US is made of immigrants and so authentic international music is widely available right here at our doorstep.

FF: You once commented in an interview, “Why does everyone have to equate people with their government…. Why don’t we listen to what they have to say in music, from their point-of-view, and from their words….” (Indeed!) Do you tie any of your programming to what’s going on in the world specifically? Maybe giving a voice to those people/cultures currently misrepresented or misunderstood?

YSR: Yes I certainly do, on the radio show for sure and at the Skirball when possible. The Skirball has no political agenda, we’re a cultural center, but the news can help to fill a house because it’s current, it rings a bell. For example, when Afghanistan was in the news, a concert we had featuring Afghan musicians was completely full. But it is not about politics, it is about giving a platform for artistic expression to various cultures and musical styles.

FF: …and artists you’re excited about?

YSR: Yes, like the Bauls of Bengal who are itinerant musicians from India that sing songs of love and devotion. We will be bringing them to the Skirball in November.

FF: Please tell me the story of how you ended up on the Grammy screening committee for world music. Please also share the special contribution you made.

YSR: I was asked by Bill Traut, the Chair of the World Music Screening Committee of NARAS, to join. I think my most important contribution was to initiate and work on the establishment of a new category in the World Music Field. Before, every type of world music—whether it was traditional, Afro-pop or fusion—would just go into one single World Music Field. I initiated the drafting of a proposal to create two categories in this field: one traditional and one non-traditional. Then we managed to gather so many letters of support and signature from press, musicians, publicist and the industry that this proposal was accepted without any question. So for the first time, this year, we had nominations and awards bestowed upon traditional artists who for years have gone unrecognized by the Grammies.

FF: I read that the reason you believe it’s important to play music from all over the world is because of the “spirit of tolerance and harmony” it creates – and that that’s your mission. Is your mission the same at Skirball? Any new missions in the pipeline?

YSR: That is certainly my mission at the Skirball and it is not only my personal mission, it is also part of the mission of the Skirball. Any other mission? Just fostering love, communication, and healing people with the power of music.

FF: That’s it! Such a small order!

YSR: That’s the mission that’s musically related. I have other aspirations that have to do with Ayurveda and Vedic astrology. But the end result is the same, because they’re all about understanding a higher order of life; a higher purpose of living.

FF: Back in New York City as a volunteer at WNYC radio, did you ever imagine that you would be doing what you are now and having such a tremendous influence?

YSR: Never. I just went with the flow enjoying what I was doing and hoping that someday I might be given the chance to play a bigger role.

FF: What music did you listen to today?

YSR: Right now I am listening to One Giant Leap by Jamie Catto and Duncan Bridgeman.
A PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN

At the age of four, like Albert Einstein, I had not yet spoken my first words. My voice was growth and I was growing, not having in what illustrous company such slow development put me. She too, unlike speech theory who wanted a considerable amount of time trying to encourage me to talk. Then he had an inspiration. He put on a record — a young People's Record of Tom Glazer singing, Josh White, who could change a broken guitar string with his teeth on stage and never miss a beat, guitar string with his teeth on stage and never miss a beat, Marais and Miranda, who sang folk songs of South Africa, and most extraordinary of all, Burl Ives and The Weavers. Soon other songs found their way to my "speech therapy" shelf: Richard Dyer Bennet, The 20th Century Minstrel, whose impeccable diction made up for Leadbelly's Louisiana dialect. Alan Lomax, who took one summer school guitar class at UCLA before. That's what inspired my song, "Waltzing Matilda," learned from Burl Ives, The Wayfarer, Strange, became my money song. Little did I know I had stumbled on the way I would eventually make my living.

A few years later, at Paul Revere Junior High School in 1959, I sang for a large group for the first time. Once a month on a Friday night they had a dance in the school gym called Revere Teens. Students got to perform occasionally, and I organized the first political group I ever joined, the Resistor's League. I sang and I organized the first political group I ever joined, the Resistor's League. I performed them only that one time, but the experience stayed with me, buried way down deep inside.

It never really surfaced until New Year's Day in 1986, when I woke up to the news that Ricky Nelson had been killed in a plane crash the night before. That's what inspired my song, Yours Was the Music We Danced To, the tragedy itself, the condescending way it was reported in the L.A. Times, and the long-buried memory of that night at a high school junior-year dance, where I sang his music and people I knew started dancing. That's where many of my songs come from, in some confluence of a current event and a deep memory, "recollected in tranquility," as Wordsworth once described poetry.

While still in junior high a third formative experience helped to shape the kind of folk singer I became. My best friend Jim Alexander belonged to Fritz Perls—the notorious Gestalt therapist who became one of the more colorful and influential figures in the age of psychotherapy that blossomed in California during the 1960's. Who knows but that some later idea of the personal being political and the political being personal soaked into me from the floor beneath my feet as I stood on old Fritz's bookcase to sing for the first time the songs I had learned from Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger, Leadbelly and Paul Robeson. Fritz Perls' bookcase—my first stage—is now in my apartment, and houses my folk music library. The books and records my mother first got me to help as speech therapy became my life's work. Thanks to them, how can I keep from talking?

HOW CAN I KEEP FROM TALKING

By Ross Altman

FolkWorks (archived on www.FolkWorks.org). I never did like to practice though, and from then on I learned by watching friends play and imitating as many traveling folk singers as I could hear at the original Ash Grove, the greatest folk music club in L.A. history, established and nurtured by Bessie Jones, who continues making cultural and political waves in Los Angeles today.

I earned my first pennies as a folk singer long before I picked up a guitar, though, traipsing around after my brother to various charitable, political and educational events as a young kid. I saw people raising money for these functions by selling homemade wares, auctioning off gifts, holding raffles and making pitches for contributions. "What can I do?" I wondered to myself. I finally got up the nerve to tug on a woman's skirt and when she looked down to see who was being so forward I looked up and said, "If I sing Waltzing Matilda will you contribute a quarter to the charity?"

She didn't have the heart to say "no," and I was in business. I walked all over the elementary school parking lot, busking for quarters for my mom's charity. Waltzing Matilda, learned from Burl Ives, The Wayfarer, Strange, became my money song. Little did I know I had stumbled on the way I would eventually make my living.

A few years later, at Paul Revere Junior High School in 1959, I sang for a large group for the first time. Once a month on a Friday night they had a dance in the school gym called Revere Teens. Students got to perform occasionally, and it was at one of these evenings I first got to sing two songs in public, accompanying myself on the guitar. I chose Ricky Nelson's double-sided hit, Hello, Mary Lou, and Traveling Man. I performed them only that one time, but the experience stayed with me, buried way down deep inside.

It never really surfaced until New Year's Day in 1986, when I woke up to the news that Ricky Nelson had been killed in a plane crash the night before. That's what inspired my song, Yours Was the Music We Danced To, the tragedy itself, the condescending way it was reported in the L.A. Times, and the long-buried memory of that night at a high school junior-year dance, where I sang his music and people I knew started dancing. That's where many of my songs come from, in some confluence of a current event and a deep memory, "recollected in tranquility," as Wordsworth once described poetry.

While still in junior high a third formative experience helped to shape the kind of folk singer I became. My best friend Jim Alexander and I organized the first political group I belonged to: "We're called 'Revere Teens.'" We met Friday nights (skipping the night reserved for "Revere Teens") and divided the meeting into two halves. The first half was devoted to our political self-education. We invited peace activists to speak to our small group—the best we could find. It was there I first heard War Resistor's League director David McReynolds, who at the time was addressing the problem of above ground nuclear testing and fallout, and also first developing the radical idea of refusing to pay a specific portion of his income taxes that was used to finance such testing. It was my first exposure to the idea of civil disobedience—and it didn't come from reading Thoreau. There were people out there who discovered who were living examples of Thoreau's philosophy and were lucky enough to learn from them. (By the way, in the category of "What Happened To," David McReynolds ran for president on the Socialist ticket in 2000, right alongside Ralph Nader and you-know-who-else.)

After we heard our political guest for the evening, we devoted the second half to a hootenanny, where we sang songs that reinforced the ideas of the first half. Thus, from the beginning of my self-education in folk music it was clear to me that my kind of folk music had something to say about the world we live in—that it had political content and grew out of history-in-the-making, as well as the history of previous times.

We held these hootenannies in a friend's garage—continuing the tradition of learning to play guitar in Ernie Lieberman's garage. We even set up a stage—so we could sing to ourselves and pretend we were actually performing. The stage was simple enough—a bookcase we turned over on its front while we stood on its back. But it wasn't just any bookcase. I later learned it once belonged to Fritz Perls—the notorious Gestalt therapist who became one of the more colorful and influential figures in the age of psychotherapy that blossomed in California during the 1960's. Who knows but that some later idea of the personal being political and the political being personal soaked into me from the floor beneath my feet as I stood on old Fritz's bookcase to sing for the first time the songs I had learned from Woody Guthrie, Pete Seeger, Leadbelly and Paul Robeson. Fritz Perls' bookcase—my first stage—is now in my apartment, and houses my folk music library. The books and records my mother first got me to help as speech therapy became my life's work. Thanks to them, how can I keep from talking? And singing.

Ross Altman has a Ph.D. in English. Before becoming a full-time folk singer he taught college English and Speech. He now sings around California for libraries, unions, schools, political groups and folk festivals.
NEEDS YOUR HELP!

This survey will take about 5 minutes to fill out. Your responses are greatly appreciated and will help us to better serve you in future issues.

Please complete the survey below and mail to:

FolkWorks, PO BOX 55051, SHERMAN OAKS, CA 91413.

OR if you prefer you can complete the survey online at our website: www.FolkWorks.org

Your information will be used by our organization for statistical purposes only, and will not be shared with any individual or organization.

Every survey received by September 13, 2004 will be entered into a drawing.

THANK YOU PRIZES will be awarded and winners notified by September 30, 2004.

PRIZES include (2) FREE PASSES to an October and November Concert at the SKIRBALL.

A FolkWorks Basic Membership and a FolkWorks T-shirt.

Gender: Male / Female

Number of people residing in household

City/Area:

Number of children under 18 in household

__ Occupation

Musician/Artist
Professional/Technical
Management/Busines Owner
Sales/Marketing
Blue collar
Retired
Student
Other

WHICH GROUP DESCRIPTIONS YOUR ANNUAL FAMILY INCOME?

$0 - $9,999
$10,000 - $29,999
$30,000 - $49,999
$50,000 - $74,999
$75,000 - $100,000
$100,000 and over

HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION

Some high school
High school Graduate
College
College Degree
Post Graduation work
Post Grad degree

HOW MANY PEOPLE, OTHER THAN YOURSELF, READ THE COPY OF FOLKWORKS?

WHAT DO YOU DO WITH FOLKWORKS WHEN YOU FINISH READING IT?

Have for future reference
Give it to a friend
Donate it to a Library/School
Trash/Recycle it.

WHAT OTHER MUSIC-ORIENTED MAGAZINES DO YOU READ MORE THAN ONCE PER YEAR?

CHECK ALL THAT APPLY

□ Sing Out!
□ Bluegrass Now/Bluegrass Unlimited
□ Promotions
□ Magazine
□ Other

WHAT IS YOUR LEAST FA VORITE REGULAR IN FOLKWORKS?

□ A.P.A.
□ Bluegrass Now/Bluegrass Unlimited
□ A.P.A.
□ Other

WHAT TYPES OF ARTICLES WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE MORE OF IN FOLKWORKS?

□ A.P.A.
□ Bluegrass Now/Bluegrass Unlimited
□ A.P.A.
□ Other

WHAT TYPES OF ARTICLES WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE LESS OF IN FOLKWORKS?

□ A.P.A.
□ Bluegrass Now/Bluegrass Unlimited
□ A.P.A.
□ Other

WHAT IS YOUR LATEST FAVORITE ADVERTISER?

□ A.P.A.
□ Bluegrass Now/Bluegrass Unlimited
□ A.P.A.
□ Other

WHAT IS YOUR LEAST FAVORITE ADVERTISER?

□ A.P.A.
□ Bluegrass Now/Bluegrass Unlimited
□ A.P.A.
□ Other

WHAT GENRE(S) WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE MORE OF IN FOLKWORKS?

□ A.P.A.
□ Bluegrass Now/Bluegrass Unlimited
□ A.P.A.
□ Other

WHAT TYPES OF ARTICLES WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE MORE OF IN FOLKWORKS?

□ A.P.A.
□ Bluegrass Now/Bluegrass Unlimited
□ A.P.A.
□ Other

WHAT TYPES OF ARTICLES WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE LESS OF IN FOLKWORKS?

□ A.P.A.
□ Bluegrass Now/Bluegrass Unlimited
□ A.P.A.
□ Other

WHO ARE YOU A STORYTELLER IF SO, WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE GENRE?

□ A.P.A.
□ Bluegrass Now/Bluegrass Unlimited
□ A.P.A.
□ Other
SPECIAL EVENTS  
continued from page 28

**LAYOUT OCTOBER 10**
- SHAKEY HIGHLAND GAMES
- 52nd St Mark Museum: A concert with music about jazzman Muriel Brand
d- Village Granada via Lista

**LAYOUT OCTOBER 12**
- DIGEREEDOO FESTIVAL
- DAVE EDMONDSON

**THURSDAY OCTOBER 17**
- DIGEREEDOO FESTIVAL
- HARRY REID

**SUNDAY OCTOBER 23**
- DIGEREEDOO FESTIVAL
- JASA

**TUESDAY OCTOBER 13**
- 7:00pm DESERT SAGE [www.desertsageband.com] Free
- 8:00pm KARLA BONOFF [www.karlabonoff.com] $25
- 7:30pm LAURENCE JUBER [www.laurencejuber.com] $18

**TUESDAY OCTOBER 18**
- 6:00pm KARLA BONOFF [www.karlabonoff.com] $28.00
- 8:00pm BENEFIT CONCERT FOR CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

**THURSDAY OCTOBER 28**
- INTERNATIONAL DANCE WORKSHOP
- LATIN DANCE WORKSHOP
- 7:00pm INTI ILLIMANI


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**FOLKWORKS FOLK**

**AS OF JULY, 2004**

**ANGEL**
Anonymous

**BENEFACTOR**
Ruth C. Greenberg • Tom & Melinda Peters • Kathy Qualey • Dave Stambaugh

**PATRON**
Susan Beem • Frieda & Bob Brown • Christa Burch • David & Jennifer Dempsey • Ron Young/Linda Dewar • Steve Dulson • Bonita Edelberg • Kay & Cliff Gilpatrick • Lisa Gwin • Don & Holly Kiger • Chris Gruber • Aleta Hancock • Dorian Keyser • Sheila Mann • Nancy MacMillan • Mary Anne McCarthy • Santa Monica Folk Music Club • Jim Westbrook • Elaine & Clark Weissman

**FRIENDS**
Anonymous
Brooke Alberts
Robin & Tom Axworthy
Carvel Bass
Aubyn & Doug Biery
Henrietta Bemis
Doug Brown
Valerie Brown/Jerry Gabel
Bob & Melody Burns
Chris Cooper
Jim Cope
Janet Cornwell
Alan & Margaret Davis
Lisa Davis
Winifred Davis
Enrico Del Zotto
Louise Dobbs
Mary Dolinskas
Lawrence Dunn
Marcia & Brian Edwards
Joy Felt
Joel Garfield
John & Judy Glass
Roger Goodman/Monica White
Alan & Shirley Hansen
Jim Hamilton
Chris Hendershot
Fron Heller/Bill Mason
Sue Hunter
Trudy & Peter Israel
Bob Jacobs
Bryon Johnson
Dodi & Marty Kennerly
Linda Kodaira
Peter Kolstad/Suzanne Benoit
Brian McKibbin
James Morgenstern/Linda Dow
Gitta Morris/Gee Martin
Rex Mayreis
Judy & Jay Messinger
Gretchen & Chris Naticchia
Molly Nealson
Sue Nelson
Melanie Nolley
Norma Nordstrom
Dave Ogden
Gabrielle O’Neill
Stephen/Susan Parker
Peter/Priscilla Parrish
Lenny Potsch
Mattias F. Reese
Suzie Richmond
Steve Rosenwasser/Kelli Sager
Tom Schulte
Yatrika Shah-Rais
Diane Sherman
Miriam & Jim Sidiano
Anne Silver
Jeff Spero/Gigi DeMarrais
Fred Starnes
Mimi Tanaka
Barry Tavlin
Doug Thomas
Vivian Vinberg
Ken Waldman
Michael McKenna/Debbie Webb
Don Green/Barbara Weismann
Donald Wood
John Wygonski/Mary Cynar
**FOLKWORKS BENEFIT CONCERT**

7:30pm - **PAVLO**

Greek Festival

7:00pm & 9:30pm - **SEVERIN BROWNE**

Greek Festival

8:00pm - **MURIEL ANDERSON**

[www.murielanderson.com](http://www.murielanderson.com)

8:00pm - **MICHAEL SMITH**

Caltech students - children

8:00pm - **SOLAS**

[www.solasmusic.com](http://www.solasmusic.com)

8:30pm - **NICKEL CREEK**

[www.nickelcreek.com](http://www.nickelcreek.com)

7:00pm & 9:30pm - **SEVERIN BROWNE**

Greek Festival

noon - **JOHN BILEZIKJIAN**

[www.dantzrecords.com](http://www.dantzrecords.com)

Free

7:00pm - **GENO DELAFOSE ZYDECO BAND**

Free

8:00pm - **VAN MORRISON**

$11.50-$20

**GREEK FESTIVAL**

**GREEK FESTIVAL**

**GREEK FESTIVAL**

**GREEK FESTIVAL**

8:00pm - **ERIC BIBB**

$25/$20 Skirball mem./$15 Students

7:00pm - **JOHN BILEZIKJIAN**

[www.dantzrecords.com](http://www.dantzrecords.com)

6:00pm - **GREEK FESTIVAL**

7:30pm - **PAVLO**

$20

**GREEK FESTIVAL**

**GREEK FESTIVAL**

**GREEK FESTIVAL**

**GREEK FESTIVAL**

**GREEK FESTIVAL**

**GREEK FESTIVAL**