**Gypsy Crossings**, the up-coming concert at UCLA Royce Hall, presents Taraf de Haïdouks, the most successful of world music bands that have emerged from post-communist Romania. Divano Productions, their management, has paired this group with Belgian guitarist Biréli Lagrène, a more mainstream jazz musician, also of gypsy origins. Such “gypsy music” concert bills have indeed become something of a standard on European stages and a touring strategy here in the States as well. Are the musicians gypsies? Certainly. Will they be playing gypsy music? Perhaps.

“Centuries before there was rock ‘n’ roll, there was Gypsy music,” reads their press kit, “loud, rowdy and rebellious…the world’s first party music! And perhaps no other Gypsy band in the world embodies the wild abandon, frenetic energy and instrumental virtuosity inherent in this musical tradition better than Taraf de Haïdouks.” This is promotional copy that unabashedly invokes the widespread image of gypsy freedom.

But these images, largely based in literature and art, are just that, images that form a stereotype which is held most commonly among those in the West with the least first hand knowledge of real Gypsies. Across Europe, Gypsies constitute very diverse peoples following many ways of life. Even in Romania, Gypsies are far from a homogeneous group.

Members of Taraf come from Muntenia, the southern region of Romania located in the Danube Plain. The village of Clejani became home to to Gypsies in the 19th century after their emancipation from surrounding monasteries. During the 1960s, when they first came to the attention of...
Dear Readers:

As you all know, FolkWorks is an all-volunteer organization. This means that writing, editing, and distributing the newspaper happens because of a lot of people care that the newspaper gets out to all of you. This means that mailing, purchasing supplies, solving computer problems, finding events and articles for you takes time out of busy lives. This means that when volunteers move or for other reasons, can no longer give us their time, we come to you to help get the job done. In the past few months we have lost a couple distributors plus our membership Director. [For those of you wondering what happened to your CD premium, we have found someone new and expect to catch up soon.]

We have not been able to replace the distributor in Hollywood/West Hollywood. We have also been notified of an impending loss that will affect all distribution. We print 12,000 papers and have a grass roots distribution system that works very well. We get the newspapers South to Long Beach and San Pedro, West to Thousand Oaks, East to Riverside and Claremont and many locations within those boundaries. But it depends on being able to pick up the papers and get them delivered to our house – our garage to be precise. 12,000 papers do not fit in your average car, nor even your average truck. FolkWorks has been lucky to have Stan Smith on our staff. Stan not only owns an extra long bed truck, but puts in hours loading and driving for FolkWorks every other month.

This newspaper happens because of people like Stan. On our masthead you can see some of the other people who make this organization run. We have been able to attract just enough people that take time out of their busy lives for FolkWorks. FolkWorks depends on people who give time and money. Some people give one; some the other. Some give both. But now, we are depending on you. Some things must have money to get done (printing, mailing, etc) and some must have people to do them. The newspaper cannot get written, published, printed, distributed without more help. Without additional resources, some things simply will not get done. This can effect distribution, as well as the content and calendar.

We need people with time and the desire to contribute to FolkWorks. We need people to give financial support. FolkWorks needs enough resources to continue and it is up to you. We need you to give of your time and/or financial support. We need all of you that care about FolkWorks to give what you can. We need it now.

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FANTASTIC FUN FOLK FESTIVALS

APRIL 27 - MAY 1
4TH ANNUAL GLAD STREET FESTIVAL
935-487-9707 www.gladstreet.org
The Glad Street Festival has all it entertaining, nurturing frame
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Comedy Award-winning musician.

MAY 5-8
PAINTED BLUES FESTIVAL
Parkfield, CA
830-927-0995 www.paintedblues.org
The James Ring, The Fox Family, The Witten Brothers, Don
Dean Band/Revelers, Brute Late Tom Surrender, Southield Band, The
New Finn Coyote, Jim Lacy: Stainbrush, Narrow Mind, Randy
Scroog, Larry Mark and The Bluegrass Gospel Singers.

MAY 10
TOPANGA RANCH HOUSE FESTIVAL & COUNTRY & FOLK MUSIC
Perussion Round, Carol Rd., Hwy 52, Agoura, CA
818-832-6419 www.topangaranch.com/house@topangaranch.com
The Lumpkins Family Band, Dan Parsons, Snow Grant & The
Manson Brothers.

MAY 20-22
CALIFORNIA AUTOHARP GATHERING
St. Nicholas Ranch, near Squaw Valley
www.californiaautoharp.com
Carter Family Legacy plus Bryan Bowers, Evon Bluestein, Kenny Hall
and more.

MAY 21-22
24TH ANNUAL CARRINGTON MUSIC FESTIVAL
Joseph Center / Lomita Park, Claremont
Evening concert at Little Bridges, Claremont
909-624-2928 fmcconcerts@yahoo.com
909-780-8810 www.santabarbarairishfestival.com
Oak Park, 300 W. Alamar, Santa Barbara, CA
805-646-8907 www.ptgo.org/village.htm
6TH ANNUAL OJAI STORYTELLING FESTIVAL
805-646-8907 www.ptgo.org/village.htm

JUNE 2-3
SANTA BARBARA IRISH FESTIVAL
1200 E. Carrillo St., Santa Barbara, CA
805-969-1511 www.sbcds.org
3730 Sunset Valley Rd., Moorpark

JUNE 2-5
KATE WOLF MEMORIAL MUSIC FESTIVAL
26800 West Mulholland Highway, Calabasas, CA
818-817-7756 www.ctmsfolkmusic.org/festival
209-293-1559 www.cbaontheweb.org

JUNE 9-10
HUCK FINN COUNTRY & BLUEGRASS JUBILEE
18000 Yates Rd., Victorville, CA
909-780-8810 fhecksin.com

JUNE 10-12
GRASS VALLEY BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL
JUNE 15-16
LAKE CARRIAGE HOUSE FESTIVAL
3500 S. Racine Ave, St. Charles, IL
630-469-6400 www.lakecarriagehouse.com

JUNE 16-17
SAN FRANCISCO FREE FOLK FESTIVAL
460 Ansel St. Greg, San Francisco, CA
510-267-9075 www.sfreefolk.org

JUNE 24-26
WILD IRIS FOLK FESTIVAL
26800 Irvine Center Dr., Irvine
858-714-7300 www.wildirisfolkfestival.org

JUNE 26-27
2005 CHILI COOKOFF & BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL
3216 E South Ave., Anaheim, CA
714-563-2024 or 714-535-6276

JUNE 27-29
SANTA FE IRISH FESTIVAL
205 E. Olvera St., Santa Fe, NM
505-983-6781 www.santafereser.es

JUNE 28-29
SOUTH INDIAN FOLK FESTIVAL
www.indianfolk.net
San Diego Museum of Man 1350 El Prado,
San Diego, CA

JUNE 30-JULY 1
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These guys can play anything they are
inspired and versatile, engaging and funny,
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Tim Froehlem. Eggs Magazine.

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Joshua Howlane & Cookie Segesta.
Also seen as "The Mans", "...more simply
incredible...they were truly inspiring",
Family Edwards. Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Also Phil & Gallagher Johnson. Leslie & Elie Grace
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MORE FUN WITH HARMONICS

TUNING, NATURAL, ARTIFICIAL, SLAP, TAP & PINCH HARMONICS

By Roger Goodman

Believe it or not, there is still more to be said about the harmonic overtone series. The focus of this issue’s column is on useful and fun ways that guitar players have learned to use harmonics.

TUNING

If you play the guitar, you may have used harmonics to tune your instrument or, at least, have seen other guitar players do that. There are at least two reasons why you might want to tune this way. One is that you get a sustained note because harmonics ring like a bell and seem to decay more slowly than a normal note. This gives you more time to make tuning adjustments. Another is that, with one exception, you can easily get matching harmonic pitches from adjacent pairs of strings. How perfect is that?

TUNING WITHOUT HARMONICS (See Figure 1)

The most common method of tuning is without using harmonics: start by tuning the low E (6th) string to match a tuning fork, pitch pipe, electronic tuner or any other dependable reference pitch. Play that E string at the 5th fret and you will hear an A or 5th string. This works because these strings are tuned a 4th apart. Remember that in a major scale there is a whole-step between 1 and 2, another whole-step between 2 and 3, and an additional half-step between 3 and 4. So if we add the steps between 1 and 2 we get 3 steps or 3 half-steps. Since each guitar fret represents 1 half-step, 5 half-steps up translates to playing at the 5th fret. This relationship holds true for each pair of adjacent strings except for the G (3rd) and B (2nd) string pair. These strings are a musical 3rd apart. The interval of a 3rd consumes 2 whole-steps. The relationship between the G and B string pair is the same as that between 3 and 4. So if we add the steps between 3 and 4 we get 5 steps or 5 half-steps. Since each guitar fret represents 1 half-step, 5 half-steps up translates to playing at the 5th fret. This relationship holds true for each pair of adjacent strings except for the G (3rd) and B (2nd) string pair. These strings are a musical 3rd apart. The interval of a 3rd consumes 2 whole-steps. This is shown in Figure 1, every open string can be tuned by matching it to the 5th fret of its lower sounding neighbor except for the B (2nd) string that must be tuned to the 4th fret of its lower sounding neighbor, the G (3rd) string.

TUNING WITH HARMONICS (See Figure 2)

Now let’s look at how the notes lay out for tuning by harmonics on the guitar. As noted in Figure 2, this can be done in several steps:

1. Tune the low E (6th) string to some external reference.
2. Play the harmonic at the 5th fret E (6th) string and match that to the 7th fret A (5th) string.
3. Repeat step 2 method for the A (5th) and D (4th) string pair.
4. Repeat step 2 method for the D (4th) and G (3rd) string pair.

As described in the above discussion about tuning without harmonics and shown in Figure 1, the B (2nd) string is a special case. Here, the 7th fret harmonic on the low E (6th) string is played and used as a reference for tuning the open B (2nd) string. Repeat step 2 for the 2nd and 1st string pair.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF HARMONICS

Not all harmonics are the same, and guitarists employ a variety of methods to produce different types of harmonics.

NATURAL HARMONICS (See Figure 3)

The most common and straightforward are the natural or open-string harmonics. Natural harmonics are produced when an open string is made to vibrate in a mode other than its fundamental mode. Remember, when a string vibrates at its full length with only the endpoints remaining stationary—that is its fundamental mode and will produce the lowest note associated with that string. By lightly touching a string with a finger of your left hand you will cause a node or stationary point at that spot when the string is played. In this manner you can cause the string to vibrate in various modes as seen in Figure 3. The harmonic overtone series, as mentioned in previous articles, is produced by dividing the string in half at the 12th fret, into thirds (7th & 19th frets), into fourths, etc. You will see natural harmonics played at the 3rd, 4th, 5th, 7th, 9th, 12th, 16th and 19th frets.

ARTIFICIAL HARMONICS

When natural harmonics are played on open strings, artificial harmonics are played on closed strings—strings that are stopped or fretted. This technique is a bit more difficult. First, the position of the harmonic must be adjusted by the proper amount to compensate for the reduced length of the fretted string. For example, on a string stopped at the 2nd fret, a natural harmonic on the 12th fret becomes an artificial harmonic at the 14th fret. If you were to play the harmonics for each note in a chord you would need to reprition each fretted note so that the layout of the harmonics would echo the shape of the fretted chord.

Secondly, since the left hand is already occupied with pressing down the frets of the chord, the right hand will have to do everything else to create the harmonics. This means you must correctly position your right hand and lightly touch the string with either your thumb or a finger and then pluck the string with a different digit of your right hand. This is most likely how Eric Clapton played the harmonics in his break for Bell Bottom Blues on the Derek and the Dominos album.

One notable advantage of artificial harmonics is that it gives you the ability to apply additional effects to the harmonic. Since the string is already fretted before the harmonic sounds, you can then slide to a different fret, bend the note by squeezing the string sideways or apply vibrato.

SLAP OR TAP HARMONICS

These are just natural or artificial harmonics that are played by slapping or tapping the string(s) at the spot where you would normally touch lightly to make a harmonic. This gives a percussive effect along with the harmonic sound.

PINCH HARMONICS

Pinch harmonics produce an almost magical, squealing harmonic sound. It involves holding a pick so that just the corner is exposed and held at a slight angle to the string. Let the thumb lightly touch the string at the same time as the string is struck by the corner of the pick. A great example of this can be heard on the break for La Grange as played by Billy Gibbons of ZZ Top. You can also see and hear a 14 second video clip of this technique at http://www.cyberfret.com/techniques/harmonics/pinch/index.php.

This is how guitarists have fun with harmonics. Try some of these techniques for yourself; use them for tuning or adding interesting sounds to your music. So, keep having fun and as always stay tuned.

Roger Goodman is a musician, mathematician, punster, reader of esoteric books and sometime 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 obscura and sometimes tries to explain how the clock works when asked only for the time. He lives with his wife, Monika White, in Santa Monica.

MUSICIANS FOR HIRE

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Mississippi native, Cliff Wagner and his band, “The Old #7” are entrenched in preserving Appalachian Bluegrass, the very same music played by The Stanley Brothers, Jimmy Martin, and Larry Sparks to name a few. Old #7’s sound incorporates traditional three part harmony and excellent instruments 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
THE VOICES IN MY HEAD
BY JOANNA CAZDEN

I’m married to a garage. Huggable, laundry-gifted homebody as he is, the Spouse of Voice spends most of his time in intricate journalistic relationships with digital entertainment gear. Two days before the Grammy Awards he joined a press pass “backstage” at the Staples Center to view the miles and coils of audio cabling, the multiple digital rear-projection screens, and other technological wizardry arranged for this annual music industry extravaganza.

Did I mention that hubby-the-gearhead is also a gifted and tenacious schmoozer? After assuring his insider contact that this behind-the-scenes tour would yield good coverage, he asked about getting tickets to the show. Nope, sorry. Out of the question, he was repeatedly told. Nevertheless, Sunday around noon the contact called: if we could get downtown by 3:30, appropriately gussied up, we were in.

Folks thus far have insisted buying a long velvety-fringy shawl-jacket thingy, consider one or equivalent boho-style finery to be insurance for the odd, unexpected “black tie” event. Throw it gratefully over plain black slacks and shift, add earrings, and stir. The Successful Schmoozer gleefully dug out a tux he keeps handy for chamber music gigs, and off we went to the ball.

Staples Center was surrounded by chaotic choreography of road blocks, a flurry of guards and limousines of all colors and sizes. We parked on a secluded side street and hoofed in hasty finery past the warehouses, small houses, and impoverished houses of the mixed Korean-Latino neighborhood. A young reporter for People magazine, bemoaning the distance to be traversed in slippery spiked heels, skittered along beside us.

Our tickets were delivered to a pre-arranged street corner, then scrutinized and stamped by relaxed but watchful guards. Once inside the security perimeter, we dodged more limbs, satellite-topped TV vans, and eighteen-wheeler staging trucks.

Event staff directed us to the off-camera, inside edge of the “red carpet,” (which was actually green, matching the logo of a sponsoring beer company.) Small bleachers on the media side held clusters of fans who pet,” (which was actually green, matching the logo of a sponsoring beer company.) Small bleachers on the media side held clusters of fans who

Mo’s, enjoying the night. Industry parties, I thought. This is REAL music. I was finally, truly a working musician.

After several minutes the accordian player ended his tune, bowed, strapped it on, unsnapped top and bottom, and closed his eyes. A slow melody with minor chords sprang to life under his fingers in the bare light of the garage. His intense concentration made up for occasional fumbled notes. Never mind record sales, download royalties, and the bare light of the garage. His intense concentration made up for occasional fumbled notes. Never mind record sales, download royalties, and

The Winners show itself—from rocker Gwen Stefani’s opening pirate-costumed cover of Fiddler on the Roof to Bonnie Raitt’s closing slide-guitar tribute to Ray Charles—was essentially a glitch-free, slick TV show. Nope, sorry. Out of the question, he was repeatedly told.

Returning to her first musical loves, the accordion and clarinet, Joellen also teaches a high energy Klezmer Band Workshop at McCabes. For dulcimer lessons or a Klezmer Band at 310-474-1123

NICOLAS BUCKMELTER
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

CAIT REED
Cait is currently taking students who are interested Traditional Irish Fiddle, Tenor Banjo, Tin Whistle, Mandolin, Bodhran, Transverse Flute and Celtic Song accompaniment. Cait 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. Cait focuses on technique, ornamentation, regional styles, phrasing, creating variations, playing “by ear” and having fun. Please write her at caitreed@aol.com, or give her a call at 310-543-1219. Her Web site will be up soon at www.caitreed.com.

Joellen Lapidus is one of the pioneers of contemporary fretted dulcimer playing and construction. She is the author of the dulcimer instruction book Lapidus on Dulcimer. Her playing style is a blend of traditional Appalachian, Indian, Arabic, jazz, classical and pop music that gives the dulcimer a new range of rhythmic, melodic and tuning possibilities. Returning to her first musical loves, the accordion and clarinet, Joellen also teaches a high energy Klezmer Band Workshop at McCabes. For dulcimer lessons or a Klezmer Band at 310-474-1123

DAVID BRAGGER
David Bragger teaches traditional fiddle and banjo to students of all ages and levels. He teaches music by ear, so no musical background is necessary! His students have won awards at festivals from Topanga, California to Galax, Virginia. More importantly, he shows you how to have a foot-stomping ruckus of a good time! You’ll be learning the technique, bowings, and styles of traditional Appalachian musicians so you can play at local jam sessions, bust a move on your front porch, or saw like mad at local festivals and contests. For lessons call David at 818-324-6123, or email him at davidbragger@yahoo.com.

Joanna Cazden is a singer, vocal coach, speech pathologist and musicologist. You can find her online at www.voicesforlife.org or send comments or suggestions for future columns to jcazden@earthlink.net. May all our voices be heard!

THE GRAMMY GARAGE
ON THE RADIO

H

Tied to the Tracks is also now a radio show, hosted by yours truly. “Acoustic Americana,” the content of my new show, was to have dou-

bly-billed concert nights at Kulak’s Woodshed and Hallenbeck’s General Store and Room Five and Highland Grounds. And we want the energy of the indie music scene, to offer your ears something new to seasoned radio professionals, for whom the industry is their life, their passion. So maybe the lesson here is that they knew the music was right, and we were simply waiting for someone to build a show around them. Tune in and let me know how I’m doing. And remember, being commercial-free necessitates pledge drives, so treat all the public radio shows as if you would want your favorite concert venue, and pay the cover. It keeps the music in the clubs, and on the air.

resouREs foR SoNGWriTERS

and letting me know how I’m doing. And remember, being commercial-free necessitates pledge drives, so treat all the public radio shows as if you would want your favorite concert venue, and pay the cover. It keeps the music in the clubs, and on the air.

resources for songwriters

Continuing our series, let’s look at alternatives to the painful “pay-to-play” scene. On of course you can support the radio that supports music. There are also song critique workshops and performance showcases.

Several open mics are listed in FolkWorks’ ongoing events calendar. Two that happen every Monday are especially notable. You take a chance that your name will be the next on Kulak’s Woodshed’s (www.kulakwoodshed.com). It’s popular, since your one song is delivered to a global web audience on the five-camera streaming video. Another Monday night that’s more than an open mic is Dave Osit’s series at the Historic Aztec Hotel in Monrovia, in the Brass Elephant Bar. There, each performer gets a half-hour set. It runs from 9 p.m. to 1:30 a.m. Stick around next time after the monthly Brett Perkins Listening Room at the hotel’s Mayan Room. Great place to catch new talent, proven by at least two artists who recently played Brett’s series after being “discovered” playing Dave Osit’s open mic.

Before risking your ego and subjecting others to your art, you can test your material at some wonderful free sessions. Thirty changes are pending at two stations. But for now, there’s plenty to cele-

acoustic, roots and Americana music. At press time, still more are coming. One of course you can support the radio that supports music. There are also song critique workshops and performance showcases.

Another radio show to catch is Tariq Mirza’s Songsalive!, a worldwide organization, with monthly workshops and sometimes they participate in the song feedback sessions.

In addition, each Co-op meeting features The Anatomy of a Hit, where a commercially-successful song’s elements are analyzed, and it’s an exercise that helps untangle mysteries and introduce even accomplished musicians to things that may have gone unnoticed. Meanwhile, Songnet offers one session each month to perform your songs on a professional stage, for an audience of your peers.

If you’ve worked through these levels, then you need to know about the fine variety of performance showcases around town. These are recommended as places to enjoy the performances, as well as opportunities to perform.

L.A. WoMen in Music (www.lawwm.com) uses the mid-word capitalization to emphasize that they welcome men. They host a monthly “soiree” at the Ten20 Supper Club, in the Wyndham Bel Age Hotel in West Hollywood. Special price gets dinner, the show and valet parking. Rules? You must first attend the event before you’re eligible to apply to perform at one.

Gilli Moon, Toni Koch and others have built a fine local presence for Songsville!, a workshop-acoustic art for radio, with monthly workshops and three L.A. showcases each month. One is at Hallenbeck’s in North Hollywood, one at The Talking Stick in Santa Monica, and the newest venue is The Coffee Fix in Studio City. They are all seeking new panelists, so if you’re not in LA, contact Denise Vasquez (www.denisesasquemusic.com) books guest artists at her Acoustic Wednesdays series at El Guapo in Hollywood. Very accomplished performers are booked every Tuesday by Garrett Swyne for the Main Street Songwriter’s Showcase at Café Bellisimo in Woodland Hills.

Next time, we’ll round up even more resources.
J
im Wimmer’s airy second story violin shop in Santa Barbara has a small band of regular visitors. They have encountered fiddler Richard Greene and dubbed him the ‘violin scientist.’

They use this phrase at the shop with a distinctive mixture of respect and bemusement, and with an honest regard for his knowledge of the arcane intricacies of sound post placement, wave-lengths and tailpiece fitting, which exceeded the expanded knowledge of Barton (their self-taught and gives Greene the air of an accomplished, ecletic professor.

Greene is an almost scholarly approach to fiddling. Wimmer, who made his instrument, finds him “extremely engaging on an intellectual level when it comes to the technical workings of the violin,” remarking that such technical engagement is unusual even among his achieving professional clientele.

Many people who comment or write about Greene’s career end up speaking about unusual dualities. Yes, he’s an artist, but there’s a scientific bent to his sensibility. His contributions both to the bluegrass tradition are immense, but his classical training is always evident. His style is at once fiery and cool. He lives and works directly beneath the famous Hollywood sign, but he is passionately authentic.

Those of us who come to Richard’s studio as students come to rely on his “intrepid discovering” perception of his dual role as both teacher and tunesinger. The merest mention of a problem or discomfort related to a student’s instrument can send Greene darting into assorted cubbyholes and compartments for just the right wood-and-metal instrument, often obscure or handmade, to fix or diagnose the problem. But if you were to conclude from these surroundings that he is low-tech, you would be wrong: he is equally proficient scouring through the valuable catalog of resources on his computer’s hard drive: after a few minutes, he can usually find what he is after and be able to unearth exactly the right exercise perfectly suited to help the student overcome a particular obstacle. Indeed, if you even finish a sentence mentioning the name of an obscure French bow you are considering, he is Googling the maker’s name in one of his networked computers and providing you with results to some useful piece of information.

And his glee (and the requisite wry twinkle in his eye) is evident in his acts of discovery indeed, finally, remind one of the triumphant scientist in his laboratory.

GRENIE (AND THE BROTHERS BARTON)

Richard Greene’s latest discovery arrived in his e-mail inbox the form of a shot-in-the-dark proposal from a pair of brothers living in Central California.

Paul and Loren Barton are acoustic musicians, brothers four years apart who grew up in Bakersfield absorbing traditional bluegrass and other roots musical genres in a household of journeyman musicians. Their grandfather migrated from Oklahoma to central California in the 1930s, bringing his guitar and harp with him. Their grandmother led group singing activities in church. And while they were growing up, the brothers experimented with guitar, banjo and mandolin, teaching themselves by listening to and imitating the masters.

Naturally, this kind of life, incorporating American native musical traditions, eventually exposed them to the works of Richard Greene.

Paul’s affinity for Richard’s fiddling was immediate: “I first heard Richard Greene on a Tony Rice album that I bought when I was 18 years old. I used to tell people, ‘That’s what fiddling should sound like.’ There’s an energy in his fiddling that really speaks to me.” Eventually Paul went to South Plains College in Levelland, Texas to study music, including Greene’s. He grew into a composer and, along with his brother Loren, a performer. And when it came time to record his compositions, his thoughts turned to Richard Greene.

“I wanted to work with Richard because the music I had written required his style of fiddling. I wanted someone who could make my album sound good as or better than anyone else.”

With youthful moxie, the young Paul and Loren sent off an e-mail to the master, boldly asking him to play fiddle on a recording of their music: “When I first e-mailed Richard it was a long shot. I didn’t know anyone who knew him, but I heard that he lived in L.A.” He found an e-mail address on Richard’s web site.

In some ways, the impulse that led the Barton brothers to seek out Greene recalls Greene’s own movement towards Bill Monroe decades earlier. In his biography of Bill Monroe, Richard D. Smith had to say about the way Richard and young other acoustic musicians sought out Monroe in the 1960s: “In years past, Bill had kept in mind a reservoir of potential sidemen throughout the South to call upon. Now a national talent pool was starting to flow toward him.”

Decades later, Greene is himself the draw, and the Barton brothers felt the pull sufficiently strongly to initiate contact, to ask him if he would join in on some tunes on their album. Music grows and thrives on these chance encounters, and this new mixture of talent is potent.

When Richard listened to sample material from the brothers Barton, he was instantly excited: “What they sent me literally blew me off my chair!” And he also immediately saw the parallels to his own musical history: “Two brothers sitting around a mike in their living room playing original compositions immediately transported me back to Mill Valley, CA, circa 1974, myself and David Grisman inventing new acoustic music and playing together all day long — what sheer joy!” Greene decided to join in: “The Barton brothers miraculously allowed me to recapture that magical time, totally unexpectedly. How could I not jump in? Sometimes miracles do happen twice.”

Richard’s enthusiastic response exceeded the Bartons’ hopes. The young pair and the master had been inseparable partners, close collaborators, friends and colleagues now for a year and a half, composing, arranging and performing together along with bassist Jeff Pekacek. The four performers share a bond based on respect for traditional old-time and bluegrass musical roots, and on a passion for innovating new hybrid forms. Extraordinary new music is ringing from Richard’s studio in Los Angeles, and Greene’s Wimmer fiddle is being put to good use playing Greene and Barton compositions, each of which reflect the greatest sensitivity to the best of old and new bluegrass. A pair of CDs is following: first came The Brothers Barton, featuring Richard Greene and others, and in early 2005 a second: Richard Greene and the Brothers Barton (Richard’s 10th or 11th solo effort).

On both, you can hear a joyful alchemy both of bluegrass and old-time tradition and of new acoustic innovation. The elements of this alchemy reflect a marvelous interplay between Paul Barton’s and Richard Greene’s intricate compositions, the first-rate musicianship of Loren Barton (on guitar) and Jeff Pekacek (on bass), and Richard’s masterful hand in arrangement. A natural fit became apparent between Paul Barton’s composition and Richard Greene’s arrangement, a kind of genetic connection of some kind. But it’s hard for me to imagine or predict how Richard doesn’t use some kind of memory aid to be able to play the music, to even be able to play it. Even with that there’s the time signature changes. One of our most interesting tunes goes into 5/8. Bluegrass and old-time music almost never does that.”

That’s the “Richard Greene style” Paul was seeking, which is not just a way of playing but also a way of understanding the music: the way Greene can pull apart a tune, examine and understand what makes it work, see it in the context of tradition, experiment with it in the spirit of innovation, then put it back together to produce wildly exciting and original music. What Paul also learned as he worked with Richard is the scholarly, scientific analysis, and he thoroughly enjoys watching the fully-schooled and richly experienced master work with his tunes: “He does hold his music to a very high standard. We rehearsed for about six months before we played our first show. One thing that I’ve learned from Richard is how to arrange the music. The music that we’re playing is really fascinating to me because of the arrangements and the improvisation. I like both but to much of either one makes the song less effective. Richard knows how to add just the right amount of these things to make the piece the best it can be. I admire Richard because he’s not afraid to try new things. He’s not worried about what people might think.”

VIOLIN
As is happening more and more often these days, it’ll be just reviews this time. No time for commentary, too much good music. In fact, there’s so much I’m even leaving some of it for next time. For some reason most are from the U.S. this time, but they’re a diverse lot anyway.

But for starters, sometimes a man’s just got to rave. The most exciting release by an Irish artist so far this year is Grada’s Endeavour [Compass] (!!). I loved the Dublin band’s previous CD, also their first U.S. release. You can credit the influence of Lunasa’s Trevor Hutchinson, who produced, for the rich, jazz-inflected feel and virtuosic instrumentalism, but while Lunasa is an all-instrumental band, Grada is heavier on songs than almost any other traditional-based band, with a ratio of about 50/50. Not only do the songs share great sound, arrangements and production with the tunes, but Anne Marie O’Malley is a great singer, and the band has a great taste in what they choose to sing, be it Hugh MacDonald’s mournful Diamantina Dower, the Irish-language album opener Catham, or the title track, an original chronicling the history of an 18th Century trans-Atlantic ship.

Meanwhile, back in the states, we have a concept record about chickens. That’s what Bob Webb, Craig Edwards and Helen Richmond Webb have cooked up (sorry!) with Cluck Old Hen. [Richmond Webb Associates] (!) featuring Webb’s expert banjo playing and singing. It could easily stray into novelty territory, but between the playing, song selection and good humor, the musical side of it, at least, transcends the subject matter. A well played selection of songs about chickens—be they cooking, crowing, or laying eggs. Proceeds from the recordings go to the Little Compton Historical Society, a group dedicated to preserving historical structures in the town of Little Compton, RI. More info on www.richmondband.com

A similar tradition informs two records of old-time music, also from Rounder. Mountain Journey, Star of Old Time Music (!) features great singers from celebrated banjo/song collector Bascom Lamar Lunsford to current ones previously raved about in this column like Ginny Hawker and Mark O’Connell. Come to the Mountainside on Old Time Music for Modern Times features more modern stars and hot players and singers like Cory Harris and Allison Krauss. The quality on both, whether old and new, is excellent and diverse, with informative liner notes as well. They don’t rank any higher simply because they’re from Rounder’s back catalogue and feature no new or rare tracks. Nonetheless they’re a good primer for the music that informed recent movies such as Cold Mountain.

Speaking of hot musicians, Dry Branch Fire Squad has a new live double CD (for the price of 1!) called Live at the Newspueblo Firehouse.

RATING SCALE:
[!]—Good/solid, what you would expect.
[!]—Very good, with considerable appeal for a fan of the artist(s). If you purchase it, you likely won’t be disappointed.
[!!]—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.
[!!!]—Classic, sure to be looked back on as such for generations to come.
[!!]—Great, one of the year’s finest. If you have even a vague interest in

The album is the brainchild of Scottish singer-songwriter Robin Laing, and was created in partnership with The New Makars Trust, an organization formed to promote songwriting about life in Scottish communities. Laing, who is probably best known for his songs and poems about Scottish whisky, collected the material which includes, in addition to some previously recorded songs, nine songs he commissioned from Scottish singer-songwriters and others to write for him.

The songs on Gentle Giants offer a cultural snapshot of rural Scottish life, illustrating the diversity of tradition and accents in the various parts of the country. The CD opens with The Last Trip Home, written and performed by the late Davy Steele and the Battlefield Band shortly before Steele’s untimely death. Altogether there are 17 tracks by 14 different artists, my personal favorites being Gone are the Strong Ones by Christine Kydd, and The Clydesdale Horse by the children of the Fourth Grade at Bigg Primary School.

The liner notes are extensive, both on the subject and on the songs, and there are also an excellent source for those who may want to know more about the Clydesdales and their history. I was fortunate to grow up next to a farm in central Scotland where the two Clydesdale horses, Prince and Charlie, were replaced by a tractor when I was a teenager; and were then adopted by many of my neighbors. On pre-

The album was held in obvious throughout this album. Robin Laing is to be commended for putting this project together while there are still people alive who remember with fondness the gentle horses who labored so tirelessly on our behalf. On a scale of 1 to 10, I’d give this one a 9.0.
WHAT IS A DRUM CIRCLE?

I t's 8:00 p.m. on a Saturday night in Los Angeles. The restaurants, movie theaters, and nightclubs are bustling. But in a drum shop on La Brea Avenue, a different scene unfolds. As you approach the building, you hear and feel a pulsing beat. Stepping inside, you discover an incredible mix of people playing an amazing variety of drums from around the world. About 30 of the drummers are seated on folding chairs in a circle; others stand and mingle throughout the store playing various percussion instruments to the beat. A table is overflowing with homemade dishes that people have brought to share. Someone calls out “Welcome! Come on in!” and you realize he is talking to you. You grab one of the many drums within arm’s reach and begin to play. This feels good.

DRUM CIRCLES IN MANY SETTINGS

If you have not yet been exposed to a drum circle, you probably will be soon. Drum circles are popping up in places that may seem unlikely at first glance. In addition to the jam sessions that traditionally take place on the weekends at Venice Beach and in parks around the city, you also find people drumming in churches, schools, prisons, senior residences and even major corporations. Why group drumming?

Drums have been used for centuries around the world in celebration, rites of passage, for worship and healing, and as a way to build ongoing social cohesiveness. In essence, rhythm unifies people. When we drum together, the shared beat gives everyone involved a feeling of being connected, of working together. The pulse unites us. At the same time, the strength of the shared rhythm makes individuals feel secure enough to creatively express themselves within the group. I have personally facilitated drum circles for non-profit organizations, major universities, groups of doctors, private parties, summer camps, and retreats. No matter what the setting or the age, people love to drum. The outcome of group drumming is always positive.

WHY PEOPLE KEEP COMING BACK

I have heard many reasons why people return to a recent drumming event. The most common reason people think they liked most about drumming. The responses touched upon several common themes: creative expression, community, spirituality, stress relief, meditation, social connection, and fun. Zulema Argota said, “I feel a rush of energy. Sometimes I feel my Dad’s presence. It’s a great feeling.” Jennifer Zinner said, “It’s healing, meditating, it gets me to share my energy and spirit with others.” Greg Johnson likes, “The group interaction and connection.” The same drum circle can be experienced in as many ways as there are people present. The rhythms and the feeling always vary depending on who comes to play. That spontaneity and unpredictability keeps it interesting and stimulating for everyone.

DRUM CIRCLES FOR SPECIFIC POPULATIONS

The most popular drums used in the circle include the djembe and the doumbek. The djembe is a goblet-shaped West African drum made from a hand-carved wood shell with a single goat skin head on top. About two feet tall, it is usually positioned between two legs while seated and played with both hands. The doumbek is a Middle Eastern drum often associated with belly dancing. It is a smaller goblet-shaped drum made of wood or ceramic and has a goatskin head on top. With both drums, you get a bass tone by hitting the skin close to the center and a higher tone by hitting closer to the edge. This wide range of tones is what makes the djembe and doumbek an appealing choice for getting the “groove on” in groups. Other popular instruments include claves (wooden sticks clacked together), bells, and shakers such as maracas and tambourines. It is helpful to have a variety of different instruments in the circle for a well-rounded sound.

DRUM CIRCLES IN L.A. AND SURROUNDING AREA

BANG A DRUM - DREML CIRCLE & POT LUCK DINNER
2nd Saturday each month, 7:00 – 9:00 pm
Free. Potluck dinner included. Bring a food item to share.
Bang a Drum Percussion Store
7308 Coldwater Canyon Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90046
323-366-3274
www.bangadrum.com

BRENDON WHITESJOURY
1st Sunday each month, 7:00-10:00 pm
Church at Ocean Park
Santa Monica
310-421-7335
brenderems@hotmail.com

GRIFFITH PARK DRUM CIRCLE
Every Saturday at 5pm
In the grassy area near the park entrance.
1st Sundays, 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm (rain cancels)
2nd & 4th Monday of Month 7:00-9:30pm
Contact: Jennifer or Richard Dier
7308 Coldwater Canyon Ave.
North Hills, CA 91343
323-936-3274 www.bangadrum.com

CHASE PALM PARK DRUM CIRCLE
Every Saturday at 5pm
Chase Palm Park.
Santa Monica
Church at Ocean Park
1st Sunday 7:30pm-10:30pm
Free. Drums provided. Bring a food item to share.
2nd Saturday each month 7:30 – 9:30pm
Steve: 805 374-8960
Mike 818-982-0461
7308 Coldwater Canyon Ave.
Tuesday 7pm-8pm
Meet in the round building.
2nd & 4th Monday of Month 7:00-9:30pm
Drumdancejourney@hotmail.com
Richard Parisi
Santa Monica

VENICE BEACH DRUM CIRCLE
818-893-8337
Contact: Jennifer or Richard Dier
North Hills, CA 91343
Meet in the round building.
2nd & 4th Monday of Month 7:00-9:30pm
Contact: Jennifer or Richard Dier
North Hills, CA 91343
Meet in the round building.
2nd & 4th Monday of Month 7:00-9:30pm
Drumdancejourney@hotmail.com
Richard Parisi
Santa Monica

GRIFFITH PARK DRUM CIRCLE
Every Saturday at 5pm
In the grassy area near the park entrance.
1st Sundays, 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm (rain cancels)
2nd & 4th Monday of Month 7:00-9:30pm
Contact: Jennifer or Richard Dier
7308 Coldwater Canyon Ave.
North Hills, CA 91343
323-936-3274 www.bangadrum.com

VENICE BEACH DRUM CIRCLE
818-893-8337
Contact: Jennifer or Richard Dier
North Hills, CA 91343
Meet in the round building.
2nd & 4th Monday of Month 7:00-9:30pm
Drumdancejourney@hotmail.com
Richard Parisi
Santa Monica

SANTA BARBARA DRUM CIRCLE
Steve: 805 374-8960
Meet in the round building.
2nd & 4th Monday of Month 7:00-9:30pm
Drumdancejourney@hotmail.com
Richard Parisi
Santa Monica

VENTURA 2ND SUNDAY DRUM CIRCLE
2nd Sundays 2:30-4:30pm (rain cancels)
Parnell Park (corner of Lambert and Scott Streets)
Ventura, CA 93003
384-8930

VENICE BEACH DRUM CIRCLE
Saturday and Sunday afternoon until dark
On the strip of grass on the ocean side of Cabrillo Blvd, across from Chico Forge Park.

VENICE ROCK BEACH DRUM CIRCLE
Every Sunday at 7pm
During (High Tide Spring Time)
On the strip of grass on the ocean side of Colorado Blvd, across from Chico Forge Park.

SHAMAN JOURNEYS DRUM CIRCLE
2nd & 4th Sunday of Month 7:00-9:00 pm
Unitarian Church at North Hills
Meet next to building.
Quiet circle with discussion and intention.
5138 Handel Ave.
North Hills, CA 91343
Contact: Claire for Richard Dale
310-855-9649

VENICE BEACH DRUM CIRCLE
Sunday and Saturday afternoon until dark
Where West Beach meets the ocean.
Venture, CA

VENTURA ROCK BEACH DRUM CIRCLE
1st Sundays, 10:00 am – 2:00 pm (rain cancels)
Ammonite Park (Park at Foot of Parnell Ave)
In the grassy area near the park entrance.
1st Sunday 7:00-9:00 pm
Ammonite Park

VENTURA 2ND SUNDAY DRUM CIRCLE
2nd Sundays 2:30-4:30pm (rain cancels)
Parnell Park (corner of Lambert and Scott Streets)
Ventura, CA 93003
384-8930

This list is also available online at www.bangadrum.com. If you know of one in your area, join in! We will be glad you did.

GETTING INVOLVED

It is easy to get started playing hand drums. Find out the location and time of a drum circle near you and show up. If you do not own a drum, odds are someone at the drum circle will have an extra instrument that you can ask to use. If you can’t find a drum circle in your area, start one up! Post an announcement on the bulletin board at your favorite grocery store, gym, church or community center. If you need help starting your first drum circle, call Bang-a-Drum for assistance. Bang-a-Drum has a drum kit available (drums, shakers, bells, etc.) that you can borrow for free. If you would like someone to help get your circle started, hire a drum circle facilitator. The facilitator’s main job is to help everyone feel comfortable participating and having fun at your event. He or she also helps keep the grooving going and guides the pace of the event so it feels complete at the end.

If you want to improve your playing technique before you play with others, find a teacher or buy a video for the drum you would like to learn. Affordable group classes are available through community colleges, leisure learning centers and hand drum stores. There are many instructional videos available for the various drums found at a circle. Prices range from $9.95 to $39.95.

CHRIS REID IS A DRUM CIRCLE FACILITATOR AND OWNER OF THE BANG A DRUM PERCUSSION STORE IN LOS ANGELES 323-856-3274 www.bangadrum.com

Drum circle facilitator, Kalani, supports the circle by playing along.

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CAPOS: DO CHEATERS EVER PROSPER?

Like a lot of folks, my introduction to the guitar was multi-genre and somewhat confused. First my Dad brought home a cheap guitar from Mexico that began falling apart within a few weeks, then an arch top that was so big I couldn’t really hold it. An inexpensive Japanese solid body electric followed, then a few discount store acoustics.

My tutorage consisted of learning You Are My Sunshine and Red River Valley from my Dad, which was about 2/3 of his repertoire. Then I moved on to sitting on the floor of my bedroom with two Sing Out! compilations. I’d never heard of most of the songs, taking a lot of pressure off when it came to melody and timing. I also had a Beatles songbook with lots of fun, easy chords like Eb. I somehow came into the possession of a capo, a device that clamps or straps onto the guitar neck to raise the key you’re playing in. If you capo on the second fret, your standard fretted G chord becomes an A, your C a D, etc.

The first real guitar teacher I had was a neighbor’s son-in-law, who had moved in the direction of country and folk music after a bad rock and roll experience. His band had been the unfortunate victims when the guest of honor at a sweet sixteen party had demanded that the band play Louis Lost for over two hours. Still somewhat shaken from the experience, the adept young man schooled me in 12 bar modal sounding chords reminiscent of “dropped D” tuning but only covered 5 of the 6 strings. When I clamped it on the second fret, my standard fretted G chord became an A, your C a D, etc.

But I took the good old capo for granted. Then about twelve years ago, someone left a Shubb™ banjo capo behind at an open mike I was hosting. The following week I queried every banjo player there, but no one had lost a capo. I took it home, and out of curiosity I clipped it on my guitar neck, and although I found I could usually play without its assistance, I often did not want to. There is truly a different totality to a G chord capoed at the 5th fret than a barred C chord or even an open “cowboy” C. With the capo, I could almost sound like Bob Dylan’s guitar accompaniment. I also noticed that decidedly non-folkie Keith Richards often capoed his Telecasters. I liked the capo, it was my friend.

About a year later a friend got me a Shubb™ partial capo as a birthday gift. The Shubb™ partial is designed to cover any of three adjacent strings, and I clamped it on the second fret, on the D, G, and B strings, making a “cowboy” A chord. The sound and some of the fingerings are quite reminiscent of open A tuning, but again, most fingerings are the same as standard tuning.

It’s possible to use two capos to add to the effect of open tuning. Using the banjo capo on the second fret with the bass E un-capoed, AND the partial capo on the fourth fret over the D, G and B strings results in an open A sounding voice, with the open E string providing a lovely drone in the 4 chord. Of course, this effect can be replicated by using THREE capos, with a standard capo placed the lowest on the neck, followed by the banjo capo two frets higher and finally the partial capo two frets higher.

About a year ago at Folk Alliance in San Diego, I noted that lots of folks use the partial capo on the second fret on the A, D and G strings providing a drone like tone, sort of a phony DADGAD. This is a great sound that works well for Celtic music and old timey stuff. Again, the fretting of the guitar does not change when you play higher fretted notes than the capo. But beware, partial and multiple capo use is dangerous. For one thing, it’s addictive, and it requires dependency on these capos. Perhaps one of your buddies is doing a coffee house gig and asks you to step up and play that new song you worked him last week, but you don’t have your partial capo with you and he’s one of the initiated and doesn’t have one either. Trouble in paradise. Also, capos can have problems. Sometimes clamping them down too tightly will cause tuning issues. Clamping them down too loose
"Coming Soon to a Walnut Grove near you!"

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Featuring Performers:
Bluegrass Etc.

Bluegrass Etc. performs an exciting show of instrumentals, square dance music and square dance philosophy. The group has played at international and national level square dances with great success. They are featured in Anthology of American Square Dance Music.

Witcher Brothers

The Witcher Brothers, a California based band formed in 1973, are Dan and Steve, brothers. Now after 30 years and over 100 years of performing throughout California and the West, the Witcher Brothers are dedicated to the art of the old-time band. They feel they owe their knowledge of their instrument to two mentors, their sound and the others have a unique sound the band is known for.

Silverado Bluegrass Band

The Silverado Bluegrass Band has been entertaining audiences in the Southwest for over 30 years. Members include: David Dunn on mandolin, Barry White on mandolin, Chuck Sasse on banjo, Pat Mouser on mandolin and John Sasse on guitar. The band is an integral part of the Southwest and the North. Their annual Summer Jampot is a two week event featuring Bluegrass musicians and bands from around the world.

The Kin Folks

The Kin Folks have been one of the premier "West Coast" Bluegrass Bands. They’ve entertained audiences in the Northwest, Central America and the South. Their music is a unique blend of old-time bluegrass music with contemporary and traditional folk music. Their music is a result of the band's unique blend of instruments and vocal harmonies.

The Lampkins Family Band

The Lampkins Family Band is a family band that has been performing together for over 30 years. The band is made up of four members, with two being brothers. Their music is a unique blend of bluegrass, folk and country music.

Tom Corbett Band

Tom Corbett is an accomplished musician playing mandolin, guitar, banjo, and fiddle. He has performed with many artists, and his music has been featured on many popular television shows. He is a member of the successful group "The Kin Folks" and has performed with many other Bluegrass bands.

Also appearing:
Howard Yearwood
The Walden Dahl Band
The Pederson Family
The Darringtons
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www.walnutgrovebluegrassfestival.com

"Beautiful new festival location..."
creating and releasing a CD is a difficult task. Creating and releasing several CDs is usually called a career. Luckily for fans of bluegrass/roots/Americana music, Chris Stuart & Backcountry are “career” musicians. Stuart cut his teeth in Cornerstone, an Ithaca, NY, based bluegrass band in the 1990s. His solo record, Angels of Mineral Springs, heralded his arrival in California, and included some musicians that ended up forming the core of Backcountry. The first Chris Stuart & Backcountry CD was called Saints and Strangers, and landed firmly on the radio airwaves and served as a platform for an aggressive touring program. Their new CD is called Mojave River, and it almost amazingly tops both of these prior efforts.

Was the approach for Mojave River different than past recordings? Chris replies “We wanted Mojave River to be a band album and only use the four band members. We also wanted to make sure that our second album was as strong or stronger than our first. I think a lot of bands put out a good first album, but then have a weaker second album. I wanted to make sure we did.” There is no need for CS&BC to worry about sophomore jinx.

Songwriting has always been a strong suit for Stuart. Check out his web-site for a long list of songwriting accolades and awards. Crafting songs is also a major talent for CS&BC band member Janet Beazley, who is in the process of finishing her first solo record. Mojave River is filled with strong work, showcasing strong melodies and compelling storylines. Chris talks about the songs: “I think the two songs we’re proudest of are Rider On This Train and The Jealous Crow. The latter is one that Janet and I co-wrote and it really features her singing and penny whistle talents. Rider came out really stark, which is what I had in mind when I wrote it. I just like the harmonies and the plodding nature of the song and story. It’s about the relentless-ness of lost chances and I think it worked.” Listeners will agree.

The process of recording is time consuming. How does a band that tours as relentlessly as CS&BC accomplish a polished effort like Mojave River? Chris says “We recorded about half of it on the road using an mBox, a Mac Powerbook, ProTools, and a couple of good mics. We did all the vocals in the studio, but the rhythm tracks and instrumental work was mostly done in hotels and friend’s homes while on the road.”

Backcountry is rounded out with bass player Mason Tuttle, and, until recently, Dobro™ whiz Ivan Rosenberg. Rosenberg has moved to the east side of the country, leaving Stuart and Beazley as the remaining original members. The bluegrass tradition often includes a revolving door on band membership, indicative of the rigors of touring, the generally less than corporate CEO pay and that usual variety of “real world” obstacles. Tuttle replaced bassist Dean Knight, and mandolinist Jeff Harvey also rests in the Backcountry hall of fame. Tuttle, Beazley and Stuart plan to announce a new member soon, but based on the catalog of recordings, Stuart’s vision stays true to the path despite these personnel changes.

Mojave River is not a bluegrass album, nor a pop album. It falls somewhere closer to the former, but one can imagine the “bluegrass police” cringing at the Celtic influences and penny whistles. Perhaps the closest touchstone would be Alison Krauss, though CS&BC are truly not derivative of Krauss’s work.

Stuart and Rosenberg’s Don’t Throw Mama’s Flowers Away probably owes more to Roy Acuff than Krauss, and has all the earmarks of a bluegrass/country classic, as the child/narrator struggles to understand why her father is leaving a bouquet of flowers behind on her mother’s grave/memorial. But it never ventures into maudlin territory, which is a testament to the song’s strength. CS&BC do one cover on the record, an accomplished reading of Townes Van Zant’s Dollar Bill Blues.

Rosenberg’s loss will be felt, as his accomplished Dobro™ playing provided spice to the CS&BC sound. Tuttle’s bass playing is rock solid yet gentle on the softer numbers. Beazley is both an accomplished banjo player and an adept singer. Her lead singing voice is reminiscent of Laurie Lewis without being imitative, and her harmonies suit Stuart’s strong vocals well.

Angels of Mineral Springs was a strong project, arguably topped by Saints and Strangers. Now Mojave River has already made some critic’s top ten lists for 2004/05. Expectations for the next CS&BC project are sky high, but if history is any indication, they will be met.
FOLK HAPPENINGS AT A GLANCE

May-June 2005

Sunday

1. Club Village at Tales Story-Telling Festival (SE)
2. Adams-Karmin Roots Festival (SE)
3. Saint-Louis Comedy Festival (SE)
4. Music of Mexico Ensemble and House of Jana Ensemble (SE)
5. Cape Cod Kids' Day (SE)
6. CLARE MULDAUR-MANCHON with STEPHEN MORAN (SE)
7. George Carlin's Old Fashioned Family (SE)
8. George Carlin's Family Fun Weekend (SE)
9. Topanga Tales (SE)
10. Topanga Days Country Fair and Los Angeles Highland Games (SE)
11. Topanga Days Country Fair and Los Angeles Highland Games (SE)
12. Santa Monica Festival (SE)
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Check out details by following the page references:
OGM: On-going Music - page 13
ODG: On-going Dance - page 16
SE: Special Events - page 28
Ever since my youth, I have wondered obsessively about fantastic and exotic things. For as long as I can remember, dreams of lost civilizations and ancient lands have pervaded my thoughts in times of wakefulness as well as slumber. They still do. So, it was hardly a surprise when childhood fantasies of the Orient and the longing for storybook adventure brought me to India in my mid-twenties. I traded my laptop computer for an open-ended ticket to New Delhi, and there I found myself on the shores of a young boy’s imagination.

I had no real itinerary. I made no hotel reservations, not even arrangements for a rental car or shuttle-bus. I arrived with only one nagging desire: music. I had to seek out as many forms of antiquated Hindustani music as possible. I was equipped with a portable DAT recording device and ready to explore one thousand and one melodies of old.

A variant of the “snake-charmer” melody, popularized in old cartoons, was high on my list. But the medieval echoes of Moghul court music beckoned as well. By that point in my life, I had tried satisfying my hunger for exotica by studying the sitar. For about three years while living in Santa Barbara, as a student of religion and folklore, I dedicated myself to North Indian classical music. Five hours a day of blood and callus helped guide me to India. I was ready at any moment to grab a bus for the eastern holy city of Varanasi and continue sitar for the next six months under a guru. I did not. Something else found me first…something very old and wonderful.

On my second day, after strolling the mazes of Delhi, I went back to my ramshackle “suite.” One of the elderly twin proprietors of this $9 per night, roach-infested palace informed me that I had some visitors earlier in the day. Apparently, he threatened them and demanded they never return. He was utterly baffled over their visit. He said the “jadugar” are not welcome here.

Jadugar is Hindi for street magician. Back-alley sorcerers were looking for me? I started to feel like I was in a Victorian detective novel or some of Lord Dunsany’s weird fiction.

I studied sleight of hand before coming to India, so the week before leaving Los Angeles, I contacted a Sanskritist who had been in touch with authentic Indian folk magicians in the early 1980s. I was hoping that I could possibly track down this elusive breed of folk performer. Their art form is illegal in India, which forces them to be itinerant and secretive. I never expected them to find me, nor did I expect to discover that music was a vital ingredient in their performance tradition. The next day, they returned and convinced me to travel with them.

After weeks of travel throughout the sub-continent with these street conjurers, I witnessed amazing things: divine snakes, magical ropes, decapitations, resurrections, sublime folktales, and hypnotic melodies. I learned about con-artistry, loyalty, poverty, sleight of hand, folk-narrative, musical power, and aesthetics. Most importantly, I lived with a sub-culture of people that uses traditional knowledge to express itself through art.

After months of Indian travel and exploits, something strange happened…something life-changing. I found myself sleeping under the Thar Desert moon, on cold sand, dreaming of things Western: the echoes of my aunt’s banjo in Pennsylvania, the old-time songs of Clarence Ashley and the Watson family, and my great uncle’s fiddle that I inherited, which rested behind my bedroom door.

When I returned to Los Angeles, I began studying the traditional music of America known as “old time music.” I purchased a banjo and strung up the fiddle. I tracked down a fiddle/banjo master, Tom Sauber, who guided me down the “old-time” road with great experience and patience. Since then, I have been studying the styles, bowings, and tunes of traditional artists spanning from the infancy of America to the present age. I have traveled throughout the country visiting the homes of traditional masters and attended various music festivals and workshops. I have found a thriving old time music culture in the streets of Los Angeles that is growing rapidly. As I continue to learn and teach the music of these traditional sources, I hope this column enlightens the curious reader about things that are wonderfully old-time.

David Bragger is a Los Angeles-based instructor and player of old time fiddle and banjo music. He also photographs, films, and collects the lore of traditional artists, from puppeteers in Myanmar to fiddlers of Appalachia.
last fall I moved to a small town. It’s spring now and I see clearly that it is not a small town at all, but a thriving metropolis, the largest city on the Oregon coast. It’s all in the perspective, of course. Eugene – two hours away – is a huge city with a Home Depot, Trader Joe’s, and Target, not to mention a university. Between here and there, the big towns have post offices, grocery stores, general stores, a café or two, and maybe an OSU Extension office. The small towns have a representative dot on my AAA map. There are hundreds of these dots in the river valleys and on the forested hills between here and Highway Five. They fascinate me. I imagine old feed stores with wooden porches and benches where old farmers lounge. I long to prowl through ancient dime stores with prices and merchandise from the 1950s. But, when I actually emerge from the mountains after an hour or so of a million trees and zero traffic, I find that the little dot is a fork in the road. This is a country in which, when houses are separated by less than a quarter mile, there’s a road sign warning “CONGESTION.”

My fascination, therefore, has switched from the towns themselves, to the inhabitants of, say, Sitkum, Dora, or Sumner (very small dots). I asked someone who claimed to be from Sitkum if he really lived in Sitkum. “Well, not really in Sitkum,” he said, “more like outside Sitkum. I don’t like towns – neighbors complain when your goats and chickens stray.”

I’m a big city girl, narrow of mind and limited in vision, and I simply can’t imagine how someone could grow up normal in a tiny town. However, the girl who cuts my hair went from kindergarten through high school in Azalia (medium sized dot) with the same 40 kids, and she seems normal.

I’m working on my misconceptions at every opportunity. I’ve learned that many people who live in town now came from the backwoods knowing, not only how to use knives and forks, but also how to play the flute or piano. The farmers’ market provides me with people who still live back in the hills and they’re usually willing to talk. Last summer I went there in search of a Bar Mitzvah gift.

There, amidst the fruits, vegetables, crafts, and flowers, I spied a table outside the ground and screws it down, down, down into the bloodstream of the mighty quick and you can’t wait to saw it open and see the grain and color. I asked where he lived. “Back in the hills,” he said. “Nearest town is Sitkum,” he said, “more like outside Sitkum. I don’t like towns – neighbors complain when your goats and chickens stray.”

“Well,” he said, “I coached high school soccer for many years and every year, at graduation, I made each of my seniors a box. All the boxes were different – just as these are – but each year’s boxes were made from the same tree – walnut, cherry, maybe oak, whatever appealed to me. When I retired, I took my best piece of oak and made boxes for the whole team, not just the seniors. Every once in a while I go into town and run into one of my boys – all grown up now with wife and kids – and he says “Say! Remember the boxes you gave us? I still keep my change in mine (or my receipts or my keys or my rusty cotter pins) and it always reminds me of our team. “Does that answer your question” he asked.

I nodded but, to tell the truth, I’d forgotten that I had asked one. By this time, the morning breeze was whipping up into a cold, urgent wind, knocking over the vendors’ sunshades, hurling hand-made ceramics and candles to the ground, and thrashing the fruits and vegetables. He started loading up his stock.

“You can get a box any time,” he said, “but please help yourself to the lattes and fresh basil now so I don’t have to take them home.”

I quickly filled a sack with produce and chose a box that combined a strong heritage, a fortunate environment, and a unique personality – the perfect gift. Definitely.

“Good choice,” he said. “Fine walnut tree…got struck by lightning. I wept over it but, when you work with wood, your grief turns to curiosity mighty quick and you can’t wait to saw it open and see the grain and color. Pretty soon it’s living again, all over Oregon, California, maybe the world.”

I asked where he lived. “Back in the hills,” he said. “Nearest town is Sitkum.”

I have a lot to learn.

Valerie Cooley is now living in Coos Bay. Oregon and is looking forward to the monthly dances there and in Bend, or maybe Eugene. She intends to return for Solstice Festival. She is being granny to her granddaughter #1, with #2 due in the next couple. And she is still writing her column for FolkWorks.
HANDING DOWN THE TRADITION

DES REGAN AND THE LARRY BANE SESSIONS

BY MIMI TANAKA

any know button accordion player Des Regan for his performanc-
es around Southern California with his Irish showband which
plays a mix of pop and traditional tunes, but the fact is, Des' heart
is in traditional Irish music. On the first Sunday of each month at the Burbank Moose Lodge, he leads an open session (or Seisun) to help musicians learn
Irish tunes in an easy-going atmosphere. The sessions are called the Larry
Bane sessions after his Irish uncle who inspired young Des.

On the family farm in Moylecullen, County Galway, Des, from age eight,
eagerly absorbed tunes. The youngest of seven children, Des enjoyed farm life
but was compelled to run up the hill to his uncle's house and play the "button
box" as much as he could. Larry Bane played the local parish dances that were
called "Four Penny Hops" because the admission price was four cents. The
dances were held from 11 p.m. to 4 a.m. and the dance floor was often concre-
ete.

But Des Regan had bigger dreams than playing local parish dances. While
Americans rocked around the clock in the 1950s, the airwaves in Ireland
resounded with pop music and remnants of the Big Band era. Traditional Irish
music was scarce in the popular media, but it was Des' fantasy to play his but-
ton accordion on the radio for his parents to hear. By the age of 18 he accom-
plished this feat and, in later years, even played at Carnegie Hall.

At the age of 17 he followed in the footsteps of many young Irish folk and
moved to Boston where two of his brothers lived. He formed a band and was
immediately hired by enterprising bar owner, Bill Fallon. Fallon heard of a man from Kerry
who few people opposed. Fuller owned a chain of ballrooms in major cities where the Irish and Irish-
American communities attended dances. The Irish bands at that time were nine or ten piece bands with
four box players, fiddlers, saxophonists, piano players,

Des worked for Fuller until the late 1960s, as did
another terrific box player, Joe Derrane (Joe per-
formed at the CTMS Summer Solstice Festival a few
years ago and related similar tales of the ballroom era).
After about four years of being extremely homesick, Des moved back to Ireland for a time and
studied traditional tunes with Brendan Mulhaire,
who still plays in Galway. Fortified, Des returned to
the States for more performances.

In 1967, Des was scheduled to open for a show called "The Festival of Stars" at Carnegie Hall. Bill
Fuller had booked all the famous Irish musicians and
singers of the time including his wife, diva Carmel
Quinn. Des recounts that he arrived in his hotel room only to find his accor-
dion in disarray; the summer heat had melted the bee's wax that held togeth-
er the reeds. "I pressed them together with my hands and prayed. In the open-
ing act there were 40 pipers playing Scotland the Brave, and then I was to play a
solo on my box. Fortunately, all went well and I played a 30 minute set."

Among Des's signature tunes is Kevin Keegan's Waltz, a cheerful three-

Among those musicians attending the
renowned sessions were fiddlers Caine
Reed and Cathy Whitesides.

As for his own compositions, Des has
recorded "Irish Jig," written for his eldest
son and namesake and "Siouhain's Jig," written for his
daughter. He has yet to write one for
his youngest son, Brendan, who also
plays button box and sings in an
alternative rock band. Des also
wrote a song about his initial departure from Ireland when he was 17 years old
called I Wished That Time Stood Still; and his second departure yielded anoth-
er song, The Lonely Corrib River. Still having a great love for his homeland
as well as the music, he brings home a piece of turf (peat) in his suitcase
because he loves the smell of it while it burns, a literal reminder of keeping
the home fires burning.

There are many locals who know the name Des Regan's as a pub. From
connections with great Irish musicians, he would book great entertain-
ment; and, at times, Ireland's famous and best performers such as the
Chiefans or Michael Flatley would drop by and play till the wee hours.

"One year Good Morning America televised their St. Patrick's Day show to
talk 'Top of the morning to ya,' Des recalls. Often crowds lined up around
the block to hear great Irish music at Des' old place. He closed his business in
1991 and as one regular patron said, "It was a dark day in Burbank when his
place closed." The new owner, Joe Handy, has remodeled and christened the
place Joe's All American Bar and Grill.

Everything comes full circle, though, and this past St. Patrick's Day Des
opened the musical festivities with a four-hour set. So, the address of 4311
Magnolia remains connected to him. Now he says, "I get to play there without
out all the headaches of running the place." And play he will, whether playing
with lively jigs and reels or beautiful slow airs, such as A Bonnie Bunch of
Roses, or a heartfelt rendition of My Lagan Love, he carries on the tradition,
breathing life into tunes with hollows of his button box.

Des has recorded one LP Irish Night in Boston, two CDs and soon will
have a new CD out of traditional tunes and songs.

Many thanks to Des for his time and patience being interviewed and
spelling out so many Irish words! Also thanks to Michelle Nosco for her techni-
cal assistance with the photos.

Mimi Tanaka is fortunate to be sitting in sessions absorbing the tunes in
the company of Des Regan and other fine players.

Mimi Tanaka dreams of dancing on the Cliffs of Moher. She loves to party with
Los Angeles Irish Dance companies whenever she has the chance.

Des Regan
Traditional Irish music for all occasions

(818) 506-8303

Visit www.far-west.org for more information
FolkWorks

practiced. I explain that piano teachers always can tell when a new student.

Five years ago I had never taught piano to any child, blind or sighted. I was on my own, and it felt exciting.

Muri is a real challenge. I put a piece of velcro on middle 'C', and turn to page one of the same book, "First Piano Book," my daughter used forty years ago. "This is middle 'C'." I say to Muri, "Middle 'C' is the boss of the whole piano." And with my hands motoring his, we play the first piece. "Left, right, left, right, we are singing—Left, right, left, right, while we're playing!"

Muri does not really want to be taking piano lessons. He has been diagnosed with autism, along with his blindness. After five minutes he is finally able to play this first and really boring little song all by himself, so I quickly begin to play a fun and mad melody with him as he plays. "Look, Muri," I tell him, "We're playing together—we're playing a duet!" "Duet" mimics, Muri, "Duet! Go back to room now." Having achieved some minimal success and cooperation, I reward him by returning to his classroom across the hall. I return to the music room to find his mom at the piano, playing middle 'C' and frowning.

"IS WRONG," she announces, "IS ALL WRONG! Why do they call this 'C'?" Make this 'A', not 'C'."

I really like this woman. She wants so much for her child. It isn't easy in her culture, (or in any culture, actually) to have a blind child with the added problem of autism, and this Mama wants her child to be successful in something. She is a very demanding mother and I understand that, but now she has gone too far.

"Sorry, Muri's Mama," I say firmly. "This key has been Middle 'C' for hundreds of years! That's just how it is!"

"Is all wrong," she says again, "Why do they do this? Is silly. More better start with 'A'."

"Listen carefully, Muri's Mama," I say in my quiet but deadly "teacher voice." "You are not in charge of the world's pianos, you are not in charge of the world and you are also not in charge of this lesson! Now I will teach you how to help Muri to learn Middle 'C'."

Two weeks pass. Muri can play two pieces and he played his first by himself. Mama can play three or four pieces and has made her peace with Middle 'C'. We are friends, and teach each other. Mama wants to study piano. (Muri couldn't care less).

"My other students love their piano lessons. One year my husband and I attended an "Organ Crawl" at the First Congregational Church in L.A. Twenty of us crawled all around the insides of the great organs, heard an organ concert and were treated to lunch. It was a wonderful and enlightening afternoon, and so I always start every school year with a "Piano Crawl." An assistant holds up the lid of our grand piano (The thin support that holds it open is not safe enough). We walk the children all around the piano, we stand on chairs and touch the hammers as they strike the strings. We strum the harp strings. We touch everything. We strike and listen to tuning forks. The older children learn some mechanics of the piano.

As I teach them, the children teach me. Since Braille music comes much later, I teach music structure, harmony and theory with every piece. We play every piece three ways: first with the notes; next, with the numbers of the fingers; and finally with the words of the song, if there are any. If I ever write a book on teaching piano to blind students, I will call it "The Buell Contiguous Piano Method," because we begin by only playing keys that are next to each other. In the beginning, actually always, I insist on correct fingering. Fingering is always important, but it is even more important for blind piano students. As soon as possible I begin to play duets with the children, either on the piano or with a guitar, autoharp, or, sometimes, a violin. In this way, the simple beginner pieces are greatly enhanced, and the children feel like real musicians.

I keep anecdotal stories for every class and every student I teach, (as does my partner, a superb musician and songwriter, and delightful human being, named Brandon Mayer).

It’s time for you to meet more students. Let’s start with Arnesto who is eleven, and has a great ear. He is learning intervals, thirds, fourths and fifths. These are immediately incorporated into simple pieces which he can play with no trouble, both hands. In his piano record book I have reminded myself to start him this week, on octaves, scales and new fingering. I explain to him that there are really only seven notes (the twelve tone scale, sharps and flats will come later). We explore all the 'C's, treble and bass.

"Let’s see if you can play an octave," I suggest. He puts his thumb on middle 'C' and we discover he can stretch to 'B'.

"Okay, tell me how many more keys up you have to count to play octave 'C'." He correctly tells me one, and we practice playing middle 'C' and other 'C's, stretching to 'B' and going up one key to play the 'C'. He is a really quick learner and before the lesson is over, he can play octaves all over the piano. 'C' to 'C'; 'A' to 'A', etc. with no stretching and counting—just by feel...

"Now it’s time for you to play a scale," I tell him. He plays up to 'G' and stretches. "Whoops!" I say. "You’ve run out of fingers! Not to worry!" Time for new fingering. I teach him to put his thumb under, after the 'E'. "We’ve always worked on hand position, but now he understands why his wrist must be high. "Your thumb needs a bridge to go under." I show him how to start the move from 'G' to 'A' and "Your thumb isn’t busy—it can start going under right away!" By the end of the lesson he has learned to play an ascending scale. At his next lesson he’ll learn a descending scale and I will write him a simple piece filled with ascending and descending scales. In addition to using some really fine beginner piano books, I also compose many pieces for my students, based always on the techniques they are learning. Difficult passages become practice exercises.

Marina is eleven and is learning chord structure. She has a great ear for both music and languages, and can play any phrase I sing to her, but tends to use only three fingers. (Many of my students play by ear, but need to learn correct fingering, hand position, and harmony.) Today Marina learns about chord inversions, which will help when I teach her the new recital piece.

Jose is eleven, partially sighted and has had brain surgery. At some time in his short life he has managed to kiss the Blarney Stone. The school supplies keys and passbooks to those blind students who need them. It is apparent that Jose has not touched his all week.

"Ms Cuca, Do you know that you are the most beautiful teacher in the school?"

"What I know, Jose, is that you have not practiced at all this week!" He insists that he has practiced. I explain that piano teachers always can tell when a student has not practiced. I explain to Jose as I take him back to his classroom, without a lesson, that I am unable to teach someone who hasn’t practiced. He promises to practice next week and assures me that I am still the most beautiful teacher in the school!

We are getting ready for our Spring Recital. I am working with my favorite...
“Jazz legend Woody Herman died homeless and alone after having made a lasting contribution to our culture.” So begins the text of a brochure from Musicares, an organization established in 1989 by the Recording Academy to provide critical assistance to musicians in times financial, medical and personal emergencies. Endorsed by popular artists like Quincy Jones and Sting, it also offers offices “for artist rest rooms” for artists in 12-step programs at stressful events like the Grammys and NAMM, and participates in outreach programs at health fairs. For more information, or to make a donation, see their web site, www.musicares.com.

GRAACE NOTES

BY LINDA DEWAR

The US Department of Labor’s Bureau of Labor Statistics provides descriptions for almost every conceivable job that’s available in this country. Here are a few salient points from the job titled “Musicians, Singers, and Related Workers.”

Because many musicians find only part-time or intermittent work, experiencing periods of unemployment, they must have physical stamina to endure frequent travel and an irregular performance schedule.

Musicians and singers always must make their performances look effortless; therefore, preparation and practice are important. They also must be prepared to face the anxiety of intermittent employment and of rejection when auditioning for work.

Making being a musician sound as appealing as flapping bargers at McDonald’s, doesn’t it? Too bad they couldn’t add something like “Many musicians experience jolts of inexplicable joy while practicing and performing, which can render the above concerns completely irrelevant.”

Here in southern California we’re lucky to have plenty of good radio programs that feature folk and traditional music. But if you have the urge for 24/7 folk, try logging onto Folk Alley, a web-based program produced by public radio station WKSU-FM in Kent, Ohio, at www.folkalley.com. The station features a comfortable mix of singer/songwriter, Celtic, acoustic, traditional, and world music, with plenty of variety. A recent, average broadcast hour featured artists as diverse as Cathie Ryan, Odetta, Tom Rush, Conjunto Jardin, Loudon Wainwright III, Kate Wolf, and Linda Thompson.

Unlike many internet stations Folk Alley’s broadcast includes the live voice of a deejay, usually Jim Blum, who has hosted trad music shows on WKSU for over 20 years. If you suspect support of their income with other types of jobs. The stress of constantly looking for work leads many musicians to accept permanent, full-time jobs in other occupations, while working only part-time as musicians.

Although they usually work indoors, some perform outdoors for parades, concerts, and dances. In some nightclubs and restaurants, smoke and odors may be present, and lighting and ventilation may be inadequate.

Young persons considering careers in music should have musical talent, versatility, creativity, poise, and a good stage presence. Because quality performance requires constant study and practice, self-discipline is vital. Moreover, musicians who play in concerts or in nightclubs and those who tour must have physical stamina to endure frequent travel and an irregular performance schedule.

That’s it for the East Coast in your future, you may want to try and combine it with a visit to the Smithsonian Folklife Festival in Washington, DC. This is the 39th annual edition of the festival, which will take place June 23—27 and June 30—July 4.

Music, song, dance events are included, along with crafts and cooking demonstrations, storytelling, illustrations of workers’ culture, and narrative sessions for discussing cultural issues. Visitors are encouraged to participate — to learn, share, practice, eat traditional foods, and converse with people presented in the Festival program.

Each year, a selection of programs is featured. In 2005, the programs will include: Nuestra Musica, celebrating the rich and diverse Latino culture in America; and Food Culture USA, a look at the contemporary state of American food culture as it has undergone a food revolution powered by increased global exchange among cultures, a grassroots movement for sustainable agriculture, and the rise of chefs and cooks as ambassadors for cultural practices surrounding food. For information, visit the festival web site at www.folklife.si.edu/festival2005/index.htm.
A
s I write this, St. Patrick’s Day is looming, and for those of us whose music is steeped in the Celtic traditions, it is the busiest time of the year. Hope it was a good time for you. As always, please note that nothing in this column is meant to constitute legal advice. If you wish to act on anything discussed in this article, please consult a qualified legal professional.

I’ve been a folk musician all of my life. I’ve written some tunes and songs. I’ve been thinking about including these in my will. Can I do this and how?

The short answer is, yes. Your original tunes and songs are, of course, the subjects of copyright, as are any of your recorded works. Each is considered your personal property (unless created as a work for hire), and becomes part of your estate at death. At death, the copyright on the works continues to be owned by the estate for an additional 70 years before falling into the public domain. During that 70-year period, your heirs can publish anthologies of your work, as well as compilation recordings of your work, each of which will have its own copyright term as of the date of the release of the compilation or anthology. However, the underlying song or tune will cease to have the protection of copyright 70 years after the date of your death.

The U.S. is a signatory to the Berne International Copyright convention, which covers the protection of your copyright worldwide. Hence, your heirs’ rights internationally could be either greater or less than the rights afforded under U.S. law.

Your right to a copyright exists at the creation of the work, if it was done before March 1, 1989. If the work was created after 1978 but before March 1, 1989, a simple notice on any recording or printed rendition of your tune or song is sufficient to afford you protection under the copyright law.

The best way to ensure copyright protection is, of course, to register your tune, song or recording with the U.S. Registrar of Copyrights. This is easily done, as the forms are available on the website of the U.S. Copyright Office, located at www.copyright.gov. There is a $30 fee for registration, which gives you the full protection of Federal and international copyright law.

From an estate-planning standpoint, the decision of what type of plan you should opt for is highly personal. While it is often difficult for an individual to contemplate his or her own mortality, it is more and more important in this age of information and technology for the artist whose goal is to benefit their heirs to structure his or her affairs in life with a view of extending the value of their assets for their heirs and beneficiaries. For example, the use of your songs or tunes in various media, such as recordings, films, “Muzak,” computer games, ring tones, digital downloads, etc. creates a series of income streams for your music that will benefit you during your lifetime and your heirs after your death.

Treating your music as a multi-faceted business is the first step in creating a personal life and estate plan. In writing this, I am not trying to place a lesser emphasis on the artistic or social value of your songs or tunes, or for that matter the communal value of folk music in general. Your music is, at the same time, a personal artistic statement, a social commentary and a personal asset.

From there, you can discuss with your legal advisor the various vehicles by which you can fulfill your estate planning needs. In some instances, a simple will is sufficient, while in others one or more trusts may be the answer. The decision of which vehicle to use depends on your personal circumstances. Don’t be fooled by the “one size fits all” estate planning road answer. The decision of which vehicle to use depends on your personal circumstances. Although your estate plan should not be a “cookie cutter” affair. Although it may cost more than the estate planning schlock shops, the fact is that every person’s estate and goals is different and requires a different set of tools to accomplish its mission.

I am a folk dancer and teacher and have developed some distinctive dance steps. How can I protect these from use by others without my permission?

Choreography is an appropriate subject of copyright. The choreography in several Broadway musicals is the subject of a separate license, which repertory groups and other theater groups must pay for in addition to the license to use the set design, music and folio of the play. Assuming your dance steps have been “fixed in a tangible medium” (i.e., paper or video), your dance steps can be protected by copyright. See the previous question for the steps required to assure copyright protection.

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BY BROOKE ALBERTS

A sword is also considered to be a Zen Buddhist sacred object, used to provide moral guidance for Samurai. Often swords bear engraved depictions of Fudo Myo-o, the patron deity of swordsmen. He is shown surrounded by flames with a double-edged sword in his left hand (for cutting through illusion to what is true) and a rope in his right hand (to bind the enemies of enlightenment). Fudo Myo-o is also depicted symbolically as a dragon curling around a sword with a hilt in the shape of a three-pronged Buddhist vajra (again, emphasizing cutting through to reality). Samurai were guardians of order, and Fudo Myo-o urged them to be unmoved by distraction or become unsettled in the midst of danger, and that this was attainable by practice.

Swords are also offered to Shinto shrines as gifts for kami (gods), or as dwelling places for them. Indeed, a place where smelting is done is revered, and the process of smelting is preceded by a Shinto purification ritual, and the kami’s help is requested.

When forging, the swordsmith can tell that the metal is at the optimum temperature when it begins to make a singing sound described as the god of the blade talking, and when the sparks fly, it is the kami dancing.

The sword-making process starts with smelting. Sand iron and charcoal are alternately added continually for three days, at which point the brink chimney is broken open and the smelted material is removed. The forging process begins with layers of the material called tama hagane, which is then heated and hammered out into flat sheets. These are hardened and broken into pieces. It is then sorted into three groups according to its iron content. All three types are used in the process. The pieces are stacked and wrapped together in paper and coated in ash and clay slurry. Then they are heated and hammered out. There are around twenty heating and hammering steps. This is what causes the “wood-grain” appearance to the polished steel. Harder steel is wrapped around a softer core to promote flexibility.

Eventually it is hammered out smoothly to the desired dimensions. This black-surfaced proto-sword is called the sunobe. There is further shaping, and the edge is forged thin. After a cold forging, clay slurry is applied in differentiated thicknesses, with the thinnest going on the sharp edge. Because this will cause the parts of the sword to cool at different rates, this not only causes the blade to curve, but the hamon - the crystal structure near the edge, which gives the blade its heat treatment, to become unstable in the midst of danger, and that this was attainable by practice.

The swords in this show come from swordsmiths representing the Yoshiiha school, which was begun as part of a revival of the art promoted by Kurihara Hisako, a member of the Japanese Diet and sword enthusiast around 1933 after it had nearly died out. He called for swordsmiths to train, and the toolmaker Yoshihara Katsukichi (who worked under the name of Yoshihara Kuniie) took him up on it. Sword making became outlawed during the Allied occupation of Japan, but Kurihara Hisako (a member of the Japanese Diet and sword enthusiast who had begun his studies in the 1933 revival) managed another revival. Kuniie again took up the forge, and today his grandson Yoshihara Yoshindo is the head of the Yoshihara school, which was begun as part of a revival of the art promoted by Yoshihara Yoshindo, and is registered as an Intangible Cultural Property of Tokyo.

Besides the swords, handles and scabbards on display, the first part of the exhibit describes an overview of the Yoshihara school, and there is a naginata, a halberd-like blade on a pole typically used either by soldiers to cut down cavalry or by women to defend their households. There is also a mock-up of a forge including raw materials and tools, and a video of the process as well.

The Japanese Sword: The Yoshiiha Tradition of Swordsmen
March 19- June 19 2005
Pacific Asia Museum -46 North Los Robles Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91101-626 449-2742
www.pacificasiamuseum.org -Wed.- Sun.- 10:00am-5:00pm, Fri. 10:00am- 8:00pm
$7.00 adults, $5.00 students, children under 12 are admitted free
Romanian ethnomusicologists, there were perhaps a hundred men earning their living as professional musicians, or lautari. The Taraf found their way to such prominence partly through the work of ethnomusicologists who were responsible for releasing their first album in France [Ocora C559036 1988] and arranging their first tours. Opportunities for appearances throughout Europe soon followed. Most American enthusiasts of the band probably know them from their appearance in the film Latcho Drom which tells a story of Gypsy migration across Europe in a sequence of wonderfully shot musical scenes. During the 1990s they established relationships with other musicians and promoters who have continued to facilitate their international career. Meanwhile, while the number of musicians in Clejani has greatly decreased, every musical child is practicing harder than ever in the hopes of a similar career. 

Lautar such as the members of Taraf de Haiduk, are called upon to play a wide variety of music for their patrons. The most popular music of everyday urban and town neighborhoods blaring from the stands of vendors selling inexpensive music cassettes. It is the music of everyday urban and town neighborhoods across the country. Its performers are largely gypsy singers like “Adrian the miracle child,” much admired for their material success; a success that is celebrated by lyrics describing the fantasy of wealth that spread over the consciousness of Romanians with the advent of a Western economy and its rampant consumerism after the revolution of 1989. Its drums, amplified, and electronic instruments, create an eclectic mix of sounds that echo musical styles drawn from throughout the Balkan region. It really does fulfill the characterization “loud, rowdy, and rebellious.” Indeed, like the “rock ‘n roll” invoked in the press kit, manele has been excoriated by Romanian cultural critics for polluting the well-springs of Romanian music. The lautars of Clejani, like many professional musicians who serve more rural regions, must incorporate elements of this music for their local audiences. On stage at Royce, the Taraf are likely to perform pieces that share in the quintessentially contemplatory, hybrid, popular, made-for-media character of the manele music. That was how the marvelous concert I heard at the Conga Room several years ago ended as enthusiastic American “oriental” dancers joining them onstage to fulfill the “party music” fantasy. You can easily identify this new musical genre easily; just listen for a dominant accordion or electronic keyboard and the distinctive mahala rhythms that evoke the sound image of music from regions further to the south and east. Some of the recordings to be found on recent CDs that are most impressive to western listeners share this pan-Balkanism. They feature sophisticated arrangements entitled tarceasca (in the Turkish manner) or even indiana (evocative of Indian film music). The Taraf will also almost certainly play some of the oldest traditional Romanian song genres in the most conservative traditional style. The instrumental ensemble may shrink to focus only on the singer accompanied by a small timbal (looks like a little hammer dulcimer rather than the large orchestral instrument used in the big-band numbers) and violin. Listen for the penetrative voice of one of the older lead singers performing half-sung half-spoken stanzas, perhaps reiterating a single pitch, interrupted by instrumental interludes in a relatively free melodic form that is periodically repressed, with significant variations, until the end of this epic or “old song” is reached. You will recognize a “love song” when then singers begin trading short lyrical motifs in a kind of dialogue-competition, a technique in which the lautari of Clejani specialize. They are juxtaposing erotic lyrical motifs in turn both licentious and sublime, from which an ad hoc poem emerges. These are a kind of the doina or “long song” that employs melodic phrases that may be lengthened or shortened at will by the singer. One should imagine these genres as they were once more commonly performed. The singers entertaining celebrants at a wedding feast, wandering among the tables gesturing and addressing themselves to particular people. Many of these older genres generally conclude with spontaneous medleys of dance tunes.

Taraf de Haiduks, a “band of brigands,” includes up to a dozen musicians ranging from 20 to 80 years in age, performing an enormous and diverse repertoire appropriate to their many audiences, from fellow villages in rural southern Romania to connoisseurs of nearly obsolete folk genres and fans of global music such as those who will be lucky enough to hear them here in Los Angeles at Royce Hall on May 1, 2005. A Taraf concert offers an experience of the cultural vitality engendered by the collision of tradition and modernity in Romania today that is not to be missed. [To learn more about the band and their music visit the links to web pages available through www.divansprod.com. Their more traditional repertoire can be heard on the recently released Les Haidus d’autrefois/Outlaws of Yore (Ethnophonie CD 3) produced by the Museum of the Romanian Peasant in Bucharest. I am indebted to the excellent notes to this recording written by Speranta Radaulescu.]

Colin Quigley, PhD is Associate Professor in World Arts and Cultures at UCLA. He has worked extensively in Romania and was curator of the Smithsonian Folklife Festival Romania Program in 1999.
Joe Hill: Martyr or Murderer?

Author's note: Part 2 of "The IWW Centennial," which ran in the Jan/Feb 2005 issue.

[Editor note. Join Ross Altman with an informal lecture on the "The IWW Centennial and The Songs of Joe Hill" at the Claremont Folk Festival-Sunday, May 22nd]

Let us suppose that you were on trial for your life, and had one alibi: You could not have done it because at the time of the murder you were charged with being in a lover's triangle with a woman whose husband shot you in the chest. You refused to divulge her name to protect her privacy. Nor would you press charges against the husband for having shot you. And not only would you not divulge their names, neither of them would ever come forth to clear your name, even as you are being led to the firing squad.

Fast forward ninety years: No one would ever come forward from this hypothetical family to claim credit for having protected his wife's honor by firing squad.

Worse, even as you are being led to the firing squad, no one would ever come forth to clear your name, even as you are being led to the firing squad.

Was Joe Hill framed? Is the Pope Catholic? It's an article of faith among labor's rank and file, old leftists and Wobbly keepers of the flame, and folk singers everywhere. Some say, that, as Alfred Hayes put it in his 1925 poem (set to music by Earl Christensen), "I Dreamed I Saw Joe Hill Last Night." "They framed you on a murder charge," Who am I to overturn a legend 90 years in the making? I won't do it. I can't do it. I'd never be booked to do another folk festival. I'd never sing for another union. I must believe it, like Catholics must believe in the virgin birth, like Protestants must believe in Creationism, like Jews must believe that Moses parted the Red Sea.

But I must also recognize that I am in the realm of religion, not science, and certainly not history. Joe Hill recognized that himself, I think, which was why when he was arrested he gave his name as Joseph Hillstrom, not Joe Hill. The man who was executed for murder was the historical, factual man, Joseph Hillstrom, christened Joel Hagglund in Sweden at his birth in 1879. The man who never died, the man who was reboomed as labor’s martyr, was the man who wrote "The Preacher and The Slave," and "Casey Jones—Union Scab," "The Rebel Girl," and a hundred other labor songs—that man was Joe Hill. It was as if he had risen from the dead like Jesus, and his followers had returned after three days to find an empty tomb.

Whatever one thinks of the case, and it may always remain controversial because the trial transcript was lost by the Salt Lake City courthouse, there is no gainsaying the fact that Joe Hill was an extraordinary artist in American music and labor history. Before Bob Dylan there was Woody Guthrie, and before Woody Guthrie there was Joe Hill, and before Joe Hill there was...well, there was...no one.

Joe Hill created the role of the traveling troubadour, the protest singer who is a voice for the voiceless, the downtrodden and oppressed who were his natural audience and who en masse nullified the jury verdict with a resounding "Joe Hill shall never die." When his body was returned to Chicago 20,000 of them came to his funeral, which was purely symbolic, because at his instructions his body was cremated and packets of his ashes scattered in 47 states and his homeland of Sweden. "I don’t want to be found dead in Utah," he had told Big Hill Haywood in his last will and testament. He added, "When I am gone, Bill, don’t mourn for me—organize!"

Who was this Swedish immigrant and itinerant working class hero, who filled the Wobblies’ "Little Red Songbook" with classic American labor songs that are still sung on picket lines and in concert halls today, and whose last moments in death inspired a song that brought tears to the eyes of striking Welsh miners when Paul Robeson sang it to them in London in 1949, and in 1969 became one of the highlights of Woodstock when Joan Baez dedicated it to her husband David Harris, who was then in prison for refusing to go to Vietnam? He came from a conservative Lutheran family that was also musically gifted. He played piano, banjo, guitar and fiddle, and wrote sentimental love songs as well as revolutionary labor broadsides.

He landed in New York in 1902 with his brother Paul, and started drifting west, arriving in San Pedro in 1910, just in time for a dockworkers’ strike that crystallized his decision to join the Industrial Workers of the World. His first two songs, "The Preacher and the Slave" and "Casey Jones: The Union Scab," were published the following year in The Little Red Songbook. The 1913 edition contained thirteen of his songs, including "Where the Fraser River Flows," and "There is Power in the Union," more than any other Wobbly bard.

When Joe Hill came along, other IWW songwriters said, "We knew he was the one." In January of 1914 he was heading back east when he made the fateful and fatal decision to stop in Salt Lake City on the way. He never got out alive.

If there ever was a woman in a long black veil who might have "stood over his grave and cried over his bones," we’ll never know. As per his instructions, his ashes never made it to Utah, and there is no grave to visit.

But in Joe’s case, Clio, the Greek muse of history, may herself wear a long black veil, and it may be true that "Nobody knows, nobody sees, nobody knows but me."

One thing we do know: As long as there are people who are overworked and underpaid, who keep getting the short end of the stick, and are promised nothing by their leaders but Pie in the Sky, Joe Hill’s songs will never die.

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.

Joe Hill: Martyr or Murderer?

Author's note: Part 2 of "The IWW Centennial," which ran in the Jan/Feb 2005 issue.
Djembe
SKIRBALL CULTURAL CENTER:
12:00-2:00 p.m. all concerts
May 7, 2005—Full Spectrum (Afro-Caribbean Jazz)
This 7-piece ensemble offers a blend of high-quality Afro-Caribbean, Jazz, and World Music all in one exciting performance. Comprised of musicians that hail from the South Bay that are involved in education and professional performance, Full Spectrum has appeal to music lovers of all ages, musical tastes, and backgrounds. Their live show is interactive and organic in nature making for a unique musical experience every time they play.

May 28, 2005—Dos Vientos (Flamenco)
Featuring Gabriel Lautaro Osuna, who has performed extensively in the famous “gypsy caves” of Granada, Spain, as well as internationally in Germany and France (Other performers names forthcoming).

June 11, 2005—Masanga Marimba Ensemble (African)
The Masanga Marimba Ensemble plays music from the Shona people of Zimbabwe. Most of this music is centuries old and has been passed down by oral tradition from generation to generation. The instruments used in this ensemble consist of Shona-style marimbas from Zimbabwe. The marimbas play music that is based on the Shona mbira dzavadzimu, a hand-held instrument with 22-28 metal keys. This music is used for calling ancestral spirits and dance. The group is led by Ric Alviso, a Cal State Northridge ethnomusicologist and professor of world music who has conducted extensive fieldwork in Senegal and Zimbabwe and is the director of the CSUN African Music Ensemble and the CSUN Gamelan.

CINEMA Z
May 21, 2:30 pm
The Legacy Of Rosina Lhevinne
This compelling documentary film by Salome Ramras Arkatov explores the nature of art, creativity, and human potential through the extraordinary life and achievements of the legendary Russian pianist and master teacher Rosina Lhevinne. Mme Lhevinne’s teaching career blossomed after age 65, her concert career began at age 75 and climaxd at her spectacular debut with Leonard Bernstein and the NY Philharmonic at age 82. Through Rosina Lhevinne’s teaching and playing on film we witness her energy, charisma, and contagious excitement that inspired her new celebrated students, as John Browning, Van Cliburn, Misha Dichter, James Levine, Daniel Pollack and John Williams to develop their artistic individuality.

Despite battles with breast cancer, depression, and the untimely death of her famous husband, Josef, she consistently thrusted on new ideas and the vitality of her students, performing and teaching until her death in 1976 at age 96. We believe The Legacy of Rosina Lhevinne will stand as a testament to the resiliency of the human spirit and its ability to endure, transform, nurture and flourish.

(USA - 2003 - 65 minutes)
June 25, 2:30 pm
Festival In The Desert
The annual Festival In the Desert has been taking place deep in the sandy vastness of the African Sahara since January 2001. The Festival is a unique celebration of the music and culture of the Tuareg (or Tamashek) people of the Sahara desert. The event also welcomes artists from other parts of Mali, Africa and the world to the most remote music festival on the globe. This movie by Lionel Brouet captures this remarkable festival featuring a diverse array of artists including former Led Zeppelin singer Robert Plant, Ali Farka Toure, Tinariwen, Oumou Sangare, and Lo’Jo performing in the often-hostile surroundings of the Sahara Desert. Brouet offers a startling expose of how the festival was organized, detailing its centuries-old history, and explaining how it was technologically possible to stage a modern upgrade of the event. A remarkable achievement, this is a fascinating document of a very special occasion. (France - 2004 - 52 minutes)
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**SPECIAL EVENTS continued on page 28**

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