Exposing Their ROOTS
WARSAW VILLAGE BAND COMES TO LOS ANGELES

BY CÀIT REED
© 2005
“...the most important things for us are emotions connected with old Polish music; wildness and the truth which comes from the roots” - Wojtek Krzak, Warsaw Village Band

Warsaw Village Band is a raw “roots” band presenting the rich and archaic music of Mazovia, the heartland of Poland.

When you first hear Warsaw Village Band, you are immediately drawn in by the truth and power of a music that has grown out of the ground. Besides the obvious Eastern European flavor, you are also reminded of other musical traditions: European music from the Middle Ages, East Indian, Native American, African, American mountain music, and blues.

Their second album Uprooting (World Village 468036) is aptly titled. The band uses an active verb, stating their intention to do more than just expose their roots and we feel this uprooting as an act of loving cultivation. Each piece is multifaceted and evocative of strange and magical times. Hypnotic acoustic lines, layer upon layer of ancient and modern strings are in the mix along with vocal solos and choruses, polyrhythmic percussion and some surprising live-dub effects.

WVB utilizes recording tools in ways that are more akin to techno-pop than to anything else. Yet at the center of this CD is a commitment to the unfiltered field recording that couldn’t be further from the value system of the techno genre. The tracks are recorded using acoustic instruments with a live, non-studio presence, and yet are mixed, arranged and manipulated in a “cut and paste” manner with sophisticated

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Free Summer Concerts
Interview: Lowen & Navarro

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How Can I Keep From Talking
Dave’s Corner
Voices In My Head
Old-Time Oracle
CD Reviews
Uncle Ruthie
Law Talk
& much more...

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EDITORIAL

URGENT NOTICE

Dear Readers:

For almost five years, FolkWorks has been publishing this newspaper, presenting concerts, and producing FROG, our annual contradance weekend. The newspaper has grown from 16 to 28 pages and distribution has grown from 10,000 to 13,000 printed copies. As we have envisioned, FolkWorks has become a valuable resource for the Folk/Traditional community. In many ways, it has been successful, in others not so. Most folks involved in the community know about and love the paper. Because we’ve been available to many people where they hang out, at coffee houses, music stores, concerts and festivals, we’ve gained name recognition and respect in the community. We fill a void that is sorely needed in the greater Los Angeles area.

But, success brings its own set of problems. We have arrived at that point where we either have to find more resources for the growing workload (filling these 28 pages, distributing these 13,000 copies every two months), or we stop printing this newspaper. Problem, to put it simply, is we do not have enough money to pay a staff person to do the work, – and we do not have enough volunteers to do the work or to help get grants, advertising and memberships. So it is UP TO YOU. We cannot continue to do this hard copy newspaper without your donations of time and money. If you want the newspaper, you can do one or more of the following:

• Volunteer to find articles
• Volunteer to distribute papers
• Volunteer to sell advertising
• Volunteer to assist with content
• Become a member (details on page 27)
• Donate online
• Mail a check

Whether or not we can continue to have the FolkWorks newspapers in those coffeehouses, at events and mailed to members, dear readers, is entirely up to you. So what will it be? The time is now. Email to Mail@FolkWorks.org and let us know what you want to do.

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REED'S RAMBLINGS

BY LEDA & STEVE SHAPIRO

Sunset Concerts at the Skirball

Thursday, July 21 6:00-8:00 pm
8211 Beverly Blvd
Los Angeles, CA 90064
(310) 440-4500 • www.skirball.org

Thursday, July 21
JANE BUNNETT AND SPIRITS OF HAVANA
Flutist, saxophonist, and pianist Jane Bunnett embraces and explores Afro-Cuban rhythms and melodies.

Thursday, July 28
MARIA DEL MAR BONET
International vocal star Maria del Mar Bonet draws upon the poetry of Majorcan writers in her widely celebrated music.

Thursday, August 4
FIAMMA FUMANA
Flamenco Fumana offers an intriguing blend of old Italian songs played in new dance grooves.

Thursday, August 11
VIAJEM
Sevillian singer and dancer Marta Santamaria and Brazilian bassist and arranger Antonio de Santos lead their ensemble, Viajem, in a fusion of joyful, romantic music.

Thursday, August 18
WARS AW Village BAND
The Warr Acres Village Band’s vibrant repertoire showcases Polynesian roots music, folk dance melodies, haunting ballades, and rural songs.

Thursday, August 25
YASMIN LEVY
Israeli-Canadian singer Yasmim Levy brings to life the most beautiful and romantic songs of Judaeo-Spanish/Ladino heritage.

Note: No outside alcoholic beverages permitted.

How Can I Keep From Talking

PHOTO BY SONYA SONES

Contact Information

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France’s official Oscar nominated entry for this year’s Best Foreign Language film is an irrevocably living piece of film. The film, directed by Kholoedh Mekhnas, is a story about the lives of two people and their struggle against the dark days of South African racism. The film is based on the true story of a woman from Ladysmith, outside Durban, South Africa, who was a member of the Grammy award winning group from the town of Ladysmith. The group has released over 40 recordings including seminal work on Paul Simon’s Graceland. The group’s songs often express the pain of the African people and their fight against the oppressive apartheid regime.

**THURSDAY, AUGUST 28 – 6:00PM**

**World Music Exchange with Transcultural Horizon**

World Village Band was founded in 1979 by six young Polish musicians who play taiko, tabla, djembe, and the dundun instrument. The band’s music is a fusion of Eastern and Western styles, and traditional Indian and African drumming. Their rhythm and dynamic coordination make for a thrilling experience for the audience. The band’s music often incorporates historical and cultural elements from different cultures, and their performances are always a hit with music lovers around the world.

**THURSDAY, AUGUST 28 – 8:00PM**

**Kholoedh Mekhnas**

Born in Jerusalem, Yasmin Levy’s deep, spiritual and moving style of singing preserves and enriches the traditions of Jewish and Arabic culture. She is known for her powerful voice, passionate delivery, and her ability to connect with audiences around the world. Her music is a blend of traditional ballads and old Italian dance tunes played to new dance grooves. She brings a unique perspective to her music, drawing inspiration from her Middle Eastern heritage and her love for the universal language of music.

**FRIDAY, AUGUST 29 – 9:00PM**

**Coca-Cola**

The Coca-Cola Company is known for its commitment to sustainability and its role in the promotion of social responsibility. The company has sold Coca-Cola products for over 130 years and is a leader in the beverage industry. Coca-Cola is committed to reducing its environmental impact and promoting healthy living.

**FRIDAY, AUGUST 29 – 9:00PM**

**Hans Jorgenson**

A native of Majorca, one of Spain’s Balearic Islands, Maria del Mar Bonet defiantly sang in her Verde style! She warmly embraces and explores Afro-Cuban rhythms and melodies as a way to express her own cultural heritage and the universal language of music. Her music is a celebration of the universality of music and showcase the life and culture of Cuba. She brings a unique perspective to her music, drawing inspiration from her Middle Eastern heritage and her love for the universal language of music.

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 30 – 8:00PM**

**Barbet**

A dynamic 10 piece band that can literally burn up the dance floor by capturing all of the elements of tropical music. The band’s music is a blend of traditional music from the Caribbean, Africa, and Latin America, and it features a variety of instruments, including guitar, bass, drums, and percussion. The band’s music is known for its high energy and danceable rhythms.

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 30 – 8:00PM**

**MID Valley PunditZ**

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**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 1 – 8:00PM**

**Hans Jorgenson Quintet**

One of the finest fiddlers Scotland has ever produced (considered by many the finest of this generation) with his dancing sense of pace and sparkling humor. His performance is electric, his music is electrifying and his band’s rhythms will turn City Hall into a Samba paradise.

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 10 – 8:00PM**

**Laurie Lewis and Band**

Singer/fiddler/guitarist/songwriter Laurie Lewis has established herself as one of the finest, most versatile and most respected artists in American roots music. Her music is a celebration of the universality of music and showcase the life and culture of Cuba. She brings a unique perspective to her music, drawing inspiration from her Middle Eastern heritage and her love for the universal language of music.

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 11 – 8:00PM**

**Katia Moraes and Sambaguru**

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**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24 – 9:00PM**

**Ricardo Lemvo and Makina Loca**

One of the most popular bands in Central America today, Ricardo Lemvo and Makina Loca bring a unique blend of traditional and modern music to their performances. Their music is a celebration of the universality of music and showcase the life and culture of Cuba. She brings a unique perspective to her music, drawing inspiration from her Middle Eastern heritage and her love for the universal language of music.

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24 – 9:00PM**

**Plastilina Mosh and Nortec Collective**

A Chicago-based group that combines traditional Tejano music with modern electronic music. Their music is a celebration of the universality of music and showcase the life and culture of Cuba. She brings a unique perspective to her music, drawing inspiration from her Middle Eastern heritage and her love for the universal language of music.

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24 – 9:00PM**

**Suzanne Vega and Marc Cohn**

One of the most distinctive female singer/songwriters, Grammy-nominated Suzanne Vega is known for her powerful voice, passionate delivery, and her ability to connect with audiences around the world. Her music is a celebration of the universality of music and showcase the life and culture of Cuba. She brings a unique perspective to her music, drawing inspiration from her Middle Eastern heritage and her love for the universal language of music.

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**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 25 – 8:00PM**

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CAn MUSIC THEORY EXPLAIN THE ENTIRE UNIVERSE?

A PHILOSOPHICAL DIGRESSION

As we studied music theory we have been able to extract some underlying rules that hold true across all fields of music. But can these rules be applied elsewhere? Could it be that music is the key to the Universe? Read on and see what you think.

ONE WITH EVERYTHING

You must have heard the one about the East Indian mystic that walks up to the hot dog vendor and says, “Make me one with everything.” The more I learn about things, the more I’m convinced that we are really “one with everything.” Everything seems to be interconnected and bound together by a network of underlying common rules. History may just be the story of different people’s journeys as they chose different paths to move them closer to an understanding of these rules. For some the path is called spirituality and for some it is science but for all it is the same journey. What we have been learning about music may only be one part of the journey but this knowledge will help us to notice the underlying rules as we continue upon other parts of our journey.

ONE TO MANY AND MANY TO ONE

Science can be used to understand and describe music but ultimately the experience is part of our spiritual journey. The ancient Greeks believed there was a singular origin (in Greek) of all things: “one with everything.” Science allows us to view this energy as vibrating of one individual to know all there was to know about the world in which they lived. This age of the Renaissance scholar came to an end in the mid-nineteenth century. At that time the global store of knowledge was growing so fast that it forced people into the age of specialization. Scholars today know a lot but in ever narrowing fields of specialization. In opposition to this is a movement by scientists, especially cosmologists, to find the underlying set of rules that bind all the separate fields together. This has gone by many names: the Gauge Theory, The Unified Field Theory, The Theory of Everything and more recently String Theory, Super String Theory and Super Symmetry. Throughout history others have pursued the quest for a set of unifying rules in various fields. These discoveries may actually be the same as ours.

BODE’S LAW

In 1766Titius of Wittenberg stated that—very roughly speaking—each planet was about twice as far from the Sun than that of the planet before it. In 1778, building upon that observation, J. E. Bode published a method that appears to define the relationship between the mean distances of the planets from the sun in Astronomical Units (where 1 A.U. is the mean distance between the Sun and Earth) and it works like this. Write down a zero, then a three, then double that and write down a six, double that and so on like this: 0, 3, 6, 12, 24, 48, 96, ... Then write a four below each number, do the addition and then mark off one decimal place so it looks like Figure 1.

The Planets

At that time, 240 years ago, only six planets (Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn) were known and Bode’s Law made very close approximations of their actual positions. But there was a gap in the sequence and this led Bode to predict the existence of another planet between Mars and Jupiter. This turned out to be the location of the (then unknown) asteroid belt that may in fact be the remnants of a disintegrated planet. Then in 1871 Uranus was discovered and it was just about where Bode’s Law predicted it to be. The next two planetary discoveries, Neptune in 1846 and Pluto in 1930, were pretty far off the mark. But it is believed that they are no longer in their original locations due to their great distance from the Sun exerting less gravitational pull and their possible gravitational deflection due to passing comets.

Octaves, Standing Waves and Nodes

What does all of this have to do with music theory? You might recall that octaves were found by doubling the frequencies for each new octave. Bode’s Law incorporates an initial offset of four but, other than that, each value is just like octaves. The question is, what is holding these planets into just these places? Remember that any musical note is a result of resonance and that resonance is a result of standing waves, which are node and antinode resonances. The planets may be taking the path of least resistance by forming and residing along these resonance nodes.

THE PLANETS

Mercury Earth Mars ?? Uranus Saturn Neptune Pluto

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-Figure 1. Bode’s Law allows to predict the planet’s distances from the Sun.

MUSIC OF THE SPHERES, GRAVITY WAVES AND BLACK HOLES

What is it that is resonating? In ancient Greece the Pythagoreans talked of the Music of the Spheres. They actually believed that each planet produced its own note and that they all resonated together. They felt that at some level we should be able to hear this celestial music. In more modern times Albert Einstein predicted the existence of gravity waves. Scientists now believe these to be more than just a mathematical construct and are searching for ways to detect and measure them. Black holes, it is now believed, each “ring” with their own unique frequency at its fundamental mode of vibration. The gravity wave formed by this resonance will be able to tell us much about the otherwise unobservable black holes.

A QUANTUM WORLD

When quantum physics began to enter the mainstream it was difficult for people to accept the idea of a discontinuous physical world. Quantum mechanics wanted us to accept that something could exist here and here but not in the spaces between. Music theory offers examples of this same idea with standing waves and with the harmonic-overshoot-series.

STRING THEORY

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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, Montika White, in Santa Monica.
THE VOICES IN MY HEAD
BY JOANNA CAZDEN

WARMING UP BY TUNING IN

The singing voice, created invisibly within the body, is often considered to be the most sensitive, expressive instrument of music. Because singing feels so personal and natural or instinctive, folk singers may deny their voices the care and discipline they routinely devote to other instruments.

There are ways to protect and improve your voice without sounding unnatural. Here is one basic warm-up sequence. (Southern California warning: singing in the car is NOT enough!)

FOCUS
First, find a place where you can concentrate. Away from home, find a restroom, hallway, or spare office if you don’t have an actual dressing room. Bring some water, juice, or tea with you.

Turn your mind inward toward your body and emotions and do a quick internal check-in.

Have you had a good day or a stressful one? Try to notice, label, and then set aside any mental distractions. This is what theater-folk call “returning to neutral,” and it will help you develop vocal awareness and project a strong stage presence.

GET PHYSICAL
Next, do a few minutes of light aerobics to increase blood circulation and energy. Use simple dance steps, wave your arms like the top half of a “jumping jack,” or just wriggle and shake all over. If there are mental preoccupations you haven’t yet shaken off, getting physical will help.

Pay attention to your breathing. Over time, you may recognize certain breathing patterns accompanying the emotional states you’re in. Don’t stop to figure them out, just notice how immediately your mind and body connect through the breath.

Once your body feels warm, do some stretching. Circle your chin, head, shoulders, and hips. Reach one arm overhead and stretch toward the opposite wall, letting your ribs expand on that side for a few breath cycles; repeat on the other side. Keep your knees unlocked; it makes a huge difference in your breathing! Exhale completely so that you don’t get dizzy.

Yawn deeply a few times, and shake out your arms and legs again… Begin to connect breath to sound by letting your voice engage as you stretch. This is NOT SINGING, just groaning, sighing, letting the body make noise as it moves into a state of greater freedom. Sip water or tea whenever you feel dry.

SING OUT
Now you’re ready to work the vocal muscles themselves. Slide up and down a few times on “hum,” or while trilling your tongue (rolled R) or lips (trumpet buzz). Switch to short scales or a fragment of melody that you can transpose throughout your range, still humming or using neutral syllables such as “mah” or “la.”

Start in the middle of your range and at soft to moderate loudness. Repeat the mini-phrases down into your low range, then go into your upper range. Always warm up to a note or two higher than you actually sing, but stretch up there gradually, and slide/glide/sigh back down to your mid-range at the end.

DON’T judge the sound at this point, let it be easy and even breathe. Instead, keep checking in with how your body FEELS. Knees still unlocked? Neck still tall, shoulders far below ears? Emotions flowing more easily than when you started?

Try some longer phrases, and play a little with resonance or tone quality. If your voice tends toward a dull, throaty or muffled quality, use nasal syllables like “mi” and “ni” to brighten the tone. (This is like playing a stringed instrument closer to the bridge.) On the other hand, if you tend to sound thin or shrill, yawn some more and bring out throatier tones by singing on “lo,” “go,” or “golly.”

Finish this part of the routine by sing a familiar set of lyrics at normal pitch and moderately strong intensity. Check that your voice is still relaxed and balanced, breath moving in your ribs and belly rather than high in your chest.

Finally, use a familiar set of lyrics as tongue-twisters, speeding through to warm up your articulation muscles. Review the beginnings of the song for any measures you haven’t fully memorized, or the introductory “patter” for new material.

FINAL NOTES
All of this can be done in about twenty minutes. If you don’t have that much time right before a gig or rehearsal, do it early in the day, then a quickie version backstage. When you have more time, use it — but always spend the first half just with body and breath. If you sing with an...
Let’s take the latter. John Batdorf and James Lee Stanley’s release this year of All Wood and Stones is a fine example and a good album. The “wood” is the pair’s acoustic island, and the “stones” is the music of the Rolling Stones, presented in fine acoustic arrangements. Don’t cringe. Think of all those “Pickin’ On…” albums, where music from other genres is reinterpreted as bluegrass.

There’s much more. Take the group Tesla, a heavy metal rock band who scored so big with their album, Five Man Acoustic Jam, that they’re out again this year with an all-acoustic tour. And not all the lyrics are of mainstream pop culture – the old song, “Signs,” is social commentary in the best folk tradition.

The advent of CD technology, together with digital recording-studio-quality programs are a pack of others, like Rich Taylor, Craig Lincoln, Lorie Dowswell, Joan Enguita, Charlie White, Cyndi Mora, Linda Geleris, Emily, Dan McFeeley, and others who are rising fast. Some have fans everywhere and tour constantly, like Kat Parsons who this year with an all-acoustic album, where music from other genres is reinterpreted. Don’t cringe. Think of all those “Pickin’ On…” albums, where music from other genres is reinterpreted as bluegrass.
**I N T E R V I E W**

LOWEN & NAVARRO: PLAYING LIKE THERE’S NO TOMORROW

BY LARRY WINES

Writers of the worldwide top five hit We Belong, and successful before being embraced as touring folk artists, Eric Lowen and Dan Navarro sat down together for the first time to discuss the battle with the dreadful disease that has stricken one of them. They spoke openly and with the same passion that characterizes their music.

And such music! Their songs have been recorded by artists as diverse as Pat Benatar, the BANGLES, the Four Tops, Dave Edmunds, the Temptations, and more. For those who’ve known them for a decade, they’ve written, recorded, and toured to growing national acclaim. They’re active and popular in the music scene, the North American Folk Alliance, and the Far West conference. Lowen & Navarro emphasize their live shows and they always deliver emotional, dynamic, uplifting performances. For those who’ve never heard them, they’ve made nine full-length CDs since 1990, plus an EP. Their limited-release debut album was commandeered in its entirety in eBay, and you can buy it on Amazon.com.

They tour constantly, in defiance of the ALS—Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis—that Eric is battling. In a very real sense, the two are battling it together. The days of stormy partnership are gone, replaced by a friendship rivaling Damon and Pythias. Dan quietly confirms Eric’s dexterity with his string instrument has not yet diminished, though he’s just tired of it. He can still play, despite the ALS, but he’s tired of it.

Eric’s dexterity with his string instruments—guitar and mandolin—hasn’t yet diminished, though he always plays seated now, and sometimes can’t lift his guitar without assistance.

LW: I know you both have a very strong commitment to ALS research.

Dan: We’re asking people to make a contribution to the Greater Los Angeles ALS Association, at www.alalsa.org to help fight this ridiculous disease, there’s no cure, and no effective treatment. It’s the most heartbreaking disease I’ve ever heard of.

Eric: And I’m sick of having it. I’ve only been diagnosed for a little less than a year and I’m just tired of it. I’m ready to get over it. But anyway, I love to say that I’ve ever heard of.

Eric: I’ve been diagnosed for a year, and I’m just tired of it. I’m pretty debilitating. It’s well-served by the Muscular Dystrophy Association. I’m one of the older members of the ALSA.

LW: You did a benefit show at Kulak’s, a benefit for the Greater Los Angeles ALS Association, and the LAALS. Wonderful people, they’d already given me a brand new shiny red scooter, to get around. I can go to the mall again.

Dan: For those who don’t know, ALS is also known as Lou Gehrig’s Disease. Lou Gehrig, the baseball player, the famous Yankee. Lou Gehrig was diagnosed with an incurable illness, but it could be many other things. You know, when you get bad news, sometimes when you get good news, you know, it actually happens with a great deal of silence. Almost in a vacuum. You just hear something, and there’s no bands playing. You know those big moments happen to us in relative solitude and in quietude. The song is called How Mighty is the Silence.

Eric: Yes. They call the disease the glass coffin because it’s really pretty debilitating but it doesn’t affect your mind. Two things it doesn’t affect: your mind and sexual function. A cruel cosmic joke.

Eric: I just recently learned a strange little connection. There’s a guy named Jason Becker who was a hotshot guitar player in the late 1980s, early 1990s. He landed a gig with David Lee Roth and played on Dave’s record, A Little Ain’t Enough, and he’s got ALS. He didn’t actually make it to the tour, because he was starting to have challenges during the recording of the record. I just found that out recently. The irony is, Dave recorded a song on that record that I wrote with Preston Sturgis. I’ve e-mailed Jason. It’s kind of a funny thing, a couple guitar players, you know, with the same disease and stuff.

So, yeah, it’s a horrible disease. It was identified in 1869, and they still haven’t figured out what causes it or how to cure it. It’s hereditary between five and ten percent of the time. It’s just pretty debilitating.

There’s some great support for it, but it’s rare enough that it doesn’t really get the kind of publicity or public support that a lot of other diseases get. It’s well-served by the Muscular Dystrophy Association. I’m one of the older members of Jerry’s Kids. And the ALSA is just a wonderful support organization, as well, and they do an awful lot for the patients with the disease.

The stem cell research initiative that passed in California is going to mean a lot to people of my ilk, I suppose, even though, you know the cure is probably a long way away. But, still, stem cell research is probably the brightest hope there is on the horizon.

LW: The last election, I think a lot of us feel the only progressive thing on the entire ballot that passed was stem cell research.

Eric: There you go. We have a song about the momentous occasions in our lives. And there’s lots of different ones. Mine happens to be getting diagnosed with an incurable illness, but it could be many other things. You know, when you get bad news, sometimes when you get good news, you know, it actually happens with a great deal of silence. Almost in a vacuum. You just hear something, and there’s no bands playing. You know those big moments happen to us in relative solitude and in quietude. The song is called How Mighty is the Silence.

Eric: Absolutely. Absolutely, yes. I think, um—I don’t have much use for anything that’s not, to tell you. My son, Ben, is dead. Absolutely, yes. I think, um—I don’t have much use for anything that’s not, to tell you. My son, Ben, is dead. Absolutely, yes. I think, um—I don’t have much use for anything that’s not, to tell you. My son, Ben, is dead. Absolutely, yes. I think, um—I don’t have much use for anything that’s not, to tell you. My son, Ben, is dead. Absolutely, yes. I think, um—I don’t have much use for anything that’s not, to tell you. My son, Ben, is dead. Absolutely, yes. I think, um—I don’t have much use for anything that’s not, to tell you. My son, Ben, is dead.
I’ve been happy to be, for the second time in a row, starting off this column out with a rave. In this case it’s about Peter Himmelman, though his new record, *Imperfect World* [Majestic Recordings, Inc. (!)] is only part of the reason. I guess you’d have to refer to him as a singer-songwriter, and he’s certainly superb at both of those tasks, but he’s also musically and lyrically diverse and consistently interesting. His new CD features his rich voice and guitar playing (he plays all the guitars on the CD) and backup by, among others, Pete Thomas from Elvis Costello’s Attractions on drums. The solid playing sometimes has the relaxed feel of a late-night blues session, but the lyrics offer an emotional directness and blend of sexuality and spirituality that’s less of Leonard Cohen or Marvin Gaye. A minor-keyed, soulful *Kneel Down* name-checks Johnny Rivers, Wet Matches has an impressively catchy slide intro and the album closet, *Another Day*, manages to be simultaneously mellow and celebratory.

But the rave is actually about his live show. Specifically the CD release party at the Mint on March 31st, one of the greatest live shows I’ve ever seen. Himmelman can give most any other performer a lesson in engaging the audience. At the Mint he chatted and joked with them both on and off-stage, and entertained the capacity, industry-heavy crowd with Pete Thomas, who lends his haunting fiddle and singing to the traditional *Caledonian Tune*, a Scottish soldier fighting Napoleon set to a traditional melody, and Dennis Roger Reed, who manages to be both good and not spectacular. Wainwright has a nicer voice than either of her performing male relatives, but his excellent backup band keeps up with all the changes admirably, but the most impressive feat is that all the wackiness doesn’t detract at all from the occasional weightiness of the lyrics, probably because he does such an impressive job making friends with the audience. Buy the CD to experience the songs, but definitely see him live for an experience like no other. Go to www.peterhimmelman.com to find out where and when.

Meanwhile, Martha Wainwright, daughter of London Wainwright III and Kate McGarrigle and sister of Rufus, has two CDs out, one a 5-song EP (*The title of which can’t be printed here, but its initials are BMF,*) and one a full-length CD, *Martha Wainwright* (!) [both Zoe dist. by Rounder]. Both are good though not spectacular. Wainwright has a nicer voice than either of her performing male relatives, and an eclectic style probably more similar to her brother’s than either of her parents. The songs are somewhat hit and miss, but the best of them, like the title cut of the EP (which also appears on the full-length CD) transcend their weightiness of the lyrics, probably because he does such an impressive job making friends with the audience. Buy the CD to experience the songs, but definitely see him live for an experience like no other. Go to www.peterhimmelman.com to find out where and when.

**RATING SCALE:**

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

[1]——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.

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

[3]——Good/solid, what you would expect.

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

**ON-GOING STORYTELLING EVENTS**

**LOS ANGELES COMMUNITY STORYTELLERS**

2nd Fridays • 7:00 pm
Los Angeles Public Library Storytelling Group
7711 Fashion Blvd. • 323-938-5480

**FAMILY STORYTELLING**

Saturdays/Sundays
11:00 am. wkds: 10:30 am: Fri.
Storytelling is upbeat on alternating Saturdays.
Unity Center Family Room, 3704 W. Liberty Avenue, L.A.
310-440-5790

**TEMPEST PARK**

GROO WORKSHOP

2nd Saturdays • 7:00 pm
3551 S. Alt Piñon, across from Tempe Market Park
Tempe, AZ 85282

**SAN GABRIEL VALLEY STORYTELLERS**

3rd Tuesdays • 7:00 pm
113-3053 E. Valley Blvd., Pomona
909-625-1072

**LONG BEACH STORYTELLERS**

3rd Wednesdays • 7:00 pm
101 Aliso United Methodist Church
3737 Badger St., Long Beach
562-961-9360

**SOUTH COAST STORYTELLERS**

2nd Mondays, 7:00pm
Temple Beth Torah
2nd Thursdays • 7:30 pm
3335 43rd Place, across from Leimert Park
On-going Storytelling Events

**STORYTELLERS GUILD**

3rd Mondays • 7:00 pm
15701 Roscoe Blvd., North Hills
818-541-9449

**TOASTMASTERS**

2nd Saturdays • 8:00 pm
7771 Foothill Blvd. • 818-541-9449

**DAVE’S CORNER**

Dave Soyars is a guitarist, electric bass player, a singer/songwriter, and a print journalist with over fifteen years experience. His column features happenings on the folk and traditional music scene both locally and internationally, with commentary on recordings, as well as live shows, and occasionally films and books. Please feel free to e-mail him at dave@soyars.com or write him c/o FolkWorks.

Peter Himmelman is a guitarist, electric bass player, a singer/songwriter, and a print journalist with over fifteen years experience. His column features happenings on the folk and traditional music scene both locally and internationally, with commentary on recordings, as well as live shows, and occasionally films and books. Please feel free to e-mail him at dave@soyars.com or write him c/o FolkWorks.
Most of us folkies aren’t on major labels, and most of us can’t afford to hire someone to do promotion. So the result is the ability to stare at one another in the mirror and say “Congratulations… you’re our new promotion maven. Get to work!”

So let’s start with radio. There are a lot of folk_roots/blues/Americana radio shows all over the world. So your new job as the radio promotion person is to find as many of those shows as possible, and get them to do it. And what do they want and/or expect from your submission? There are quite a few people out there with opinions on how to submit your work. They don’t agree on too much, but most agree that the CD needs to be clearly marked with the artist’s name and contact information. The song titles and work for each song is each song is useful and readable, clear language. Save that psychedelic lettering and those “in-jokes” for elsewhere in the CD booklet, and put those titles and information on the front where they’re easy to find. Include a ONE PAGE bio with your CD submission. Don’t include all the great reviews you’ve gotten, or maybe some radio people to look up your website for information. Don’t include fun extras, like an ounce of glitter that falls out when you open the packet. Today, it costs about $5 to mail a single CD with jewel case and that one pager anywhere in the USA. Factor in the cost of the padded mailer, and you’ve got an investment of $10 for every single radio station you’re mailing to. If you’re planning on sending out quite a few, this adds up. My promotion budget for mailing my CDs to radio approaches my budget for CD duplication cost easily.

It’s not too hard to find local shows, and do the contact work. But what about other states and other countries? If you’re a Folk Alliance member, they provide a big fat database with all kinds of info about radio. Or you can do your own leg work. Hurry for the internet. Locate a few websites that have to do with the type of music you’ve recorded. Check out www.folkradio.org, which is an electronic discussion group for DJs and other people interested in all folk-based music on the radio. With over nine hundred subscribers from all corners of the earth, you can be sure you’ll get a response. And the lighter weight translates to less postage. If you’re planning on sending out quite a few, this adds up. My promotion budget for mailing my CDs to radio approaches my budget for CD duplication cost easily.

Here’s another important point: if your music has controversial words in the lyrics, let the radio station know. Make sure you know. The FCC has taken a nice swing into the censorship mode, and your great song with the “F” word mentioned three times could cost that little public radio station their license. If you have “questionable” language, note it. Or even if you don’t, make sure that that live CD doesn’t have someone in the audience shouting out one of the FCC nasty words in an audible manner. Whoever said that all publicity is good publicity hasn’t been fined by the FCC or caused someone else to be fined. I sent out 441 CDs to radio in the last couple of months. Finding most of these took some time and some effort. It’s also has to be important to **do your own leg work** and **do your own research**. And **do your own leg work** and **do your own research**. Find the station’s web site, locate the program guide, note if the shows are local_ or are syndicated. If you’re a Folk Alliance member, you have a big fat database with all kinds of info about radio. Or you can do your own leg work. Hurry for the internet. Locate a few websites that have to do with the type of music you’ve recorded. Check out www.folkradio.org, which is an electronic discussion group for DJs and other people interested in all folk-based music on the radio. With over nine hundred subscribers from all corners of the earth, you can be sure you’ll get a response. And the lighter weight translates to less postage. If you’re planning on sending out quite a few, this adds up. My promotion budget for mailing my CDs to radio approaches my budget for CD duplication cost easily.
The Mammals describe themselves as subversive acoustic traditionalists. What an apt label! They use acoustic instruments and a folk-music mindset to create a wonderfully original sound. The studio production plays the traditional folk instruments sing richly, yet The Mammals stay in character with a glorious combination of folk, Americana, and well-written folk-pop tunes. Their second studio album is a treasure; a fascinating blend of traditional songs and originals. The songwriting is even stronger than on their previous albums, Evolver and Born Live.

To say that The Mammals have music in their blood would be a gross understatement. Tao Rodriguez-Seeger is the grandson of folk-song legend Pete Seeger. Ruth Ungar is the daughter of Grammy-winning composer/fiddler Jay Ungar and folk guitarist and singer Lyn Hardy. Michael Merenda has been writing songs and playing in rock bands for years. All three have released or are working on solo albums. Between them, they play an amazing variety of stringed things: violins, banjos, mandolins, ukuleles, and guitars. This impressive trio is joined on Rock That Babe by Ken Mairau, Pierce Woodward, Aoife O'Donovan & Chris Merenda. Chris is a permanent member of the band now, as is drummer Dan Rose.

Highlights of the CD include Chan Chan, a Compa Segundo song (Buena Vista Social Club) that The Mammals have been performing for several years, but never recorded for release. The most-requested song on the album is Michael Merenda's scathing political commentary on our presidency, The Bush Boys. Other gems include Bad Shoes Blues, a banjo-centric tune of Tao's with Ruth's soulful lyrics, and Lay Down Yr Mountain, an Allen Ginsberg poem set to Michael Merenda's music.

However, the best part of the album for me comes near the end. The Mammals play a slow, beautiful version of Pete Seeger's Quite Early Morning. "...You know it's darkest before the dawn/This thought keeps me movin' on/If we could heed these early warnings/Time is now/Quite early morning...." It didn't hurt that the first time I heard it, I was driving across the desert in the wee hours of the morning, before dawn. If you grew up with Pete Seeger's music playing around the house, like I did, this track will likely bring tears to your eyes.

The Mammals will be touring with Arlo Guthrie for the second half of 2005, and plan to be in Southern California in November. Keep your eyes open for details in upcoming issues of FolkWorks, or check out the Mammals' website at www.themammals.net.
FolkWorks

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For those into the Celtic genre, don’t get confused—Celtic Fiddle Festival is a band, not an event. The group got its start in 1992 when Irish fiddler Kevin Burke and Scottish fiddler Johnny Cunningham decided it might be fun to tour together. They added Christian Lemaire, Breton fiddler and a founding member of the group Kornog, to the mix, and took to the stage for what was to be an unequaled series of concerts called the Celtic Fiddle Festival. The music was so well received, and they had such a bang-up good time that they decided to keep the ensemble intact to record and tour.

In December of 2003, the unthinkable happened—Johnny Cunningham, the innately collaborative musician, passed away, leaving the world of Scottish music in general, and Cunningham and Celtic Fiddle Festival in particular, with a void that would not easily be filled. Eventually, Burke and Lamineau came to believe that Cunningham would have no doubt enjoyed to carry on, so they invited French-Canadian Quebecois fiddler Andre Brunet to join them, along with guitarist Ged Foley from England. Play On, named in honor of their belief that it’s what Johnny would want them to do, is the first recording by the new lineup. Cunningham and Celtic Fiddle Festival understand that, and so they haven’t tried to replace him. Instead, they’ve opted to do something new and different without him, and it has worked perfectly. Traditionally, Fiddle Festival, taste of Celtic music as Scottish, Irish, or some muddled mixture of the two. But the predominance of the Breton and Quebecois influences brings a completely new sound and spirit to the music. It’s a touch broader scope; lively, complex, intriguing, and, well... different.

Right from the start, the first track lets you know that this isn’t the Celtic Fiddle Festival you’ve heard before. It’s a set of traditional Quebecois dance tunes,recall the “hooked” rhythm that is the hallmark of the French-Canadian style. There’s also a traditional Yiddish tune, a set of fascinating modal marches from Brittany, and a very Irish set of O’Carolan tunes. Cunningham’s love of poingnant touch, leaving Breton) witten by Johnny Cunningham and first recorded on the album Relativity when he was a member of the band of the same name along with his brother Phil. It’s a beautiful melody, made even more so by the arrangement and by the quote in the liner notes written by Johnny several years before his passing.

There is certainly an air of sadness; of mourning for Johnny Cunningham, about Play On, but the surviving members of the band have kept it going and turned it into the musical tour de force that the album can stand on its own as a wonderful collection of music that really shouldn’t be missed. Surely the decision to “play on” was the right one, and somewhere, Johnny would be proud of the cuing and tapping his (ectoplasmic?) foot along with his old mates.

CD REVIEWS

Art: MIKE DOWLING
Title: BLUE FANDANGO
Label: WIND RIVER GUITAR WRG-65
Release Date: APRIL 2005

BY DENNIS ROGER REED

Mike Dowling is not a household word. Those in the know in the folk/blues/swing/roots music world know the uniqueness of this fact. This year’s Grammy for the Pop Instrumental Album category was awarded to Pink Guitar, an acoustic guitar tribute to the songs of Henry Manccell. The Duhks are not the only ones doing experiments on that recording, so now as a Grammy winning performer, perhaps he can say Things is ‘Bout Comin’ My Way.

But there’s no reason to quote Tampa Red or the Mississippi Sheiks when you can quote Mike Dowling. In the world of folk/blues/swing/roots, a record like Blue Fandango is all that is needed to further establish his credentials as one of the top artists in this-theseg. Dowling sets out this year to provide a solo recording of both vocals and vocal songs. Some of the tunes may be familiar, like his remarkable version of Maria Elena or the Reverend Gary Davis’ Trying to Get to Heaven. As has been the case with all of Dowling’s recordings, taste is foremost. There is no flash for flash’s sake. Dowling can be a blistering soloist on the guitar, but more often than not, his style is restrained, economical, and his execution of the blues, sweet point tart. In his latest, but Dowling isn’t limited by the solo format, he is showcased by it. Whether playing bottleneck blues, ragtime fingerstyle, or flatpickag hot swing lead lines, Dowling’s style is apparent.

It’s a true sense of the world. Dowling’s original’s are fine tunes, and he has a way of playing well known numbers like Marie Elena in a manner that makes them fresh and new. This CD has a nice mix of instrumentals and vocal numbers. The title tune shows his touch with Latin influenced pieces, and his vocals on I Hope Gabriel Like My Music, I Hate Myself for Being So Mean to You and Steamboat Bill feature Dowling’s way around a complicated lyric.

A nice summer day, back porch approach to recording. Now he’s all set to work on that household work thing, okay?
The music of Altan is the music of Ireland’s pubs and informal sessions. They have done what is necessary to adapt the traditional music to recording studios and concert halls, but the traditional flavor and laid-back feel of the local pub is still there. Of course, this means that there is not a great deal of difference from one Altan album to the next, but there’s something to be said for the comfort of predictability. Local Ground is typical of its predecessors: solidly performed with a variety of memorable songs and tunes.

Lead singer Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh’s voice is one of the best in the Irish genre, with a quality that falls somewhere between ethereal and earthy. There’s a sincerity in her delivery that leads you to believe that she’s lived with her music, and the liner notes are useful and readable (an important consideration for those of us who have entered the “bifocal years.”) Lyrics are given in Irish with English translations; on each song the original language’s provenance is presented in some detail. On the down side, I’ve never seen so much text on a CD insert devoted to haranguing the purchaser with dire warnings about the consequences of illegal duplication. The disc is also copy-protected, and there’s a three-paragraph explanation of how to get it to play on your computer. As a musician, I fully support efforts to control the theft of recorded music, but this is a bit over the top.

This box set contains the songs of Utah Phillips: union ballads, protest songs, hobo tunes, and more folk songs with stories and morals. Utah introduces and explains each track, its history and meaning. This set is four CDs of masterful and moving storytelling from this living historian of the people. Here is entertainment; here is education on a compelling scale. Ratings are (1) = (5) www.outsight.mu
FOLK HAPPENINGS AT A GLANCE

Check out details by following the page references:

OGM: On-going Music - page 13
OGD: On-going Dance - page 16
SE: Special Events - page 28
Folk Happenings at a Glance

Sunday

July 30

1. Bluegrass (OGM)
2. Open Mike (OGM)
3. Scottish (OGD)
4. Irish (OGD)
5. Israeli (OGD)
6. International (OGD)

Monday

August 1

1. Bluegrass (OGM)
2. Open Mike (OGM)
3. Scottish (OGD)
4. Irish (OGD)
5. Israeli (OGD)
6. International (OGD)

Tuesday

August 2

1. Bluegrass (OGM)
2. Open Mike (OGM)
3. Scottish (OGD)
4. Irish (OGD)
5. Israeli (OGD)
6. International (OGD)

Wednesday

August 3

1. Bluegrass (OGM)
2. Open Mike (OGM)
3. Scottish (OGD)
4. Irish (OGD)
5. Israeli (OGD)
6. International (OGD)

Thursday

August 4

1. Bluegrass (OGM)
2. Open Mike (OGM)
3. Scottish (OGD)
4. Irish (OGD)
5. Israeli (OGD)
6. International (OGD)

Friday

August 5

1. Bluegrass (OGM)
2. Open Mike (OGM)
3. Scottish (OGD)
4. Irish (OGD)
5. Israeli (OGD)
6. International (OGD)

Saturday

August 6

1. Bluegrass (OGM)
2. Open Mike (OGM)
3. Scottish (OGD)
4. Irish (OGD)
5. Israeli (OGD)
6. International (OGD)

Check out details by following the page references:

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OGD: On-going Dance - page 16
SE: Special Events - page 28
**GODS OF OLD-TIME**

This is the first of a two-part series presenting a wide variety of old-time resources, such as sound recordings, websites, performance/instructional videos, books, and instrument-makers. The first part, Gods of Old-Time, will list some available CD reissues of commercial 78 recordings and field recordings of traditional musicians. These recordings can give us a glimpse into what homegrown American music sounded like before mass media and marketing caused the musical landscape to mutate. On the flipside you'll hear traditional artists who, inspired by the popular music of their time, began to experiment with new sounds and techniques. These artistic inventions, working in concert with the old tunes, gave birth to some of the greatest recordings of all time. (Part two, The Preservers of Old-Time, will focus on the newer generation of old-time musicians that are currently recording, teaching, innovating, and competing in old-time contests.)

**RECORDINGS**

Watson Family – The Doc Watson Family, Smithsonian Folkways
Kentucky Mountain Music (7-CD box set) – Various Artists, Yazoo
Alamont – Black Stringband Music, Rounder
Dewey Home – The Roan Mountain Hillhoppers, Ivy Creek
Puncheens Camps – Clyde Davenport, Berea College
The Harry Smith Anthology of American Folk Music – Various, Smithsonian
Freight Train & Other North Carolina Folk Songs and Tunes – Elizabeth Cotten, Smithsonian
Echoes of the Quarries, Volume 1 & 2 – Various, County
Black Banjo Songsters of North Carolina and Virginia – Various, Smithsonian
The North Carolina Banjo Collection – Various, Rounder
Times Ain’t Like They Used To Be, Vol. 1-8 – Various, Yazoo
The Legacy of Tommy Jarrell, Volumes 1-4 – Tommy Jarrell, County
Old Time Fiddle Tunes and Songs from North Georgia – The Skillet Lickers, County
Records Old Time Songs from 1925-1930 – Charlie Poole, County
Stop and Listen – The Mississippi Sheiks, Yazoo
Old Time Texas Fiddler 1922-1929 – Eck Robertson, County
Skillet Fork: The Southern Illinois Fiddles of Mel Durham – Mel Durham, VVEST-DVD13003, VVEST-DVD13016, VVEST-DVD13037
American Fiddle Tunes – Various, Rounder
Family Tradition – Joe Thompson, Rounder
Traditions of a West Virginia Family & Friends – The Hammons Family, Rounder Select
High Atmosphere – Various, Rounder
Old-Time String Band – Camp Creek Boys, County
Home Recordings 1941-1942 – John Salyer, Berea College
Country Blues: Complete Early Recordings – Dock Boggs, Revenant Records
On the Banks of a Lonely River – Darby & Tarlton, Rebel
Kitty Puss: Old-Time Fiddle Music from Kentucky – Buddy Thomas, Rounder
Marvin Martin – Marvin Martin, Field Records Collective
Forked Deer Vol. 1 & 2 – Ed Haley, Rebel
Black Appalachia: String Bands, Songsters And Hoedowns – Various, Rounder
Blue Ridge Legacy – Hobart Smith, Rounder
Clearsummer Banjo, Vol. 1-3 – Various, County
Traditional Fiddle Music of Kentucky, Vol. 1 & 2 – Various, Rounder
The Edden Hammons Collection, Volume 1 & 2 – Edden Hammons
Close To Home: Old Time Music From Mike Seeger’s Collection 1952-1967 – Various, Smithsonian
Go Long Mule – Uncle Dave Macon, County

**WEBSITES**

The Old-Time Music Home Page - www.oldtimeaudio.com
Roots of American Fiddle Music - www.100tunes.com
Mike Seeger’s Website - mikeseeger.info
Old Time Kentucky Fiddler Clyde Davenport - www.stg.brown.edu/projects/davenport/CLYDE_DAVENPORT.html
Old-Time Herald - www.oldtimemerchandl.org
Digital Library of Appalachia - www.aca-dla.org
County Sales - www.countysales.com
Elderly Instruments - www.elderly.com
Folk Music Index, useful index for traditional fiddle tunes - www.folkbible.org/folkin dex
WeenieCampbell.com, devoted to old-time country blues - www.weeniecampbell.com/rambo
Yazoo Records - www.yazoorecords.com
Document Records - www.document-records.com
North American Tradition
Series - www.rounder.com/sagas/nat
Sugar in the Gourd - internet streaming old-time music, www.sugarinthegourd.com
Field Recorders’ Collective - www.traditional-music.com

**DVD/VIDEO**

Legends of Old Time Music - Features performances by Pete Steele, Tommy Jarrell, The Walker Family, Jean & Edna Ritchie, Sam McGee, Doc Watson, and more. VEST-DVD31026
Sproat Wings and Fly – Tommy Jarrell, Flower Films 111
Alan Lomax’s American Patchwork- Appalachian Journey: From the Original Ballad of Tom Dooley to the Origins of Bluegrass, VEST-V13079
Melvin Wine: Old Time Music Maker by Robert S. Boles
Shady Grove - Old time music from N. Carolina, Virginia, and Kentucky featuring Billie Snow, rare footage of Dock Boggs and more, VEST-DVD31071 Traditional Music Classics - Doc Watson, Billie Snow, Roscoe Holcomb, and Buell Kazee, YAZ-DVD316
Legends of Traditional Fingerstyle Guitar - Merle Travis, Elizabeth Cotten, Mance Lipscomb, Brownie McGhee, Doc & Merle Watson, Rev. Gary Davis, and more, VEST-DVD31003
Legends of Country Blues Guitar, Vol. 1, 2, & 3 – Mississippi John Hurt, Son House, Reverend Gary Davis, Big Bill Broonzy, Mance Lipscomb, and more, VEST-DVD31303, VEST-DVD31306, VEST-DVD31307
Shades of Clyde – Clyde Davenport, Cedar Grade 007

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.
Once upon a time, a long time ago, there was another band flying over the Summertime Festival. It was a young band and lived on the elegant, pastoral grounds of Greystone Mansion. It was called the DixieFem Folk Band, a group that mixed the music of instruments and the glad voices of happy people. It was perfect. It needed nothing more.

It is six years old today. On its sixth birthday, it moved to Cal State Northridge. Festival goers, using to locate workshops and sight sound, couldn’t always find the classrooms. The Festival’s mother, Elaine Weissman, said, “I think we need a sign maker!” We were feeling a little like hanging banners. No sooner did Elaine see the new stage and the banner makers gleefully decorated their branches. There were dozens of light poles, and brilliant Renaissance men emerged from the throng to devise ways of hanging banners on them. Each era has put its sign makers. Springtime became a time of frantic sewing and last minute all-nighters, but Elaine got every banner she’d promised, for no one would dream of disappointing her.

One year a donation came in at the last minute but the banner makers were up to their ears in fabric and couldn’t help. Elaine stood by her door at the end of a house concert and asked each departing guest “Could you sew me a banner?” Finally a busy volunteer heard Elaine’s desperation and said, “I’m so sorry, Elaine, I’d help, but I can’t sew.”

Elaine’s despair vanished. “Thank you,” she said, “You’ve saved my life.” Before the woman could even say “huh?” Elaine added, “Can you glue?” “I suppose so,” the volunteer said, and went home to produce one of our brightest and liveliest banners. That was so typical of Elaine. A sincere offer of help made the two of you a team and a team can do the impossible. Such a woman was—so lovable, so bright, so quick, so thrilled by the things people did for her. May the beautiful Festival banners wave long and joyfully for Elaine Weissman!

Valerie Cooley is living in Coos Bay, Oregon. When she’s not playing with her beautiful and brilliant young granddaughters, she paddles her kayak on the bay, watches birds, gardens, and contra dances once a month.

Contracted from page 1

The result makes music sound groovy and unprocessed with any overt gimmicks or additions. The folk is infused with the haunts, with the grit of the band’s mentors. These senior musicians are credited with keeping the music alive and are the face of the intense westernization that occurred so recently in Poland. We hear short “roots” clips from these esteemed guests from which the band’s performance sprouts. One might call this approach bio-techno, as techno techniques and effects are applied to live acoustic music.

Warsaw Village Band presents their music in a refreshing way, unfurled by folk revival ideas of other decades and generations. With the industrial revolution came power and a kind of homogenization to all folk culture. Folklore and folk music began to disappear and as this happened, revivalists set to work to preserve the music so that it would not be lost forever. Each era has put its unique stamp on the music it sought to revive and preserve.

You can hear this in the music of the American and British Isles folk revival of the 50’s and ‘60’s, when the rough edges of these folk tradi- tions were smoothed out and turned into something more marketable to the average listener. The result was infused with the grit of the band’s mentors. These senior musicians are credited with keeping the music alive and are the face of the intense westernization that occurred so recently in Poland. We hear short “roots” clips from these esteemed guests from which the band’s performance sprouts. One might call this approach bio-techno, as techno techniques and effects are applied to live acoustic music.

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THE ALAN LOMAX ARCHIVE GOES ONLINE

The Alan Lomax Archive is pleased to announce the culmination of its seven-year effort to preserve and disseminate the work of one of the 20th century’s foremost folklorists and musicologists, Alan Lomax. Lomax recorded and nurtured the careers of Lead Belly, Woody Guthrie, Muddy Waters, and other legends; his recordings of many obscure artists have been featured in works such as O Brother Where Art Thou? Alan Lomax believed in a principle he called “cultural equity,” the need for all cultures to be equally represented in the media and in the classroom. Through years of comparative research on folk song style, he drew a convincing parallel between natural and cultural ecology which underscores the importance of preserving our intangible oral heritage.

Alan Lomax thought it was important to return traditions to their home sources and artists, a strategy he called “cultural feedback.” In that spirit, on April 22, 2005 The Alan Lomax Database went online; also, over the following ten months, the Association for Cultural Equity, which administers the Alan Lomax Archive, will be sending digital copies of audio and video recordings and photographs by Alan Lomax to a number of libraries and archives in North America, Africa, South and Central America, Asia, Australia, and Europe so that they will be available locally to people in or from the regions in which they were originally made.

The Alan Lomax Database, www.lomaxarchive.com, is a multimedia catalog of the audio and video recordings and photographs made by Alan Lomax from 1946–1994, as well as recordings made by few of his colleagues. It will also ultimately include some of the older collections of audio recordings made by Lomax on behalf of the Library of Congress, which have been transferred and remastered using cutting-edge technology. Developed and built by personnel and consultants of the Alan Lomax Archive, the Database features 25 collections and thousands of recordings, which have been preserved, digitized, and cataloged over the past several years with funds from the Rock, Concordia, Rockefeller, Richmond, and Grammy foundations, the Save America’s Treasures Program, and the National Endowment for the Arts, among others.

The Alan Lomax Database is designed to be an inclusive record of Lomax’s recordings of music and the spoken word; it thus documents all recordings, including interrupted tracks and false starts. It can be searched by performer, song title, geography, culture, genre, subject, instrument, collection, session, and recording date. Users can print out single-page reports of their search results. Photographs taken by Lomax during the field trips are also available in a separate searchable catalog. Every audio recording in the catalog can be heard in samples of forty seconds (music, spoken word) to two minutes (radio shows, discussions, lectures).

The first seven collections to go online are:

- Wood downloaded an example of Mrs. De Franco’s favorite genre, a villanelle called Tears of Blood.
- Texas Gladden & Hobar t downloaded an example of Mrs. De Franco’s favorite genre, a villanelle called Tears of Blood.
- Alan’s daughter, Anna Wood, turned on a laptop recently at the home of an old friend, diminutive Raffaella De Franco, longtime immigrant from Calabria. Thirty years before, she and some of her co-villagers recorded songs for Dr. Wood, which were eventually published on an LP by Folkways. A few seconds after logging on to Smithsonian Folkways new Globalsounds site, Wood downloaded an example of Mrs. De Franco’s favorite genre, a villanelle called Tears of Blood. The overlapping polyphony, high-pitched drone and exquisite lyric texts, mournful yet wild, came from the near-untamed backwoods of the Apennines, where the tape recorder could once have been a five-watt radio. The overlapping polyphony, high-pitched drone and exquisite lyric texts, mournful yet wild, came from the near-untamed backwoods of the Apennines, where the tape recorder could once have been a five-watt radio.
- “The whole world can hear them now,” was Wood’s answer. Soon, Mrs. De Franco will be able to go to the Smithsonian Folkways new Globalsounds site, and browse through its collections of Calabrian, Abruzzese, Genoese, Neapolitan, Sicilian, and Georgia Sea Island songs, whose styles she had grown to love after being exposed to them in the US. The first seven collections to go online are: Texas Gladden & Hobart Smith 1949; Calypso Concert 1949; Mississippi Prison Recordings 1947 and 1948; in the Texas Gladden & Hobar t; The Southern Journey US 1956 and 1960; Hally Wood 1960; and Central Park Concert 1965.

DISSEMINATION “BLITZ”

The Alan Lomax Archive is also in the process of donating digital copies of selected collections to some 20 libraries and archives in the U.S. and abroad, largely in the regions in which the recordings were made. Donation agreements have been signed with fifteen of these institutions. By the end of 2005, a total of 4,500 hours of audio recordings and 2,014 hours of video recordings will have been disseminated.

Recipient institutions include: the Adams Music Research Institute of Center for Black Music Research, St. Thomas; the Alabama Center for Traditional Culture, Montgomery; the Ruby Pickens Tartt Collection at the University of Western Southern Louisiana; the Library of American History and Culture, College of Charleston, Charleston; the Blue Ridge Institute and Museum, Ferrum College, Virginia; the Ethnomusicology Archives at the University of California at Los Angeles; the Folk Research Centre, St. Lucia, West Indies; the Hunter College Libraries, Hunter College, New York; the Bizzi Cultural Archive, Bizzi, Spain; the Irish Traditional Music Archive, Dublin; Mediatheque Caraibe, Guadeloupe; the Robinson Library, Newcastle University, UK; the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, Glasgow; the School of Scottish Studies, University of Edinburgh, UK; The Blues Archive, University of Mississippi Library, Oxford; The Hogan Jazz Archive, Tulane University, New Orleans; the Music Library of the Performing Arts Library, New York Public Library; The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York Public Library; and the University of Louisiana at Lafayette.

In 2004, the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress acquired Alan Lomax’s original recordings and papers, bringing seven decades of his work together under one roof. The Association of Cultural Equity and the Alan Lomax Archive in New York continue to administer and disseminate the work of Alan Lomax.

The Alan Lomax Collection on Rounder Records is a multi-series, 100+ CD collection of folk music and narrative drawn from Alan Lomax’s international field recordings. For more information go to www.rounder.com/series/lomax alan

In FolkWorks we have often mentioned/reviewed CDs from the Rounder collection. You can be assured that every one is exceptional and we recommend them without reservation. You can also visit www.alan-lomax.com for more information about the Alan Lomax Archive and the Association for Cultural Equity.
When I moved to California in the early fifties, my best friend was a fun-loving ball of fire named Leah. She worked with teenagers at the Westside Jewish Community Center till ten at night, after which she would stop by our house and wake up my 14 month old baby just to hear his rendition of "Asa ANIMOMO!" One day he told her, "Asa ELEEFANT" and she never woke him up again.

Leah liked the songs I wrote and told her brother André about me, who told his music composition teacher about me and arranged for me to study with him.

Leah died of cancer two years later, leaving a year old baby girl, her brother, André Previn, and a broken-hearted best friend. One of her many gifts to me was my music teacher, Mario Castelnuovo Tedesco.

You have to know that I knocked on the door of this charming little melody, and when I would bring them to Mario, he would always praise my efforts and then, very gently change a note here, change the direction of a contrapuntal line there (or create one), and I would sit at the piano, amazed at the transformation of my little melody. He told me my strength was in writing melodies. One day he asked me if I knew the rules of Bach harmony and counterpoint. Each week he would give me an eight bar melody and and dignitaries that he was returning to Italy under much friendlier conditions than those which had necessitated his departure in 1939, when he and his family were forced to flee for their lives, from the Fascists. It was a gracious offer and I was quite overwhelmed.

Mario Castelnuovo Tedesco, my beloved friend and teacher has been gone many years. I hear his music more and more on the radio and occasionally it is performed live; though not often enough. When my husband, sculptor Stan Schwartz, and I were married five years ago, there was music by Leon Levi, played by Disney Hall organist Director Phil Smith, and Cantor Steve Puzarne sang a wedding song in Hebrew by Mario Castelnuovo Tedesco. As we stood beneath the Chupa, I could almost hear Mario's voice, and see his dear face! I just hope that Mario, up there in Music Heaven, isn't reading this column and whispering to the nearest angel, "Isn't this terribly dull?!"

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

Celebrate the cultural and historical diversity of the music of North America at this daylong festival, featuring outstanding live performances, an energizing musical workshop for the whole body, and hands-on family art projects.

**Louise Taylor**
Folk singer/songwriter and guitarist whose voice has been hailed by reviewers as smoky, buttery, and rich. Her vivid and poetic lyrics are complemented by her Appalachian, country blues, rock, jazz, and Celtic influences, creating for the listener an emotionally resonant and sonically fascinating musical universe.

“She tugs the listener as surely as Ariadne held the string in the labyrinth.”
—Boston Herald

**Richard Greene and the Brothers Barton, with Jeff Pekarek**
Bluegrass

Grammy-winning fiddler Richard Greene joins forces with the brilliant bluegrass duo Paul and Loren Barton and master bassist Jeff Pekarek. Together they deliver fresh readings of old-time classic fiddle music and exciting original compositions.

“With Richard Greene you get the complete bluegrass package: great technique, daring invention, sensitivity to the music’s inner soul, and a fiery presentation.”
—Bluegrass Unlimited

**The Holmes Brothers**
Gospel/Blues/Soul

For more than twenty-five years, the Holmes Brothers—featuring bassist Sherman Holmes, guitarist and keyboardist Wendell Holmes, and drummer Popsy Dixon—have been bringing their brand of gospel/blues/soul-inflected music to audiences around the world. With heartfelt passion, they deliver breathtaking harmonies and inspired musicianship.

“The undoubted masters of blue-based American root music.”
—Chicago Tribune

**Geno Delafose and French Rockin’ Boogie**
Zydeco

The son of influential zydeco accordionist John Delafose, worldwide festival favorite Geno Delafose expertly carries on his father’s musical legacy. Backed by his band, French Rockin’ Boogie, Delafose blends the traditional sounds of zydeco with the thrill of modern dance music.

“One of zydeco’s rising young stars.”
—CBS Saturday Morning News

**Crosspulse Body Music Workshops**

2:45–3:30 p.m. and 4:20–5:00 p.m.

Ages 7 and up with an adult

Play fun, funky original and traditional rhythms on the oldest instrument on the planet, the human body. Percussionist and rhythm dancer Keith Terry teaches participants to use their hands, palms, fingers, feet, belly, cheeks, and voice to generate a symphony of sound. Wear comfortable clothing and clean sneakers or jazz shoes.

**Gallery Talk**

**America and the Pursuit of Liberty**
2:30 p.m.

This gallery talk explores how, in struggling to survive in a new land, Jewish immigrants created opportunity and contributed to the economic, social, political, and educational development of America from the late 1800s to the early 1900s.

**Balloon Flutes**

Drop in anytime, 2:00–6:00 p.m.

Create a wild-sounding flute with artist Robert S. Hilton. Combine plastic pipes, colorful balloons, and decorations to make an instrument that changes pitch with the touch of a finger.

**Bits-and-Pieces Memoryware**

Drop in anytime, 2:00–6:00 p.m.

Assemble a miniature wall hanging inspired by the early-1900s American folk craft of memoryware with artist and art educator Marta Feinstein. Bring a small lightweight memento—a snapshot, a piece of fanciful jewelry, even a favorite old button—to incorporate in your artwork.

**Tickets**

$15 General
$10 Members
$5 Students Ages 12–23
Children under 12 are free
Includes admission to all exhibitions
Tickets: (866) 468-3399 or www.ticketweb.com

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N othing in this column is meant to con-
stitute legal advice. If you wish to act
on anything discussed in this article,
please consult a qualified legal profes-
sional. I now have a new website, www.gee4law.com, as well as a new email address: rgee@gee4law.com.

I’m setting up a website to promote my
music. What are the legal issues?

There are a number of legal issues that a mu-
cian will confront when establishing a website for
his or her music.

Initially, the question is your website’s domain
name. If it consists of simply your name, and that
domain is available, then there are probably no legal issues involved.

If the proposed domain name is not your own name, but rather one such as your band’s name, legal issues arise. For example, even if your preferred domain name is available for registration, the name you choose may already be a registered trademark. If so, your band’s use of the name on a website may infringe on the rights of the trademark owner or may subject you to a claim of “cyber squatting.”

Assuming, however, that this is not the case, the next question is what will you put on the website? Many musicians today use the World Wide Web as an advertising medium, full of downloadable samples of their music, links to retail sites where their albums can be purchased, videos, mailing lists and press kits. How you use your website will depend mostly on your goals.

Although not required under the 1976 Copyright Act, it is still a good idea to let the web world know that you claim copyright on your works. Make sure any stock photographs or clip art are duly licensed. If you are using the works of any individual artist or photographer, make sure to get a written license allowing use of the work on the website. Any band or personal

logo should bear either the “®” symbol or the “®” symbol, respectively, on whether the logo is an unregistered or registered trademark.

If your music consists of a song, Where, if you got a stock photo, the website will need to get the permis-
sion of the author’s publisher and give proper credit as in the liner notes for an album. If your site includes features such as internet radio, how you handle the downloading of the song may raise royalty issues under the Digital Millennium Act.

These are only some of the issues that can arise from the musician’s com-
mmercial use of the web. While the web has obvious commercial appeal, it operates in the same legal world as any business enterprise. Understanding this to the planning of your website

Richard Gee is an attorney specializing in the entertainment industry and is a

Celtic and acoustic singer, guitarist, songwriter, arranger and music producer

for his many fans. If you didn’t catch his recent interview on NPR radio with Melissa Block, it’s worth a visit to NPR’s archives to hear it. My favorite quote: “I can write on a steering wheel as well as I can write on a guitar. Sometimes a guitar is—imposing. It kind of means ‘yes, I am writing a song.’ Where, if you got a stock photo, you can be heard playing mostly Celtic music at small gatherings and

Christmas and found a rather melancholy tune with the intriguing title

For FolkLove, Linda Dewar is a singer and a player of various instruments with strings and

keys. She can be heard playing mostly Celtic music at small gatherings and

large festivals here and there in California. Her first solo CD is currently in

development, which means she’s thinking about it a lot and will start doing

something about it real soon.

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something about it real soon.

Know any others? Email them to me at brigatha@earthlink.net and I’ll include some of the best in future editions of this column.

And speaking of The Mudcat Cafe, if you’re not already aware of this great internet resource for folk and trad music, then you may want to pay it a visit at www.mudcat.org. The Digital Trad section contains lyrics for hundreds of folk and folk-ish songs. The Forum is one of the best managed on the web, and it’s a great source of information about playing, getting gigs, finding the best places to hear good music, and anything else related to tradi-
tional and folk music. You can “lurk” without ever signing on and partici-
pating, or you can join the group (no fee, and no spam) and enter into the exchange.

Last year, fans of Mary Travers (of Peter, Paul and) were saddened by the

announcement that she would be stepping down from her band. Her first solo CD is currently in

development, which means she’s thinking about it a lot and will start doing

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NOT ALL KATTYWOMPUS

By Brooke Alberts

When fellow FolkWorks writer and board member Mimi Tanaka mentioned that I might like to meet “the Dollmaker People from Monrovia,” I was intrigued, particularly when I heard that they also dealt in music, dance, education, recording and publishing all with folk arts as the axis. I met with Jennifer Ranger in her family store on Myrtle in Old Town, Monrovia (a street so evocative of the 1950s that it was used as the setting for parts of the movie Back To The Future) which is separated into the doll-oriented sector in front and the music teaching studio in the back. She ushered me to a splendidly comfortable black leather wingback chair where I was moved to take out my pen and notebook and ask her, “...and how did this madness first come upon you?”

Jennifer Ranger had been a professional belly dancer since the age of seventeen, and traveled with the Gay Chosokobean Revue, an Armenian dance troupe. After that, she performed at clubs and cabarets and taught for many years at the West Covina YWCA, and the Inglewood and Pasadena YMCAs, among other places. Having married and had children and no longer touring and performing as much she became interested in learning to play the piano. Her personal philosophy includes Not Doing Things Halfway (so as to have no regrets), and putting time and effort into her piano studies. A few years later when the need for a church pianist came up, she was able to step in, beginning her publicly musical life.

When Jennifer’s children were roughly 10 and 15 the possibility of opening a business arose. While considering what sort of business it might be, her cousin, Sharon Howard (a well-known doll artist) suggested a doll store. Her immediate reaction (not being initially interested in dolls) was lukewarm, but the notion of having a store in Old Town, Monrovia was appealing. “The people in the stores in Old Town get to talk to people all day, and make connections.” Having decided that this should be a family run business, the Ranger adopted a stated policy that “If Anything Is Wrong, Fix It.” There is a huge amount of pressure in entering any enterprise with one’s family, and the ups and downs of retail can be stressful. Luckily having the store, she says, has only strengthened their familial bonds.

A half-way portion of the store includes collectable dolls, Raggedy Anne dolls, art dolls, a series of American Presidents (some with actual sound clips of their voices), fashion dolls, handmade clothing for the Americas, Girl dolls, shoes, clothing, and doll making accessories and equipment, and art dolls by Shelly Niemerow. Jennifer and her sister are also commercial designers, involved in designing toys (a Batman figure from the first movie and “The Jester Who Lost His Jingle” doll from the book of the same name) doll clothes, and logos (such as the green-haired girl on the PBS commercials).

The Dollmakers had been known ten years ago as the only recommended doll store in Southern California, and after a feature about their doll repair services aired on CNN they were inundated with nationwide business. They were good at what they did, and handled a tremendous amount of doll repairs, but after Jennifer survived a health crisis, they decided that it would be best to begin teaching people how to do repairs themselves. They still teach doll repair in addition to doll making with Super Sculpey and clay.

One day while working in the store Jennifer started playing her hammered dulcimer, hoping she wouldn’t be disturbing the customers. Quite on the contrary, people came up to her saying, “Oh! That music makes me feel so happy! What is it?” She soon began taking her hammered dulcimer out onto the sidewalk and people responded positively. “Music is communication,” she says. “I like to look people in the eyes to see if there’s a friend smiling back.” People started asking if she taught classes, and she began to teach hammered dulcimer, mountain dulcimer, finger cymbals (zils), ukulele, Appalachian style autoharp, and her daughter teaches violin. At The Dollmakers’ original location on Lemon Ave. there was no room for it, but in the current location at 412 S. Myrtle she was able to set up a teaching studio in the back of the shop.

On Fridays from March to December, Old Town Monrovia has a “Family Festival” from 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm, and from 8:00 to 10:00 pm in front of The Dollmakers their family band, Kattywompus String Band, has a free concert and jam. This began when Jennifer would set up her hammered dulcimer on the sidewalk and play. Her daughter was learning the violin and she started to play along with her. Her son thought it looked like fun, so he started to play mountain dulcimer to join in. Now her niece (on guitar) and nephew (guitar, electric and acoustic bass, doumbek and clarinet) also play with the band.

There are articles on mountain and hammered dulcimer, music theory, belly dance, resources (including clubs, events and news), and a section of tunes to learn. For the next issue there will be articles on henna painting techniques by a well-known practitioner, and an article by a woman who studied Gawazi or the traditional Arabic song describing merchant trade along the old caravan routes from India to China. “Syncap8 Sound Lab:” The Kattywompus Experience, (traditional American and Celtic and including a Belly Dance Routine), Pleasure Journey: An Eclectic Blend of Life’s Music, (which has a mix similar to the above as well as some hymns), and a CD of “traditional and international kid-friendly music called The Ants Go Marching. The latter arose from Jennifer’s teaching music to first- through third-grade students at Monroe Elementary School.

My customers have learned to expect surprises,” says Jennifer, and that is part of what has helped to build community goodwill around The Dollmakers and their family enterprises. As they sing in Tafta Hindy (“a traditional Arabic song describing merchant trade along the old caravan routes from India to China” on The Ants Go Marching), “There’s enough for everyone.”

The Dollmakers: 412 S. Myrtle Avenue, Monrovia, CA 91016 626-357-1691 www.mydollmakers.com
Kattywompus String Band: www.kattywompus.bigstep.com toll-free 877-365-5744
Syncap8 Sound Lab: syncap8@earthlink.net Studio published by The Studio (at the Dollmakers address). Subscriptions are $22/year.

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

Brooke Alberts
Eric: I have the strange circumstance of having five eleven-year-olds, two boys and three girls. If you have multiples already, don’t go to the Mothers of Twins Club looking for a date. We do have five eleven-year-olds. And the five of them are a new band that’s been seen by the public very little. They’re called Furlow, and they sing *Walking on a Wire*. It’s spectacular. Three girls singing up front, and two boys singing in the back, and me playing guitar with ’em. It’s great.

LW: One of the things that just amazes me is how much you tour. Granted, everybody does that in this business to make a living, but your never ending ‘Oh-Five Live’ Tour is truly nationwide. Everything from Annapolis with the Cowboy Junkies to headlining the Kerrville Folk Festival. Then, next January, there’s your eighth annual cruise to Grand Cayman and Cozumel. Tell us what that’s like.

Dan: That is a complete kick. We spend five days on a Carnival Cruise ship. We’re kind of a private tour group inside a ship. Usually about a hundred of our fans come. We eat dinner in the same place at the same time. We usually hang out in the evenings. We’ll spend days sitting by the pool, we do shore excursions together. You wind up spending real human time with people, which is one of the things that we can’t do touring. We’ll spend ten minutes with them and it’s over. This way, we get to spend a concentrated amount of time, and become friends with the people that support what we do. It’s real gratifying, and it’s a growing trend. The particular group that does this, we were their first experiment, back in autumn of 1998.

Eric: It’s called Fan Club Cruises.

Dan: Fanclubcruises.com, and we were their first one. They’ve now done like thirty of these things. It’s a growing trend, because of the fact that high-end media doesn’t really allow for mid-level and small-level groups to really hit critical mass, artists are finding new ways to communicate with their people, and this is one of them. It’s been a lot of fun. It’s January 2nd through 7th, 2006, five days and nights.

LW: Just recently, across Canada, was the annual folk music train in one direction, singer-songwriters, and then the cowboy music train going the other direction. There are some opportunities out there, despite the homogenized lowest-common-denominator of mass media. Eric: Right. Same kind of thing, exactly. We should check out that train.

Dan: You can always check our own web site, www.lowenav.com, and you’ll get information on anything else we’re up to.

The second part of the Lowen & Navarro interview in which they discuss how they began playing to folk crowds and how to get along as a duo will be published in the next issue.
One of Woody Guthrie’s minor gems is a reworking of the outlaw ballad, “Frisco Jim,” into a secular Jesus story. He put it to music, putting him in the context of an outlaw of his time. He takes the listener back two thousand years into Jesus’ world: Jesus Christ was a man/who traveled through the land/a carpenter true and brave/He said to the rich give your goods to the poor/too they laid Jesus Christ in his grave. Then the chorus completes the parallel with “Jesse James,” so instead of that dirty little coward they called Mr. Howard/had laid poor Jesse in his grave, Woody writes, That dirty little coward called Judas Iscariot/Has laid Jesus Christ in his grave. Then—after pulling you back into the world of 2,000 years ago—Woody reaches his great last verse, where he turns the premise of the song upon its head. This song, woefully written the way Bob Dylan once called, A Simple Twist of Fate. In effect, whoever wrote that substitute chorus, violated the most elemental rule of good storytelling: Did you create that substitute chorus, violated the most elemental rule of good story-telling: “Don’t give away the ending.” What do you make of it?

Ten years ago I wrote to Bob Dylan’s publisher to ask for permission to change one of Dylan’s songs, to substitute my lyrics for his on my new album. I got back a letter from Jeff Rosen, the head of his publishing company, who said in no uncertain terms that Mr. Dylan did not permit anyone to substitute their own words in the music to his songs. I quietly shelved my song idea and went back to writing my own songs—words and music—and worked hard to keep the ending of it.

What do you make of it?

In the songbook put together by his brother Michael Lomax’s Folk Works, Florence Reece asked that eloquent question—as bullets from deputy gun thugs were ricocheting off the walls of her Harlan County home, mind you—when her song was reprinted in Tom Glazer’s book Songs of Peace, Freedom and Protest. Will you be a scab or will you be a man? Florence Reece asked that question—no previous words had ever been written that put the words “lousy scab or will you be a man?” on the Almanac Singers classic recording Rise Up Singing.

In short, every text and recording—with one exception—of a definitive song of the American labor movement, a song written by a great woman as an earth-shaking challenge to anyone who has ever crossed a picket line, and an inspiration to everyone who has refused to cross a picket line, a song that has been used as the title for a modern book on the labor movement, a song that was further immortalized in Bob Dylan’s classic song of despair, Desolation Row, Florence Reece stood up bold and beautiful and powerful and said calmly asked once and for all time, “Will you be a scab or will you be a man?” That exception would be Rise Up Singing. Here, on page 260, Florence Reece is reduced to asking, Will you be a crummy scab or will you be all a hand? What do you make of it?

According to my first edition of Phil Ochs Songs, published in 1964, in the last verse he writes, Now the labor leader too. You would never find the same language in Tom Glazer’s Songs of Peace, Freedom and Protest, and in every other published source for the song, except for one—that would be Rise Up Singing, where the word “congressmen” is substituted for Phil Ochs’ word, “labor leaders.” You are left to assume that Phil Ochs wrote it. After all, it’s not going to cost a folk singer any bookings by criticizing Congress.

But to point your finger in the face of some of the very people who might actually be in your audience—well suddenly you’re not just preaching to the choir. Suddenly you’re not saying not just what your audience wants to hear, but what they need to know—the truth. That was Phil Ochs’ greatness as a songwriter—he was not afraid to speak truth to power and let the chips fall where they may. I would argue that what raises Phil Ochs’ song above the mass of protest songs is precisely his willingness to take on not just the “masters of war,” as Bob Dylan called them, but even those on the left with whom he was most intensely identified. Anyone can criticize Lyndon Johnson; it took real courage for Phil Ochs to take on the labor leaders too. You would never know from the front matter of the Ochs book that he even mentioned the name of John Lennon; he could not have imagined what Rise Up Singing would print in lieu of his dream of a universal “brotherhood of man.”

That with one politically correct bowdlerization someone ripped the heart out of Imagine, because the entire song slowly builds to a conclusion that Rise Up Singing’s version never realizes. “Nor folk with empty hands” adds nothing to the song, it only subtracts it; and what it subtracts is the internal logic—upon which the final line rests: “Imagine all the people living in peace.” That ideal of peace doesn’t come out of the blue for Lennon; it presupposes the ideal—that which makes peace pos-
Some might make of it that I overdraw the matter—they’re only songs, after all, not serious literature. If that is how you feel about songwriting then you shouldn’t care, but if you think of song as a form of literature, as I do, then you do care, and if you know that Russia’s greatest living author, Alexander Solzhenitsyn was exiled to a gulag in Siberia for what he wrote, if you care that John Steinbeck’s masterpiece, The Grapes of Wrath, was banned by the town council in that Southern town and the Great Depression thought as they were sitting around a campfire roasting marshmallows in 1975.

When I see John Lennon’s name on a song I want to know what great poet thought and said, not what some ideologues thought he should have said, or would have said if he had not been assassinated.

And when I see Sing Out’s name on a songbook I want to know that what is inside reflects every artist’s honest attempt to tell it like it is and give shape to the words and music to their best dreams, their deepest fears, and their permanent hopes, not some shortsighted, misguided desire to adhere to a temporary fashion in language or thought.

Is that too much to ask?

Russ 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.

**FAR-West ANNOUNCES “BEST OF THE WEST” AWARDS**

Folk Alliance Region West (FAR-West), the western regional chapter of the North American Folk Music & Dance Alliance (Folk Alliance), is pleased to announce the inaugural Best of the West Awards. These awards, one to a performer and one to a non-performer, will be given annually at the FAR-West conference. The criteria used in selecting the award recipients are:

1. Excellence in one’s craft.
2. Enduring presence in the western Folk community for a decade or more.
3. Embodies or builds upon Folk values and traditions.
4. (Non-performer): Promotes, nurtures, fosters, expands the audience and opportunities for folk music and musicians.

The recipients of the 2005 Best of the West Awards are:

**PERFORMER: LOWEN & NAVARRO**

Lowen & Navarro’s works have been recorded by artists as diverse as Pat Benatar (We Belong), The Bangles, The Four Tops, Dave Edmunds, The Temptations and a host of others. Out of their success as songwriters came the impetus for forming Lowen & Navarro: They wanted to sing humanity’s dignity and frailty, to examine life’s losses and lessons. Their songs are all conveyed with an urgency and immediacy that is the hallmark of their commitment to their music and their audience.

**NON-PERFORMER: ROZ & HOWARD LARMAN**

Since 1970 Roz & Howard Larmar have hosted and produced the radio program Folkscene, a program of traditional and contemporary music. The program features live music, interviews, remote recordings and the finest in recorded music. In 35 years of broadcasting, Folkscene has featured over 3,000 musicians. Some of the performers who have been featured on the program are Randy Newman, The Chieftains, Ricky Skaggs, Tom Waits, Jennifer Warnes, Pete Seeger, Shawn Colvin, Richard Thompson, Iris Dement, Vince Gill, Jackson Browne and Willie Nelson. Folkscene can presently be heard on KPTK Los Angeles; WUMB Boston; KPFZ Lucerne, CA; WYOU Virginia Beach, VA; and in New Zealand: Plains FM Christchurch; Fresh FM Nelson and Radio Southland, Invercargill.

The awards will be presented during the 2005 FAR-West conference at the Warner Center Marriott Hotel, Woodland Hills, CA, on Saturday, October 29, during the noon luncheon. For further conference information see our web site at www.far-west.org.
FOLKWORKS AS OF MAY, 2005

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Kathy Qualey

PATRON

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Frida & Bob Brown
Christa Burch

David & Jennifer DeZee
Ron Young/Linda Dewar
Steve Dunon
Bonita Eidelberg
Kay & Cliff Gilpatrick
Roger Goodwyn/Logan White
Liza Gwin
Don & Holly Kiger
Chris Grabe
Alea Hancek
Sharon Keyser
Sheila Mann
Nancy MacMillan
Frannie Marr
Mary Anne McCarthy
Russ & Julie Parrish
Tom & Melinda Peters
Steve Peterssewski/Kelli Sager
Santa Monica Folk Music Club
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Elaine & Clark Weisman

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Doug Brown
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Janet Cornwell
Alan & Margaret Davis
Lisa Davis
Winfred Davis
Enrico Del Zotto
Louise Dobbs
Mary Dolinski
Lawrence Dunn
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Jay Felt
Brian McKinlon
Teressa McNeil MacLean
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Gitta Morris/Gee Martin
Ray Mayres
Judy & Jay Messinger
Gretchen & Chris Naticchia
Melanie Nolley
Noma Nordstrom
Dave Ogden
Gabrielle O’Neill
Stephen & Susan Parker
Peter & Priscilla Parrish
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Lenny Potash
Matthews & Reece
Ron Rice
Suzie Redmond
King Reilly
Tom Schuol
Yatika Shah-Rais
Diane Sherman
Miriam & Jim Sinius
Anne Silver
Timothy Taylor
Mimi Tanaka
Barry Tavlin
Dong Thomas
Vivian Vinberg
Ken Waldman
Joseph E. Wack
Donald Wasson
John Wygonski/Mary Cyran

SPECIAL EVENTS

continued from page 28

FRIDAY AUGUST 5

$80 – Late Night

$40 – Advance

$50 – Front Row

$30 – Student/Small Groups

$15 – Children under 12/Non-Students/Colleges

FRIDAY AUGUST 6

$40 – Advance

$60 – Front Row

$15 – Children under 12/Non-Students/Colleges

SATURDAY AUGUST 7

$40 – Advance

$60 – Front Row

$15 – Children under 12/Non-Students/Colleges

FRIDAY AUGUST 12

$40 – Advance

$60 – Front Row

$15 – Children under 12/Non-Students/Colleges

SATURDAY AUGUST 19

$40 – Advance

$60 – Front Row

$15 – Children under 12/Non-Students/Colleges

FRIDAY AUGUST 26

$40 – Advance

$60 – Front Row

$15 – Children under 12/Non-Students/Colleges

SATURDAY AUGUST 27

$40 – Advance

$60 – Front Row

$15 – Children under 12/Non-Students/Colleges

SUNDAY AUGUST 28

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$60 – Front Row

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11:00am  THE HALO BULB FESTIVAL
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11:00am  SEE LITTLE HOUSE ON THE PRAIRIE
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11:00am  PLANETARIUM
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FRIDAY JULY 2
11:00am  THE LIVING TRADITION
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11:00am  CENTER POW WOW
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310-396-6007 • www.skirball.org

11:00am  FOWLER MUSEUM COURTYARD CONCERTS
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11:00am  BOSTON COURT
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11:00am  BEAN TOWN
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11:00am  POP ECHO
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