In the Kirundi language of Burundi, the words for drum and king are the same.

It was near the end of Peter Gabriel’s set at the WOMAD Festival on September 18, 1993, in Dominguez Hills, California, where I, along with thousands of others, had gathered to sample sounds from some of the world’s finest musicians. There was a sudden prolonged silence in the middle of a song. For a moment I wondered if there were technical difficulties on stage. Then I heard it. At first a low rumble from the back of the stage, it grew stronger and stronger until it thundered in my eardrums. Then, as the audience watched in amazement, a line of men began to appear on stage, swaying from side to side, with enormous barrel-shaped drums balanced precariously on their heads. Without missing a beat, the drums were lowered to the ground in a large semi-circle, and one-by-one each drummer took turns ferociously pounding the largest, most-colorful drum placed in the center.

It was my first introduction to the Royal Drummers of Burundi.

In Africa, drums are much more than rhythm. Drums are life. Each drum, rhythm, and movement of the drummers can be symbolic—imitating language, birds, and animals, representing agriculture, fertility, regeneration, royalty, and commenting on events in everyday life. The layers of rhythm are interconnected, representing the communal fabric of African society. Yet this music and society allows space for individualism and the improvisational freedom to create a unique moment never to be repeated exactly the same way again. In my travels to study music in Senegal and Zimbabwe, the depth...
FolkWorks
November-December 2006

EDITORIAL

Hi Folks.

Can you believe it was already the end of 2006? Where did the year go? At the beginning of the year, we began a new special feature set at the Craft and Folk Art Museum. It has been a great series with terrific performers and wonderful audiences. We did find that, while the concept of having concerts in an intimate museum space seemed ideal, in reality, it was a challenge for us and the museum staff.

As this season and series comes to an end, we would like to thank all who made it possible, particularly the volunteers who shlepped chairs, setup sound and lighting and prepared the refreshments. We want to thank all the musicians and the museum staff.

As the year comes to an end, some of the writers and friends have put together their “TOP TEN” lists. Perhaps it will inspire you to purchase recordings of their favorite artists, either for yourself or as gifts for friends. It is a time for sharing and rejoicing.

Speaking of sharing, a couple of the best technological things that have come to our attention are YouTube (www.youtube.com) and Google Videos (www.google.com). We first discovered YouTube while surfing the web the day after the Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young concert. Do you know that you can see video footage of CSNY as a group or as individuals from concerts 30 years ago. It’s incredible. There are a huge variety of videos available for viewing. There is footage of the young Bob Dylan. There is even footage of old 1950s square dancing from Bob Osgood’s Sets in Order. The 15 minute clip brings you back to a time when Square Dancing was an integral part of poplar culture. An amusing clip, showing how popular Square Dancing was, is a “campy” Lucky Strike commercial with cigarettes doing a square dance. Check it out.

As we march into the holiday season, it is easy to get wrapped up in its commercial nature. Instead, in the folk spirit, think outside the box. Use materials found around the house and create your gifts from scratch. It might not be as cool as giving someone an iPod but your friends and family will really appreciate it. Or cook something different. Our newest writer, Michael Macheret has a new food column. His first exploration includes food of the season from around the world. If this interests you, go to your computer and find a new recipe or take a cooking class. There are a few around town. And, when you are thinking of what to give, think of FolkWorks. Give a gift of a FolkWorks membership (see Page 27).

From all of us at FolkWorks, we wish you all a happy Chasikwanukah.

———

BY LEDA & STEVE SHAPIRO

FolkWorks is supported in part by Los Angeles City Department of Cultural Affairs & Los Angeles County Arts Commission

FOLKWORKS.org

Music at the Skirball

Cuartetango

Experience all the passion of Nuevo Tango when sitting quartet Cuartetango, takes the stage. This triumphant ensemble brings together the best musicians and dancers of Buenos Aires and New York, under the direction of premiere tango violinist, singer, and dancer Leonardo Suarez Pat. At the Skirball, the band will welcome as their guest the world-renowned bandoneon player Héctor Del Corro.

“Enthralled, inspired, and creative.”—Legendary tango bisonic Iriani Ferrer

Sunday, December 10
11:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.
Kap Blank 
Skirball Free Time-Activities

HANUKKAH FAMILY FESTIVAL

With musical performance by The David Glukh International Ensemble

Celebrate the Jewish holiday of light and freedom at this daylong festival, featuring storytelling, dance, gallery activities, food and live music by The David Glukh International Ensemble. Eclectic by repertoire and design, the group has performed worldwide to critical acclaim. It will perform music featuring Sephardic music, pieces by Salomon Rossi, and international music from the Jewish tradition.

Advance tickets: (866) 465-3799 or www.ticketweb.com, or on site at the Skirball Admissions Desk
Bob Dylan: Modern Times, Ancient Footprints

BY ROSS ALTMAN

I

n 1962, when Bob Dylan wrote Blowing in the Wind, he reached back one hundred years, to the Civil War, for the imagery of destruction he wanted to portray: “How many times must the cannonballs fly before they’re ever banned?” He steered clear of any references that might have pinpointed this song as a product of the 1960s—no atom bombs, no “whites only” signs of prejudice, no “marching in the streets” as a symbol of hope.

On the contrary, the song that became the protest anthem of both the civil rights and antiwar movements clung resolutely to symbols from the Bible, “How many seas must the white dove sail, before she sleeps in the sand?” and a pre-industrial world of discrimination: “How many roads must a man walk down before you call him a man?” as if there were no automobiles on those roads.

It was a song stripped bare of identifying markers from the modern world. It took its very tune from the African-American anti-slavery song No More Auction Block Over Me, so that musically as well as lyrically it was essentially timeless. And yet it spoke with both urgency and immediacy to the social forces that within one year would converge into the March on Washington.

It did something more: it brought Dylan to the attention of New York’s left-wing intellectual and political elite, who had been hungry for a popular voice that spoke to a new generation. At the end of 1963, New York’s Emergency Civil Liberties Union gave Bob Dylan its Tom Paine award, the kind of honor that had been previously bestowed on more earthbound leftists like singer and actor Paul Robeson, and novelist Howard Fast. During the awards dinner Dylan managed to alienate the whole room by telling them, in effect, that he wasn’t going to be their lapdog.

It was the beginning of the end for the American left’s love affair with the reincarnation of Woody Guthrie, the raspy-voiced Minnesota troubadour who got their minds tapping with modern protest anthems like The Times They Are a Changing, Masters of War and the aforementioned Blowing in the Wind. A year and a half later he would sing them his farewell song, It’s All Over Now, Baby Blue, as he wrapped up his electrifying anti-folk hero appearance at the 1965 Newport Folk Festival. From then on Dylan would take the road not taken, trading his Huck Finn cap and Guthrie persona for the self-created position as the poet laureate of rock and roll.

But despite Bob’s pissing, dissing and kissing off the organized left, he never completely abandoned his industrial mining town roots from his Mesabi iron range small town childhood in Hibbing, Minnesota. His North Country Blues from The Times They Are a Changing album tells the story of a lost way of life, the transformation of Hibbing from a working class town to a ghost town, where the miners work almost for nothing, and the female narrator ends her sad tale with the despairing recognition that my children will go as soon as they grow, for there isn’t nothing here now to hold them.

Dylan has returned to those radical roots many times during his various artistic incarnations as electric troubadour, Nashville’s strange visitor from another planet, Christian convert, returning Jewish pilgrim, Kennedy Center honoree and Nobel Prize nominee, and finally his still evolving role as post-sixties elder statesman in a cowboy hat and tour guide through the vast territory of America he has charted (and occasionally charted) in forty years as what he calls “a musical expe-ditionary.”

In his 44th album, Modern Times, he returns to them once again, and it is for that reason attention must be paid.

For make no mistake, Bob Dylan is still the most radical American artist ever to achieve popular success, and he remains, at 65, far more radical than his marginal acolytes who owe their careers to him (myself included).

Case in point: When George Jackson was shot down in an aborted escape attempt from California’s notorious Soledad prison in 1970, it wasn’t Phil Ochs or Country Joe McDonald or Pete Seeger or Peter, Paul and Mary who came to his defense.

It was Bob Dylan, whose 1983 song Union Sundown was the first song by a major artist to describe in elaborate detail the destructive effects of globalization and corporate third world outsourcing on the American worker: Well, it’s sundown on the union / And what’s made in the USA / Sure was a good idea / ‘Til greed got in the way. He put his finger on “the decade of greed” before anyone else did.

Folk music’s old leftTroika—Pete Seeger, who tried to cut his mike cables at Newport, Irwin Silber, the 1960s editor of Sing Out! who used his hammer to say that Dylan had sold out, and the late Harold Leventhal, who was still carrying a grudge against Bob when interviewed for Martin Scorsese’s documen-

Dylan page 21
Pythagoras: Greek philosopher, fifth century BC. Comma: A pause or a space between things.

**WARNING:** This article may contain methods of math instruction. You may find the following content to be mathematically and musically challenging but I think you’ll find it worthwhile.

**LET’S START WITH A LITTLE MATHEMATICAL STORY:**

**NATIVE AMERICAN MATH**

Three Native American women are sitting and talking. The first is sitting on a deerskin and she says, “I have a son who weighs 130 pounds.” The second one is sitting on a bearskin and says, “I have a son who weighs 170 pounds.” The third one is sitting on a hippopotamus skin and she says, “Well, I myself weigh 300 pounds.” The question then is, “What basic principle of mathematics does this scene represent?” And the answer is... wait for it... “The sums of the squares of the two sides is equal to the square of the hypotenuse.”

This joke is a reference pun. In order for it to work it is assumed that the recipient is familiar with the reference. In this case the reference is to the Pythagorean Theorem that states that, “The sum of the squares of the two sides is equal to the square of the hypotenuse.” The nice thing about using this reference is that almost everyone who took high school algebra will know this, and even those who don’t think they like math will still be able to get a good chuckle. But did you know that the Greek philosopher Pythagoras (c565BC-490BC) from his observations in music, mathematics and astronomy, generalized that everything could be expressed in terms of numbers and numerical ratios. Numbers are not only symbols of reality, but also substances of real things; hence, he claimed, “All is number.”

**PYTHAGORAS**

Pythagoras (see Figure 1) was the first person to study the notes produced by plucked strings of various lengths. He discovered the series of harmonic overtones and found they could be expressed as the ratios of small whole numbers (see previous columns in the Archives at www.folkworks.org). The frequencies of the notes of a perfect fifth interval are in the ratio of 3 to 2 (also noted as 3/2, 3/2 or 1.5). This is called the Pythagorean fifth, and was considered throughout the Middle Ages to be the most harmonious interval outside the octave. When tuning an instrument it was important to make sure that the octaves were true and that the fifths were as close to true as possible. When watching piano tuners you might notice that they first tune the instrument’s central octave (the F-F octave around middle C) by going around the circle of fifths, a method of tuning that survives from the times of the ancient Greeks. But this is not as straightforward as you might think and here’s why.

**THE CIRCLE OF FIFTHS IS NOT REALLY A CIRCLE — IT IS MORE LIKE A SPIRAL.**

It doesn’t have closure. That is to say that the ends don’t meet; instead, they overlap (see Figures 2 & 3). Twelve perfect fifths should add up to exactly seven octaves; five when you begin — but it doesn’t.

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But here’s what really happens: start at the lowest frequency for C (32.7 Hz) on the piano and multiply by 1.5 (the ratio of 3/2) to get the fifth above that — the G (49.05 Hz) — then multiply that by 1.5 again to get to the next fifth up and so on. This is the result:

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**TABLE #1**

In a similar fashion you get the octaves when you multiply by 2 (ratio 2/1) like this:

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Counting up by seven octaves (ratios of 2/1) from C 32.7 Hz winds up at C 4186.5 Hz but counting up by twelve fifths (ratios of 3/2) yields C 4242.7 Hz. This discrepancy is known as the Pythagorean Comma and has been a powerful challenge for instrument makers and tuners. Fixed note instruments like keyboards and fretted instruments must have a way to manage this error. The various schemes to do this are called temperaments. The Pythagoreans left the entire comma in the least used fifth between G# and Eb. This left all of the fifths in tune except for the G#-Eb interval which was extra large, rather dissonant and, some say, bowled like a wolf. This “wolf fifth” was placed where it could most likely be avoided.

The necessity for temperaments arose because of the conflict between the desire to have certain intervals (especially the perfect fifth, the perfect fourth and the major thirds) be as harmonious as possible while still allowing one to play the instrument in as many different keys (i.e. starting the scale on as many different notes) as possible. Many different tempering schemes have come and gone over the past centuries of musical evolution. What they all have in common is the re-tuning of the scale so that some or all of the intervals are slightly “out-of-tune” but no particular ones are left grossly out-of-tune.

**EQUAL TEMPERAMENT**

Equal temperament is a method of tuning that spreads the Pythagorean comma equally over all twelve of the fifths, each one being flattened by 1/12 comma. This gives the equal tempered scale flexibility and simplicity at the expense of musical purity. Now twelve tempered fifths precisely equal seven octaves, which closes the circle of fifths. All intervals except the octaves are slightly, but acceptably, out of tune.

In modern music theory B♭ and C are considered to be enharmonic, that is notes that are named differently but sound the same. When scales were not tempered notes like B♭ and C were separate and distinct notes unto themselves. With equal temperament that distinction disappeared. Some of the very old keyboard instruments had two or three separate manuals (keyboards) and as many separate sets of strings to allow the instrument to play in more than one key. Contemporary with those instruments were instruments that had the “black keys” split into two notes to allow for the difference in the enharmonic notes like D♭ and Eb.

We no longer have to worry about tunings when changing keys or about the differences between enharmonic notes, but we may have lost some of the emotional impact that went with the old tunings. Composers back then believed that each key evoked a particular mood and would choose a key for the mood they wished to convey. I happen to think the trade off is worth it. Except when not, of course, stay tuned.

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**TABLE #3**

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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, Monika White, in Santa Monica.
Dining at the International Holiday Table

The months of November through January bring out the holiday spirit in many cultures, especially in the Northern Hemisphere where the long nights and chill of winter solstice drive us to celebrate around a warm and comforting dinner table. There are not many things more comforting than those special but familiar tastes that we grew up with and grow old with.

Here in the US, we have pumpkins, turkey and cranberry sauce; and candy canes, eggnog, apple cider, gingerbread and the dreaded fruitcake. Familiar, predictable and very comforting. Just south of the border, the tamale is a special holiday treat. While tamales are available year round from restaurants, grocery stores and street vendors, the homemade tamale has a particular significance for the holidays. This is because they are so labor-intensive that you need a couple of days to be able to make them correctly and in sufficient quantity.

The tamale is pre-Columbian in origin and was known among the Aztecs, Mayans and Incas. In the days before masa harina (ground corn-flour) was commercially available in packages, tamale-making started with the grounding of dried corn that had been boiled in a lime water solution. Masa harina is more commonly used now and is very different from corn meal. The masa (dough) is then spread over a corn husk, although in the southern Mexican provinces a banana leaf may be used. A filling, usually some kind of meat (chicken or pork) with red or green salsa or mole is then spread over the masa before it is folded and steamed.

In the northern provinces, the tamale is usually long and roundish in shape, while in the southern provinces where banana leaves replace corn husks the tamales tend to be more square-shaped. I am partial to the Oaxacan tamales that are seasoned with the region’s piquant chocolate-flavored mole negro. There is also the tamal de dulce where the masa is sweetened and the filling contains raisins or other dried fruit.

The tamale and its relatives are found all over Central and South America. Venezuela has a variation where the Christmas holidays are celebrated with hallaca. A stew of beef, pork, raisins and olives is wrapped in a cornmeal dough rather than masa. Like the tamale, the hallaca is wrapped in banana leaves and steamed. Depending on the chef, the hallaca may have closer relations to the Spanish empanada than the Mesopotamian tamale.

A traditional Spanish Christmas dessert is a delicious nougat candy called turron. It includes almonds, (sometimes) dried fruits, honey and sugar. The quality of the candy is usually judged by the percentage of almonds in the mix. The turron has a hard version from the southern coastal town of Alicante and a soft version from eastern town of Ijona in Valencia.

When in Scandinavia, hoist a cup of glögg as you warm yourself by the fireplace on a cold Christmas Eve. This holiday drink is a version of mulled wine, fortified with whatever spirits you have handy: aquavit, vodka, brandy, or whiskey. Add cinnamon, cloves, orange zest, almonds, raisins and sometimes sugar and let that sit overnight or longer. When it’s ready, heat it (don’t boil away the best part!) before serving. Sweet wines can be used as well. Liqueurs are great, but avoid any that are very sweet and high in alcohol. A chacun son goût.

The Nordic countries have a special Christmas dish called lutefisk consisting of dried whitefish cured with lye. The curing process breaks down the protein and renders the fish into a jelly-like consistency. To make the fish edible after the lye treatment, it is soaked in water for several days before being cooked – either steamed or baked. Lutefisk is traditionally eaten with lefse, a soft flatbread made from potatoes, milk, cream and flour. Lefse is similar to a tortilla and probably very effective in masking the fish’s flavor.

Latke (potato pancake) is a traditional food for the Chanukah holiday. The ceremonial ingredient of the latke is not the potato but the oil. Lighting candles and eating food cooked in oil commemorates the miracle of the Chanukah oil and dates from the 2nd century BCE. When the potato was introduced to Europe from America in the 16th century, the delicious result of frying potatoes in oil made latkes a perfect choice for a holiday food. The latke is strictly an Eastern European contribution to the Chanukah menu. In Israel the traditional Chanukah food fried in oil is the sofggamotay, a donut flavored with brandy or dried fruits.

Cakes and cookies are a big part of holiday celebrations in Europe. The German holiday cookie pfiffernusse is a small, half-moon shaped spice cookie. The name translates as “pepper-nut” and the cracked black pepper is mixed with various spices such as anise, cinnamon and clove. The cookie is covered with a light sprinkling of powdered sugar. The French holiday cake buche de noël (yule log) is based on an ancient Celtic tradition of burning a special log at the winter solstice. The tradition of the yule log was allowed to continue into the Christian era and the burning ceremony was enhanced and transformed eventually developing into what we now know as the Christmas tree with its decorations and candles. Today electric lights replace the candles as a safer alternative because we don’t want that yule log burning down our living room. The buche de noël is a rolled up sponge cake with a cream filling and covered with a chocolate frosting that is scored to appear like a log.

The English have a Christmas cake that bears some resemblance to our familiar fruitcake. If you find yourself with leftover tree-cle, you could consider yourself well on the way to making one of these cakes. The origins of the Christmas cake are intertwined with the origins of another English tradition, plum pudding, both of which are boiled confections of fruit, nuts and honey and some kind of flour. The Christmas cake is differentiated by its ingredients, especially the spices representing the gifts of the Wise Men who traveled from the East. Many of these spices were originally brought to England by the returning crusaders in the 12th century. In Scotland the Christmas cake is soaked in Scotch Whiskey and is lighter than its cousin to the south.

The Christmas pudding is a cake-like confection, consisting of fruit, nuts and stout boiled in a pudding cloth and soaked in brandy or beer, sometimes served flambéed. A common tradition was to hide a silver coin in the pudding.

The Japanese have adopted a Christmas cake though it is very different from the British version. Even though the large majority of Japanese are not Christian the tradition of Christmas dinner is now widespread. The Japanese Christmas cake is a light sponge cake topped with whipped cream and fresh fruit.

For an indigenous traditional Japanese holiday food, look to New Year’s Day. You will awaken on New Year’s morning to a bowl of zoni, a soup containing vegetables and either meat or fish plus that inimitable delicacy called mochi (sticky rice cake). Mochi is a kind of rice dumpling made from rice that has been pounded until it becomes a smooth, thick, cohesive ball. Zoni originated in the 16th century, but mochi as a ceremonial food predates the soup. The tamales in the Shinto ceremonies, two oval mochi cakes of different sizes are stacked with a small orange or tangerine on top and then placed on an altar as an offering to ancestors. Mochi, whether in or out of the soup, is found in abundance on New Year’s Day.

Steamed mochigo is a “sticky” rice that has some of the properties of gluten in that it binds together much like wheat flour that binds to make bread dough. There are different varieties of sticky rice such as Sushi rice that binds together very well until you dip it into soy sauce – that’s why the Japanese dip only the fish side of the sushi. You cannot make sushi with Uncle Ben’s rice.

Well, after all that food, I’m ready to pour myself another steaming cup of glögg and sit down to one of the greatest tributes to a culinary feast ever filmed. Although it is not set on any particular holiday, Babette’s Feast makes the meal become its own holiday. The food is the star of this 1987 Oscar-winning movie. Enjoy the richness of this film like complexities of an international holiday feast.

When not dining in exotic locales, Michael Macheret forages closer to home in the South Bay regions near Los Angeles.

“What he has to thing to sell and goes and whispers in a well, is not as apt to get the dollars as he who climbs a tree and holliers.”

By Michael Macheret

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Swing High from Our Branches!
Thoughts on the Best (And Worst) of 2006

Tied to the Tracks

By Larry Wines

McEuen, is touring with a talented trio, playing roots and solid originals from his CD. Another New England favorite, Nathan Stanley, who quipped, “I was only married two-and-a-half years to Bubba. But I got 55 songs out of it like, I Miss My Man But My Aim’s Gettin’ Better.” (Jones can also be serious. She received a 1999 Grammy nomination for her CD, We’re An Acta of Love: a Producer of Pearls in the Snow: The Songs of Kitty Friedman, and she’s winning accolades for her tribute CD, Kitty Jones Sings Mickey Newbury, which had its world premiere Monday night.)

Best Up-And-Comers

Yes, Cianna broke through, but there are many music- gifted young-uns. Nathan McEuen, a protege of Nitty Gritty Dirt Band founding member John

The Natural Resources Defense Council and a local homeless shelter. Even the Roxy’s typically a rock/club downtown, became magical. VRs (www.marinaav.com), Kat Parsons (www.katparsons.com), and Libbie Schrader (www.libbieschrader.com) and a lineup with rockers Mandi Perkins and Arden Kaywyn.

3) The triple header with Dafi (www.dafi.us), Gwendolyn (www.gwendolyn.org), and Janna Marri (www.jannamarri.com) at the tiny Cinema Bar in Culver City was superb. All three have marvelous acoustic bands with banjos, innovative roots and sure- fire accumulation and the Edie Staecky (Dune Box Band) sat-in. They delivered sentimental originals and a few well-arranged covers, like Elizabeth Cotton’s Freight Train and Tony Gilkyson’s Goodbye Guitar.

2) Eric Taylor is an iconic performing songwriter on the national scene who played the Coffee Gallery Backstage. A superbly entertaining vaudevillian accordion-playing cornball cowboy, he’s quirky selection of “The best music of the last 2,000 years.” He toured it nationally, playing UCLA Live! without intermission. An interesting folk artist with arrangements from good to brilliant. But Thompson’s selections for the second half were mostly post-1980, dominated by Prince, Madonna and Britney somebody-who-sounds-like-her. A bunch of other- somebodys. He never discerned that corxes were a desperate effort to hear one of his originals, not more pop crap.

The other 2006 Missing-the-Point-Award goes to Garrison Keillor’s feature film version of A Prairie Home Companion. Sure, Meryl Streep affected the accent of Minnesotans, Francis Mc secretion for a Forge and Lily Tomlin. But what everyone wanted was another O Brother, Where Art Thou, a film with great music, good melodies. She felt it was a film for the folk culture that naturally produces both. Instead, this film’s music was, at best, incidental. Radio regulars Pat Donohue, Robin & Linda Williams, Peter Ostroushko and others were setting- dressing. Incidental melodies bled through walls. Actors exchanged quirky dialogue.

Entirely too much Lindsay Lohan, an angst-ridden teen “star” who is most famous for being famous. Straight from the high school play, with melting eye makeup, Mariah Carey-esque vocal gymnastics and wild arm flaps during the closing Gospel number. You just wanted her to get out of the way of the real musicians. But it was about reaching target-audience demographics. That’s who’ve never heard the radio show, not us niche- market types, who listen every week.

At least one other talent-seeking dtain got her come- up-ance, in the year’s Best Musical Stunt. The bril- liant Banksy. Banksy’s prankster of the arts, replaced 500 Paris Hilton CDs in 48 record shops on release day. Then sending his parasites of her undistinguished pop songs. Examples: What am I Famous? and What Have I Done? Notably, no pur- chaser who got the parachute, worth sounding as if they actually intended to buy her unschooled efforts. Hmmmm. Hoorya for the folk process.

The Not-so-Hot Stuff of 2006

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HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

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FolkWorks

November-December 2006

TIED TO THE TRACKS

By Larry Wines

McEuen, is touring with a talented trio, playing roots and solid originals from his CD. Another New England favorite, Nathan Stanley, who quipped, “I was only married two-and-a-half years to Bubba. But I got 55 songs out of it like, I Miss My Man But My Aim’s Gettin’ Better.” (Jones can also be serious. She received a 1999 Grammy nomination for her CD, We’re An Acta of Love: a Producer of Pearls in the Snow: The Songs of Kitty Friedman, and she’s winning accolades for her tribute CD, Kitty Jones Sings Mickey Newbury, which had its world premiere Monday night.)

Best Up-And-Comers

Yes, Cianna broke through, but there are many music- gifted young-uns. Nathan McEuen, a protege of Nitty Gritty Dirt Band founding member John

The Natural Resources Defense Council and a local homeless shelter. Even the Roxy’s typically a rock/club downtown, became magical. VRs (www.marinaav.com), Kat Parsons (www.katparsons.com), and Libbie Schrader (www.libbieschrader.com) and a lineup with rockers Mandi Perkins and Arden Kaywyn.

3) The triple header with Dafi (www.dafi.us), Gwendolyn (www.gwendolyn.org), and Janna Marri (www.jannamarri.com) at the tiny Cinema Bar in Culver City was superb. All three have marvelous acoustic bands with banjos, innovative roots and sure- fire accumulation and the Edie Staecky (Dune Box Band) sat-in. They delivered sentimental originals and a few well-arranged covers, like Elizabeth Cotton’s Freight Train and Tony Gilkyson’s Goodbye Guitar.

2) Eric Taylor is an iconic performing songwriter on the national scene who played the Coffee Gallery Backstage. A superbly entertaining vaudevillian accordion-playing cornball cowboy, he’s quirky selection of “The best music of the last 2,000 years.” He toured it nationally, playing UCLA Live! without intermission. An interesting folk artist with arrangements from good to brilliant. But Thompson’s selections for the second half were mostly post-1980, dominated by Prince, Madonna and Britney somebody-who-sounds-like-her. A bunch of other- somebodys. He never discerned that corxes were a desperate effort to hear one of his originals, not more pop crap.

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When first heard, the layering of voices wash over you, or perhaps, more accurately, permeates through you, pulsating, sometimes gently, sometimes fiercely. The choral en masse harmonizes and then alters underscore the refrain followed by the soprano section riding on top and then again the chorus weaves in with an intense drama. The human-like intonations coupled with a degree of dissonance are not often encountered by audiences attuned to western melody and harmony. Still, the effect can be hypnotic if not almost haunting as each song displays another example of exhilarating vocalization presented within the context of a simple folk song.

The effect is heightened or at least contrasts with other forms of singing by the fact that many songs are sung without gesture or physical display. This places the entire focus on the purity of the voices. This is not to say that there is no emotion involved. All members radiate the joy of singing through very expressive faces, hand-clapping and “yelps” which accent specific upbeat moments. Other songs may include instrumental accompaniment by a band, or percussive augmentation and instrument playing by the choir.

This is Nevenka, an Eastern European Folk Ensemble of vocal enchantresses, who caress a song and then unleash their powerful harmonic blend Nevenka (derived from neven – a marigold flower and a woman’s name common to many of the Balkan countries), is a female choral group whose seeds were planted in Los Angeles, back in 1976. Their specifically is bringing the folk music of Eastern Europe to the now open ears of the southland and beyond. They are rooted in the traditions of the songs, but arrange and sing the pieces with the style and strengths of their members. Nevenka is lead by Musical Director, Tracy Israël, who handles all arrangements along with singer and Assistant Director, Jennifer Jurick. However, all of the members contribute in different ways to make personal the songs they sing. Tracy offers some insight and reveals some of the magic behind Nevenka. “Each of our members brings something to Nevenka. Many of them teach and direct new songs or work on style and pronunciation with the group. It is the reason why we have many very talented women. Nevenka is democratic in that sense.”

Because the songs are sung in the country-of-origin’s language, (Russian, Bulgarian, Croatian, Greek, etc.), for English-speaking audiences it is with this kind of music that one’s attention turns to the range and variety that the voice can produce. Nevenka’s sound covers a vocal array that is the same for Balkan music,” confides Trudy. “It is with this kind of music that one’s attention turns to the range and variety that the voice can produce. Nevenka’s sound covers a vocal array that is consistent with and reminiscent of The Bulgarian State Radio and Television Female Vocal Choir known for their Le Mystere des Voix Bulgares recordings. These recordings introduced Bulgarian music to a wider audience back in the late 1980s. “One generalization about Balkan vocal music is that it should NOT be operatic,” reminds Trudy. “Most of the traditional folk songs are sung in chest tones, even the soprano parts.”

There are other groups both here in the US and, of course, in Balkan countries, who sing similar types of music. And yet, there is uniqueness to the Nevenka sound. This is the “other” that she describes her approach to the music. “What really like is the diverse styles of music we sing. We limit our repertoire to Eastern Europe, but there is a wealth of varied musical styles within each country and within the regions of each country. I think we do a good mix of roots music and composed pieces.”

She goes on to say, “In the past, we’ve tried to be as authentic as possible, drawing our arrangements, vocal styles, and instrumentation from original recordings, but authentic is sort of a floating definition when you look at the development of Eastern European folk music over the past several decades. With the advent of world music, the purists have had to put up with the fusion of vocal styles and instrumentation, while the non-purists have welcomed the new music coming out of these cross-pollicinations. The advent of world music has allowed us to experiment and be more free with arrangement and instrumentation in recent years.”

The members that comprise Nevenka come from many ethnic and musical backgrounds. They also cover a wide age range. There is a very basic common thread that ties them together. Trudy elaborates, “The common bond that holds us together is the desire to make music out of that which has been around for so long, but with its own unique twist.”

To underscore the different backgrounds of the current line-up of Nevenka, Trudy revealed the “other” musical lives that some members pursue concurrently with their more traditional Balkan singing. “Many of our singers are in two or three performing groups, from Medieval/Renaissance to folk rock to Gamelan to bluegrass to Balkan. They are rooted in the traditions of the songs, but arrange and sing the pieces with the style and strengths of their members. Nevenka currently has three recordings available. The last, Reflections of Eastern Europe, took them in a slightly different direction than the previous two. Trudy explains the change in emphasis: “We had friends who played hot tamburica (Croatian string band) music so we featured more Croatian music then. Over the years, we’ve been drawn to more Bulgarian, Sephardic, Georgian, and Greek music. The type of music is often dictated by the numbers in the group (their vocal strengths and backgrounds).”

Nevenka has performed in music festivals, auditoriums, churches, and even in local nightclubs where, as musical worlds collide, they continue to rise above, enlighten and surprise receptive audiences, their powerful voices embracing the traditions of Eastern European folk music while expanding the boundaries of singing itself.

Nevenka can be found on line at www.nevenka.org where you can find out where they are playing or how to purchase one or all of their CDs. Joel Okuda is a struggling artist, struggling writer, and struggling musician. It occurs to him that life is all about the struggle. Fortunately, he did not take up acting. However, he’s not half bad as a zydeco dancer and the ability to make a mean gumbo and lovely walnut tortes has gotten him by.

UPCOMING PERFORMANCE FOR NEVENKA
Friday, November 17th - 9:30 pm $10
El Cid - 4212 W Sunset Blvd
Reservations at 323-668-0310.
Folk and acoustic music and how it relates with technology has been a much-debated topic in these pages for quite a while, and it’s been occupying my thoughts lately as well. Now that the best-known singer-songwriter, Dylan, has a new record (I still call them albums) that called Modern Times [Columbia] (!), it might lead one to think that the old guard is finally getting with the program. But worry not, nothing is ever that obvious and indeed looking to the record tells another story. All of the songs are connected, either by title, or in the case of a very slight re-working of one of Dylan’s classics Rollin’ and Tumblin’, by arrangement of a song from the past. Workingman’s Blues takes the title of Merle Haggard’s country hit, and a bit of its chorus, but replaces the major chord swing of the original song with a relaxed descending bass groove and lyrics that ruminate on the nature of age and work. Of course the problem with being Bob Dylan is that whatever you do; everyone’s going to assume you’re ruminating. To my ears, though, I don’t think this is one of Bob’s more personal records. If there is a theme to it, that he has no modernity enmeshed in his music, perhaps. What technology accomplishes is the ability to embrace them both simultaneously. Pick any musical artist from the past and search them on the web. A biography, histories, musical samples, you name it; all are at your fingertips. Is this a good or a bad thing? A little of both, I think. It can rob the music of its sense of community, or it can introduce it to people that would have never heard it any other way. And there’s still plenty of banjo pickin’ going on. Just because it’s not got to be a folk song...

Speaking of modern adaptations of traditional music, Phoenix, AZ’s wonderful Canyon Records, overwhelmingly the main purveyor of Native American music for the past several decades, released another great album. The first of two that fit our theme is the re-release compilation of two wonderful vinyl LPs originally released in 1969, A. Paul Ortega’s Two Worlds/Three Worlds (!). Ortega, at the age of 16, started a band, the Aguachuapa, which included a blues player in a blues band, producing them two records that have light but constant grooves with rich vocal intonation. Nowadays we have the poetry of John Trudell and Robbie Robertson’s Southern Searcher, but the Native Americans, like the Native Americans, has simply nobody doing anything similar. The insistent pulse of his rhythm guitar and gentle sway of his voice superficially resemble Western African guitar music, the spoken introductions are nicely intoned bits of history and background. Ortega’s tunes, with just his voice, his wonderful guitar playing and minimal percussion, to combine elements of acoustic blues with the insistent rhythms and chants of native songs and combines it into something of his own.

On Canyon Records’ latest reissue, there’s Pow-Wow Songs (!) is a purely traditional recording of Pow-Wow songs except for one slight difference. The titles for some of the songs: Sponge Bob Square Pants, Scooby Doo, and Barbara’s Round Dance. While the simultaneous vocalizing and communal drumming that is common to pow-wow songs is in evidence, it’s an odd experience to hear the words “Sponge Bob Square Pants” repeated in an insistent chant. But the music is treated with respect and evidence, it’s an odd experience to hear the words “Sponge Bob Square Pants” repeated in an insistent chant. But the music is treated with respect and evidence.

Then there’s Pow-Wow singer Black Lodge, who’s More Kids’ Pow-Wow Songs (!) is a purely traditional recording of Pow-Wow songs except for one slight difference. The titles for some of the songs: Sponge Bob Square Pants, Scooby Doo, and Barbara’s Round Dance. While the simultaneous vocalizing and communal drumming that is common to pow-wow songs is in evidence, it’s an odd experience to hear the words “Sponge Bob Square Pants” repeated in an insistent chant. But the music is treated with respect and evidence. Still, there’s no question in my mind that these are songs sung by kids. The kids may even know these songs better than the adults. Now that the best-known singer-songwriter, Dylan, has a new record (I still call them albums) that called Modern Times [Columbia] (!), it might lead one to think that the old guard is finally getting with the program. But worry not, nothing is ever that obvious and indeed looking to the record tells another story. All of the songs are connected, either by title, or in the case of a very slight re-working of one of Dylan’s classics Rollin’ and Tumblin’, by arrangement of a song from the past. Workingman’s Blues takes the title of Merle Haggard’s country hit, and a bit of its chorus, but replaces the major chord swing of the original song with a relaxed descending bass groove and lyrics that ruminate on the nature of age and work. Of course the problem with being Bob Dylan is that whatever you do; everyone’s going to assume you’re ruminating. To my ears, though, I don’t think this is one of Bob’s more personal records. If there is a theme to it, that he has no modernity enmeshed in his music, perhaps. What technology accomplishes is the ability to embrace them both simultaneously. Pick any musical artist from the past and search them on the web. A biography, histories, musical samples, you name it; all are at your fingertips. Is this a good or a bad thing? A little of both, I think. It can rob the music of its sense of community, or it can introduce it to people that would have never heard it any other way. And there’s still plenty of banjo pickin’ going on. Just because it’s not got to be a folk song,...

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Finally, Boulder Acoustic Music Society has been quickly gaining a rep as one of the top acoustic bands in the world, and here’s where categorizing music can be problematic. BAS is probably identified as a newgrass band, but their music’s all over the place. While there are certainly bluegrass and jazz elements on 6th Color [independent release, www.boulderacousticsociety.net] probably the most winning element is their eclecticism. Start with their line-up to begin with—guitar, bass and fiddle, along with the occasional banjo, but also Scott Higgins’ marrimba. There’s also ukulele and guests include Dave Anger on mandola and Sally Von Meter on Weissenborn guitar. The lead track, Things is jazzy, Waltz in Ragtime is what it says, there’s bits of surf and Brazilian music, delicate chamber pieces, funky blues, and the appropriately titled Kazoo Serenade. About the only unifying factor is that it’s all acoustic in nature.

All in all, it’s an eclectic bunch. Just the way I like it. No telling what I’ll have for you next time, but I’ll see you then.

RATING SCALE:  

[!][1]—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.  

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

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

[X][2]—Avoid. Either ill-conceived, or artistically inpet in some way.
BY AUDREY COLEMAN

Seeking the Roots of Salsa

I was past midnight and steam was rising from the salsa dance floor. Skirts whirled, stiletto heels clicked. Even the waiters bustling around the club were moving to the beat of the clave. I was among the dancers, my wide, flexible hips extraneous as each turn I made. From the stage, the sinewy salsero tipped his straw fedora in my direction and began improvising on the subject of my dark, silky hair.

“It’s cast a black magic spell upon her! It has a life of its own! Look out! I’m reaching my crescendo, grab you! Someone take her home!”

The three person chorus responded in tight harmony, “That’s how they dance down here. Yes, that’s how they dance!” Trumpets punctuated the refrain as we danced even more frenetically.

“Her black hair is setting the place on fire!” sang the salsero, his voice darting in rhythmic counterpoint to the band. “Look out, everybody! The flames are getting higher! Fire! Fire!”

Then I woke up.

Whew! I do not, in reality, dance salsa anywhere but in my overactive imagination. These fantasies come from admiring salsa dancing from a distance and savoring the musical mélange that swept the country nearly 40 years ago.

Where did salsa come from? What are the ingredients of this flavorful sauce (literal translation of salsa) that continues to dominate dance floors from New York to Miami to LA? On behalf of FolkWorks, this musical detective will search out the roots of salsa.

THE AFRICAN CONNECTION

The Africans who were enslaved by the Spanish between the early 1500s and the late 1800s brought with them musical and cultural traditions that contained the seeds of salsa. Kidnapped mainly from the area of West Africa that now contains Nigeria, Ghana, Togo, Cameroon, Benin, and Congo, the slaves came from cultures in which music played a central role in daily life. Different types of singing and drumming accompanied a multitude of religious and social rituals beyond mere entertainment. Performance standards were exacting and musicians in training were taught complex drum patterns that had to come in perfectly timed points in a ritual.

In addition to the highly developed art of polyrhythmic percussion, the West Africans brought to the New World their tradition of “call and response” in solo voice and chorus. In salsa this has become the dialogue between the improvising salsero and the chorus, which may consist of three or four vocalists, or alternately, the voices of band members.

Recommended Listening:
Yoruba Drums from Benin, West Africa (Smithsonian, 1996)

The rhythms of Yoruba culture and religion that crossed an ocean to Cuba influence the development of Latin American music.

THE SPANISH CONNECTION

The colonies of Latin America put the Africans in touch with musical and poetic traditions of Spain. The songs and instrumental pieces Spanish settlers brought to the New World emphasized melody and harmony, new elements of Africa's poetic traditions of Spain. The songs and instrumental pieces Spanish settlers brought to the New World emphasized melody and harmony, new elements of Africa's poetic traditions of Spain.

In Puerto Rico, the adaptation was the clave.

As Africans absorbed the Spanish language from their masters, they incorporated rhyming verses. By the time the slavery era ended, the African musicians had gradually introduced the polyrhythms of their African heritage into the percussion section which now included congas. The new form, also containing Haitian influence, was called charanga. Orquesta Aragon was one of several charanga orchestras that thrived between the 1930s and the 1950s. An equally popular form in the 1940s was the mambito, invented by pianist Pioerd Prado. The great Cuban mambo and charanga orchestras of the 1950s and 1960s were the forerunners of today's salsa bands.

As for vocalists, Celia Cruz made her reputation as a sonero in Cuba's clubs two decades before she became the Queen of Salsa. She had an uncanny ability to improvise lyrics and sing in melodic counterpoint to the band, staying aware of what every instrument was doing at each moment. It remained for a set of political and creative conditions to come together by the 1970s for soneros to become salsa superstars.

In 1959 the lights went out in the casinos. An exodus of refugees from Castro's revolution brought thousands of Cubans to Miami and New York, among them the already accomplished Celia Cruz and her band, Sonoro Matancera. But we won't get to them quite yet.

Recommended Listening:
100% Azucar: The Best of Celia Cruz Con La Sonora Matancera

Hear Celia before salsa got its name and savor the Afro-Cuban flavor of the band.

THE PUERTO RICAN CONNECTION

A smaller island than Cuba, Puerto Rico had fewer plantations and thus imported fewer slaves in its early colonial days. This explains why Hispanic elements were more influential in the overall development of Puerto Rican popular music. The leading musical influence was, and still is, the cuatro, a small guitar with four double strings, was Puerto Rico's answer to the tres. Hispanic Puerto Rico also developed its own song form known as the seas, based on the Spanish decima tradition of rhyming impromptu verse.

The early 20th century saw the emergence of the plena, a Caribbean-sounding narrative song that accompanied a couple dance. Plena ensembles in the 1930s and 1940s included congas, bongos, pandeiro (tambourine), guiro (scraper), and an extra cuatro. At the same time, Cuban big band broadcasts and records began to exert influence on Puerto Rican music...
N o matter how thorough our very folk-ness can be, there is always an artist or two that somehow slips below the radar. I had thought I’d roll through a few folksies from the old days. Apparently, Warren Dalton has been an influence on a few musicians in the past, his music is still being discovered now and then, but somehow he didn’t slip into the radar. Perhaps we should think of him as a folk-ist rather than a folk-nik.

Dalton seems to have influenced every musician he came in contact with, but somehow successfully eluded any real national renown. Since she disliked recording we’re lucky to have anything to hear of this influential artist. Often compared to Billie Holiday, Dalton had an impressive vocal approach. Check out It’s So Hard To Tell Who’s Going To Love You The Best (finally released in 1969), it features tunes by Fred Neil, George Jones and traditional numbers. Haunting vocals...

Ramblin’ Jack Elliott is probably the closest to a household name in this list, but still well worth seeking out if you’re not familiar with his work. The son of a Brooklyn dentist, Elliott Charles Adnopoz slipped away from home in his early teens and worked for a rodeo, eventually creating harmony with Woody Guthrie. He is known for his wit, his long humorous stories and a highly crisp, clear guitar style. He has many recording available, but I’m partial to his major label work in the 1960s and 1970s with Young Brigham and Bull Durham Sacks & Railroad Tracks. Nobody plays Dylan’s Don’t Think Twice like Jack, and nobody tells a better story about how they learned the song.

Tim Hardin was reportedly a troubled soul, but his achy, fistful vocals and sensitive songs may be a result of that turmoil. Many Roses, How Can We Hang On To A Dream, Reason to Believe, and If I Were A Carpenter have all been covered by artists from the based band to Johnny Cash. Jack Elliott’s tabla spiced double drop D tuning version of Carpenter is remarkably compelling. There is a lot of Hardin’s work on CD, but his later recordings are arguably less compelling.

Fred Neil is probably best remembered as the composer of Everybody’s Talkin’, the theme to the film Midnight Cowboy. Not just a songwriter, Neil was a fine performer with a deep voice and forceful 12 string guitar work. But he eschewed the footlights and retired from the music business before the end of the 1960s, working with the Original Dolphin Project until his death in 2001. I’m most fond of Neil’s tunes. You might even loathe his mostly folk based music, but there is probably less compelling.

Neil Young’s best known song is虹桥 was built on a Friday and Saturday Night. Further accolades are awarded if the song really rocks, and Neil’s recording is remarkably compelling. There is a clear guitar style. He has many recordings feature a warm blend of folk and rock. His early work, primarily on harmonica, Sebastian managed to provide not only an aural treat, but also some valuable lessons. The Spoons created catchy pop out of old time blues, ragtime and jazz, and appeared to actually enjoy doing so. The Spoonful catalog has mercifully been re-mastered and released, after years of mix and match garbage Sebastian’s solo career following his exit from Spoons. Just as Sebastian has had his ups and downs, documented on a Rhino Records compilation released in 2004. His two recordings as John Sebastian and the J Band feature a warm blend of just about everything:

This is Baghdad. And after his 2004 “fact finding mission” to the Mid-East, Sebastian managed to provide not only an aural treat, but also some valuable lessons. The Spoons created catchy pop out of old time blues, ragtime and jazz, and appeared to actually enjoy doing so. The Spoonful catalog has mercifully been re-mastered and released, after years of mix and match garbage Sebastian’s solo career following his exit from Spoons. Just as Sebastian has had his ups and downs, documented on a Rhino Records compilation released in 2004. His two recordings as John Sebastian and the J Band feature a warm blend of just about everything:

John Lennon's tunes. You might even loathe his mostly folk based music, but there is probably less compelling. His oddest mix and match garbage Sebastian’s solo career following his exit from Spoons. Just as Sebastian has had his ups and downs, documented on a Rhino Records compilation released in 2004. His two recordings as John Sebastian and the J Band feature a warm blend of just about everything:

According to the release, Life Short Call Now, marks Bruce Cockburn’s 29th release. Such venture assures Mr. Cockburn of the respect awarded one who has longevity in their field. Further accolades are awarded if the critics find one’s work to be of substance. Again, Mr. Cockburn has been almost universally heralded by those who write. Superstar status and international acclaim has been achieved by a number of artists from the late 1960s folk scene, roaming from Greenwich to Woodstock in his short but weighty career. Siebel was a wordsmith with the propensity for melodic density and a piercing tenor to drive home his words. You can find both of his releases on CD, Woodsmoke and Oranges and Jack-Knife Gypsy. Siebel’s best known song is Louise, covered by Bonnie Raitt and Leo Kottke. Siebel’s She Made Me Lose My Blues served as the theme song for John Davis’ Los Angeles based band. His early work, primarily on harmonica, Sebastian managed to provide not only an aural treat, but also some valuable lessons. The Spoons created catchy pop out of old time blues, ragtime and jazz, and appeared to actually enjoy doing so. The Spoonful catalog has mercifully been re-mastered and released, after years of mix and match garbage Sebastian’s solo career following his exit from Spoons. Just as Sebastian has had his ups and downs, documented on a Rhino Records compilation released in 2004. His two recordings as John Sebastian and the J Band feature a warm blend of just about everything:

Ani DiFranco harmonizes with Cockburn on the rhythmic The Captain and the Many Sides of Fred Neil that includes all of his three capital albums and some rarities. You’ve heard one of Willis Alan Ramsey’s tunes. You might even loathe it. But if you haven’t heard Ramsey’s version of a tune he called Mushrat Candlelight, don’t base any feelings about the tune on The Captain and
CD REVIEWS

Artist: DOROJO
Title: AROMA PIE
Label: SELF RELEASED (WWW.JOEYLATIMER.COM)
Release Date: MARCH 2006
BY DENNIS ROGER REED

The way music reaches us has changed dramatically in the last few years. Major labels no longer have control of what we listen to. Brick and mortar record stores seem to be rapidly going the way of the dinosaurs, with major chain stores and the Internet now becoming the main source for music purchases. The CD may soon be something as esoteric as the vinyl LP is today. What’s an artist to do? The best answer is to be creative. Danny Barnes records short run CDs to sell at his shows: better buy it tonight, because once that run is sold, he’ll move to another project.

Buddy Guy records all his shows at his Chicago club and offers them for sale by the end of the night’s gig. DOROJO has done a similar thing with Aroma Pie. Café Aroma is a popular Italian/California cuisine restaurant in the quaint mountain community of Idyllwild, and DOROJO takes their band name from the first names of the trio’s musicians: Don Reed on various guitars, mandolins and background vocals; Robin Rabens on bass, and Joey Latimer on guitars, charango and vocals. DOROJO apparently plays this venue frequently and taped several of their shows, cleaning Aroma Pie from these recordings. The sound quality is for the most part major league. Since the recording was taken from the mixing board, there is no crowd noise or applause. The between song chat is limited to one short exchange. Still, the CD does a great job at capturing the élan that DOROJO bring to their performances. One may forget that this is a “live” recording, since the “warts and all” approach features very few warts.

Reed is a stellar instrumentalist who moved to the fertile Idyllwild music scene a few years ago. Latimer and Rabens are long term residents. Idyllwild is known for its annual jazz festival, but for many years also supported a bluegrass festival, and was the home of Chris Thiele of Nickel Creek fame. Café Aroma books a wide variety of music, and DOROJO hits many of these bases, as Aroma Pie features blues, ragtime, a little jazz, some pop and a bit of bluegrass. Although Latimer is a solid songwriter, Aroma Pie features primarily cover songs from a variety of sources, including Los Lobos, Jackson Browne, Big Bill Broonzy, Don fixing and Jimmy Reed.

Latimer’s vocals are perfect for the material, relaxed yet emotive. His use of a vocal harmonizer on several songs adds to the fullness of the trio. His guitar playing is firm and inventive, relying on amplified acoustic sounds that can range from raw Delta to smooth jazz, then feature intricate raga-tme picking on the next number. Rabens is a rock-solid bass player, and Reed runs the gamut from bop influenced resonator mandolin, blistering lap style Dobro™ country and blues picking, and a vast variety of acoustic guitar sounds. Reed has become the “go to guy” accomplish for many of Idyllwild talented musical artists due to his flexibility, and his long term musical relationship with Latimer and Rabens makes for a seamless sound.

Highlights abound, with Latimer’s two originals holding their own with the cover tunes. One could ask how a recording that features a long jazzesque workout on Mark-Almond’s free form FM radio standard The City could lack the Lenny Breau’s Long Blues, Jimmy Cliff’s Sitting In Limbo and Blind Boy Fuller and Sonny Terry’s I Want a Piece of Your Pie and not sound schizophrenic, but DOROJO carries an element of improvisation and creativity that allows this range of repertoire to not only work, but work well.

The intent of the menu at Café Aroma is to not only inform you of what they serve, but to get your taste buds tingling in anticipation. Aroma Pie does a good job of the same. Might be time to take a little trip to the mountains.

Artist: JOHNNY CASH
Title: AMERICAN V: A HUNDRED HIGHWAYS LABEL: AMERICAN RECORDINGS
BY PAT MACSWYNEY

Playing Irish Traditional and Punk throughout the 1980s, I was begrudgingly talked into playing a stint in a Johnny Cash cover band and was quite surprised of Cash-loving punks from various other local bands and I’ve been hooked heavy ever since. American V: A Hundred Highways marks the 5th album collaboration between the late Johnny Cash and producer Rick Rubin, co-founder of Def Jam Records, best known for his work with rap & rock groups like Public Enemy, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Slayer & System of a Down. Like the prior 4 Cash recordings on American, A Hundred Highways features Cash’s weathered voice minimally accompanied by acoustic guitar with other instrumentation thrown in sparingly for effect. Despite Cash’s prowess as a great American songwriter, the songs in this, like the other four volumes in this series, are culled from various other songwriters, traditional repertoire and a smattering of songs from Cash’s own pen.

Although an American VI is in the works, V marks Cash’s final album effort recorded up to his death in 2003 and includes his final composition Like the 309 which opens with the line “It should be a while before I see Dr. Death, so it would be nice if I could get my breath’ going on to describe his own wake and departure by train “Put me in my box on the 309”. Much of the material on V deals with Cash’s own expiration mortality and the recent loss of his wife June Carter Cash. Not surprisingly, there is a heavily spiritual slant to the song selection with the opening tracks Help Me and God’s Gonna Cut You Down and Cash’s only other original song on V, I Came to Believe, about finding strength in his own faith. While personal, I pointedly steer clear of specifically religious music, Cash’s spiritual material, like much traditional American music, really needs to be heard in the greater cultural context of the early 20th century poor rural America in which he grew up.

On V, Cash’s voice is frail and vulnerable yet rich with a gentle depth and compassion of a rough but life well lived. In listening to Johnny on these later American label recordings, I am reminded of an interview with New Orleans trumpet player Wynton Marsalis discussing a very similar quality in Louis Armstrong’s trumpet playing and singing late in life. Marsalis very passionately described that while technical ability had clearly waned, Armstrong had something in his later playing that was impossible for Marsalis and younger musicians to even approximate and it is this quality in Johnny Cash that must be appreciated on V. On the otherwise “soft rock” Gordon Lightfoot ballad If You Could Read My Mind about the painful end of a relationship, Cash’s voice comes across as fragile and vulnerable as dry autumn leaves about to be crushed and blown in the wind. Additional highlights include a feisty rendition of Bruce Springsteen’s Farther On Up the Road, Hank Williams’ On the Evening Train and a beautiful version of Rod McKuen’s Love’s Been Good to Me. While not as risky as covers on previous albums in this series like 9 Inch Nails’ Hurt and Soundgarden’s Rusty Cage, the song selection appears to be a great deal more personal to Cash himself. As the album closes, Johnny delivers a heartfelt vering version of the melancholic Four Strong Winds, made popular on Neil Young’s 1978 album Comes A Time and ultimately closes with the poignant I’m Free from the Chain Gang Now. In short, American V: A Hundred Highways is a compelling swan song from one of America’s greatest singer songwriters.
O ne of this year’s most unexpected pleasures, PaddyRasta’s debut CD Listen To Your Heart single-handedly invents Celtic reggae. Formed two years ago in Aberdeen, Scotland, which is still the band’s homebase, PaddyRasta explores a sound that rethinks a unique combination of influences, staying true to all and striking a blow for cultural unity. Lyricist and lead vocalist Brian Gilligan’s banjo replaces the signature reggae chicken scratch guitar, his rock steady rhythms tickled and tweaked by Colin Edwards’ melodic limber bass work. Tom Roche’s button accordion usually joins the whis- tle of Sara Reith in unison arrangements of traditional tunes played between Gilligan’s socially conscious lyrics. Nigerian drummer/percu- sionist David Imevbores keeps the rhythm section propulsive with a light touch.

The collection begins with Meditation and its oming chorus. You’re so tense, can’t relax / Cos you’re not content with what you have / Always want what ya have not got, Gilligan sings. Reith’s whistle ornamentation on the vocal displays her strong tone and playful sense of melody. Fair Trade Banana makes a point with humor: Some people talk of justice and equality / and say how the world should be / but when it comes to buying a bunch of bananas / they won’t pay the extra 10p. The band expands their sound with a mellow horn section, and bor- derpips join the unison march.

Gilligan writes memorably of the poor and hungry on Freedon, singing the poignant minor shaded melody supported by the movingly arranged background vocals of Imevbores, Roche, and Edwards. Reith’s whistle weaves through the rich arrangement. An irresistible take on the tra- ditional Irish tune, Molly Malone, follows, Roche and Reith keeping it green. Given a portentious minor melody like Freedon, Listen To Your Heart blooms into its chorus arguing for self trust in the face of a crazy world. Can’t you see that every politician you see on television ain’t got a clue /bout what to do? / And every day the children are being born blind / by false education and misinformation / and when they speak about the truth of what is happening / they’re silenced by their med- ication.

Forty Shades of Green captures a sense of awe and wonder for Irish pagan spirituality. All across this ancient land / the standing stones still stand / Yeah mon.” Newgrange Temple of the sun / Awake your time has come. Gilligan sings, his springy banjo creating the momentum. Roche dexterously fingers the acco r d i a n , when not framing the vocal with subtle chording. Guest James Lang contributes a lazy fiddle solo. Simple and Free boasts another ear coddling vocal arrangement. Besides its catchy tune, and lyrics extolling a harmonious existence, the song includes the wonderful Dance dance move up and down / Move and shake your body to this Irish Reggae sound.

PaddyRasta’s Listen To Your Heart unleashes positive messages attrac- tively packaged in infectious original arrangements that maintain close ties to two very different musical traditions without diluting either.

Artist: PADDYRASTA
Title: LISTEN TO YOUR HEART
Label: PADDYRASTA www.paddyrasta.com/
BY REX BUTTERS

E ddie Kamae has collabor- ated with some of the most talented, innova- tive musicians Hawaii has pro- duced. From his years as a ukulele virtuoso in the 1940s through his role as co-founder of the groundbreaking band, the Sons of Hawaii, in the 1960’s, he was at the forefront of the Hawaiian cultural renais- sance. Approaching his eighth decade with characteristic cre- ative verve, Kamae has loving- ly gathered performances that represent friendships with musicians identified with that ongoing renaissance. His and his wife and creative partner, Myrna, have selected recordings by musicians who have inspired him, shared the stage with him or both. The diversity of voices makes for a mainly satisfying lis- ten.

The CD starts off with Eddie singing a simple and touching rendition of the lovely Akahi Ho‘i Ka Manene composed by Hawaii’s last monarch, Queen Lili‘uokalani. He includes three songs composed and performed by Sons of Hawaii alumnus Dennis Kamakahi. Although Kamakahi always conveys warmth and meaning in his performances, I found the recording of the Kamae selected of Kamakahi’s Pua Home to be too fast-paced to do justice to the song’s lyricism. Another Sons of Hawaii band member, the late Moe Keale, sings Only You and Mai Ate / Ka Hewa with the rough- edged emotion that endeared audiences and friends alike. In the back- ground on several numbers, we hear music of two departed Sons: the twinkling steel guitar of David “Feet” Rogers and the stalwart stand-up bass of the Joe Marshall.

As for the late Sonny Chillingworth, I cannot improve on the Kamae’s liner notes, which say he is “remembered not only for the incredible range and depth of his voice, but also for the individual stylings of his remark- able slack key guitar.” It is unfortunate, then, that the Kamae included only one song that truly showcases Chillingworth’s talents – She’s So Sad & Blue. The other song he performs is a composition by Eddie and Myrna Kamae, and, frankly, I found it lacking in depth.

This leads me to consider the main disappointment in this compilation – the Kamae’s decision to include four of their own compositions. It is hard to believe that Eddie Kamae, composer of the exquisite Morning Dew was satisfied with the child-like Sunshine Between the Rain, We Have Two of Those, and Dreams. They are not to his standard nor do they stand up well beside classics such as Only You.

Not included is the incursion of guitarist Diana Aki easily explained. Presumably a friend of Kamae, the Big Island-based singer gives an unremarkable rendi- tion of the classic La Loma.

Despite these drawbacks, the final ensemble number composed by the Kamae is very pleasant and leaves the listener glad to have experienced the music of Eddie Kamae and his remarkable friends.

*For more background on Eddie Kamae and the Hawaiian cultural ren- aissance, see the article in the March-April 2006 edition of FolkWorks.

Artist: EDDIE KAMAÉ & FRIENDS
Title: EDDIE KAMAÉ & FRIENDS
Label: MOUNTAIN APEL
BY AUDREY COLEMAN

DAVID BRAGGER

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

DES REGAN

Unveils the mysteries of the Irish button accord- don with Des Regan, who has performed for over 50 years in concert halls and pubs across the United States and Ireland. In his warm affable style, he will show you the intricacies of ornamentation that gives Irish music its’ dis- tinct sound. His repertoire is from his native County Galway, with influences from Clare and Sligo.

He loves to kindle the spirit of those with a feverish interest in Irish music. If you don’t have a B/C button accor- don, Des can arrange a reasonable price. Contact Des Regan: 818-506-8303 or email him at desregan@sbcglobal.net

JOELLEN LAPIDUS

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

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FolkWorks
November-December 2006
Interview Writing on the Purple Sage: Cody Bryant

Cody Bryant

BY JOEL OKIDA

November-December 2006

FolkWorks

CODY: In the years I’ve worked with Mike Ley (vocalist & mandolin player in the Riders), he’s arranged the vocals for the Riders. This last year he’s been absorbing Foy Willing’s tricks of the trade in regards to harmony and has utilized many a Foyism in his vocal arrangements. Few people realize what a great musician and arranger Foy was. There’s a reason the Riders material from the forties and early fifties holds up today. It was well built from the ground up. Rider arrangements start with Mike, gets sung a bit and absorbed, then filters through Evan Marshall (the Riders’ crack mandolin & fiddle player) for further input then ends up with me for final tweaking. I look to make it as interesting as possible to fly with the audience.

JOEL: Is it difficult to keep the real Cody Bryant identity from being lost in any of the projects you are involved in? Or do you get equal enjoyment out of all your musical endeavors?

CODY: Moon in Gemini. There’s a lot of me’s in here. Yes, it has its inherent challenges on all fronts-musical, personal, professional and business as well. Every show finds me refining the role I play in that unit. The Riders was a challenge for awhile. How do you seriously go out and say we’ve been together since 1943?!!! No matter how bad we look that day we still don’t look ninety. People used to fall out of their chairs laughing and I couldn’t blame them. We’ve been playing together for over a decade but as the Riders for a lot less. And for some of my bandmates it was a challenge to find their inner Rider. Jimmy (Lee Harris, bass) struggled a bit but seemed to have had an epiphany after watching Foy in an old Monte Hall movie. As for me, I’ve heard and played these songs since childhood so it wasn’t a stretch. Leading a band with that much history has its unique challenges. I knew it would eventually work out and it finally has. In the shows we’ve done lately, especially with the last three, and please allow me to mention them and the fine people who came to listen at the Fallbrook Americana Music Series, San Juan Capistrano Symphony Show with Carlo Spiga conducting, and the raucous Strawberry Festival in Oxnard.

It’s a comfortable fit now, especially with the addition of Evan Marshall on fiddle (jindolin and Windsor doing the looking). The Brombies gig is a delight because it’s a perfect outlet for my bluegrass on banjo. There’s a lot of me’s in here. Yes, it has its inherent challenges in Michael Herzmark’s latest documentary (Moot Davis and the Honky Tonk Business) would suggest it’s a tough go. I feel like I dodge a career bullet everyday.

JOEL: What is the state of “cowboy” music today?

CODY: Seems a little tough around here to me. There’s little record-label presence recording and supporting this kind of music. You can’t (Michael) Moot Davis challenges in Michael Herzmark’s latest documentary (Moot Davis and the Honky Tonk Business) would suggest it’s a tough go. I feel like I dodge a career bullet everyday. We’re a lucky bunch of cowpokes, my band mates and me. We’re lucky all the way around. We get to play music we like for people who like it and are willing to pay for it. It doesn’t get any better.

JOEL: Is LA still a good home base for this kind of music?

CODY: Seems a little tough around here to me. There’s little record-label presence recording and supporting this kind of music. You can’t (Michael) Moot Davis challenges in Michael Herzmark’s latest documentary (Moot Davis and the Honky Tonk Business) would suggest it’s a tough go. I feel like I dodge a career bullet everyday. We’re a lucky bunch of cowpokes, my band mates and me. We’re lucky all the way around. We get to play music we like for people who like it and are willing to pay for it. It doesn’t get any better.

JOEL: In regards to you or any of your hands, are there new directions or songs that you feel must be incorporated from the current commercialized local entertainment scene? Or is there a stronger need to promote the traditional songs of the past?

In a Riders show we stay within the parameters of the Western genre, in all its different flavors, whether it’s an old song or something new. Or the other hand, the Cody Show is a no holds barred environment. It might be all Haggard, might not. Depends on where we are physically, emotionally and who’s listening. Could be a bunch of my originals, could be cowboy, could be any genre, country shuffles, it might be Robert Palmer or Lynyard Skynard. Buck Owens has been a role model since childhood and he worked the room whatever it took. We give our audience the best time possible.

JOEL: Long ago, the Riders of the Purple Sage were originally led by the legendary Foy Willing. At present, to whom do you look to for artistic interpretation?

CODY: As for me, I missed its last heyday in the late eighties and early nineties, that period of time when Warner Brothers stepped then later abandoned, its Warner Western label. From what I see, its popularity and momentum from that period has waned. But it’s always waned then returned with a new spin as does everything. From the shows we do in California and Arizona, I think it’s in a hibernation waiting to reinvent itself through the work of new artists, songwriters and show folk.

JOEL: What is the state of “cowboy” music today?

CODY: Seems a little tough around here to me. There’s little record-label presence recording and supporting this kind of music. You can’t (Michael) Moot Davis challenges in Michael Herzmark’s latest documentary (Moot Davis and the Honky Tonk Business) would suggest it’s a tough go. I feel like I dodge a career bullet everyday. We’re a lucky bunch of cowpokes, my band mates and me. We’re lucky all the way around. We get to play music we like for people who like it and are willing to pay for it. It doesn’t get any better.
O
n this patio, where I work, write and rehearse
with the Lost and Found band, I overlook
the one acre Learning Garden. Just over a
mile inland from the Pacific Ocean on the campus of
Venice High School, this is a very different world
from the small town in Kansas where my Grandfather
had his garden. It was there under his instruction, I
began to learn the craft of gardening at the wise old
age of six and the learning has never stopped.

My family knew how to garden and to play music
as well – I’m keeping both traditions alive every day.
Summer is coming to a close. Hotter than Hades last
night, I did not cook dinner. Dinner was a Greek salad
(I learned this in Athens, all other ‘Greek’ salads are
only so-called); cucumbers and tomatoes in equal
amounts, fresh from the garden, cut into rough
chunks, add an almost equal portion of feta cheese and a dollop of olive oil
(Trader Joe’s ‘grows’ these two quite nicely) with some dried oregano and
pepper to taste. Mix thoroughly to coat every morsel with oregano and oil
and enjoy. Fresh from the garden, tomatoes are still warm from the sun and
cucumbers feel cool, though
they are room temperature. Only the cheese is from the fridge. Still, this eats like it’s
been chilled. It is as sweet as
some ice cream, but is undeni-
abley better because I grew
these vegetables myself and
they are the highlight of sum-
mer gardening. Summer does-
n’t really begin until the first
tomato gets ripe and hasn’t
left until the last tomato has
been eaten or preserved for
later in the year.

Fruits are in abundance at
the farmers markets making
this about the best culinary
time of the year in Southern California. There is much talk nowadays about
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ON-GOING MUSIC HAPPENINGS
MUSIC, MUSIC AND MORE MUSIC

JAM SESSIONS / OPEN MICS / SINGS / ONGOGING CONCERTS AND MORE

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3rd and 4th Thursdays 7:30-10:30pm
Country Club Table, Colony Inn, Agoura
805-583-5776
www.agourabluegrass.com

REMIX RECREATIONAL MUSIC CENTER
Community Day Camp Tuesdays 1:30-4:30pm / Four Corners Community Center, Arcadia
908-366-9774
www.remixmusiccenter.com

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Wednesdays 7:30-10pm
805-666-9000 • 805-666-9085
villagemandala@comcast.net

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First Sundays 2:00-4:00pm
First Farmers Market, 220 Block, Santa Monica
828-666-5037 • www.drumcircle.net

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www.downtownjam.net

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3000 Main St., Santa Monica
805-866-7427
drumcircle@loyalloy.com

SDBS BLUEGRASS JAM
Sandy Beesley zmbeez@cox.net
First Tuesdays 7:00-10:00pm
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805-583-5776
www.agourabluegrass.com

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FOLK HAPPENINGS AT A GLANCE

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OGD: On-going Dance - pg. 18
SE: Special Events - pg. 30-32
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ON-GOING DANCE HAPPENINGS
DANCING, DANCING and MORE DANCING

AFRICAN DANCING
YORUBA HOUSE
Yoruba@primenet.com • yorubahouse.net

AFRICAN DANCING
FROM CAMEROON, CENTRAL AFRICA with Ms. Ndeoji
Sunday 3:00 - 4:00 pm
La Hacienda Center, Auditorium
3773 South Crenshaw Blvd., Los Angeles
90216 ❋ 310-272-8707
Fax: 310-659-6945
nndeoji@usa.net

AFRICAN DANCING
with Toonita Divine Peters
Saturday 7:00 pm; August 27
Dancers’ Studio, 3777 Pico Blvd., L.A.
323-721-7696

BAKALN DANCE
with Punya Nanda
Wednesday 7:30 - 8:30 pm
1035 West Washington Blvd., Los Angeles
702-769-0333
Fax: 702-769-0334
punyananda@earthlink.net

BAKALN DANCE
with Antonio A. Montoya
Tuesday 8:00 - 8:30 pm
Lindberg Park • 5401 Rhoda Way, Culver City
310-649-2870
Fax: 310-649-2872
amontoya63@earthlink.net

SAN PEDRO BALKAN DANCE MONDAYS
with Dost Atasoy
Dickman American Club
17231 Sherman Way, Van Nuys
818-753-0353
Fax: 818-753-0354
Call for school/dancing info.

CAJUN / ZyDoo DANCING
Thursdays - Lesson: 7:00-8:00 pm ($5) Dance to CD's: 8:15-10:15 pm
Paci Fudo Center
700 West Crenshaw Blvd.
Los Angeles 90044
323-857-3377
Fax: 323-857-3378
nancy@zbydance.com

CABRONA DANCING
with Ruth Gore
4th Saturdays
8:00-11:00 pm
2nd Sundays
7:45-11pm Teaching to 9pm $2
310-284-3636 ❋ UniversityDanceClubs@yahoo.com

CALIFORNIA DANCE CO-OPERATIVE
For additional Cajun/Zydeco dancing:
Elks Lodge
2nd Sundays
562-708-8946 karinovations@verizon.net

INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING
ARMENIAN DANCING
Wednesday 10:30-11:30 am
St. Vartan Cathedral, 14438 West Telephone Rd.
Carmine & Amy Rafferty, Directors
818-797-7737
Fax: 818-797-7738
armenian-dancers@att.net

HUNGARIAN DANCING
THROMBOS DANCE ENSEMBLE
2nd and 4th Fridays 8:30-10pm
Cipriano Community Center, 5590 W. Olympic Blvd., Los Angeles
310-210-9224 • jkimbred@cybermail.net

INTERNATIONAL FOLK DANCING

CULTURAL DANCERS
Tuesday 10:30-11:30 am
Auditorium Community Center
818-319-6683
Fax: 818-319-6684

cdc-members@sbcglobal.net

CONTRA DANCING
Between Torrance & Madrona
Torrance Civic Center, Cultural Building, Studio 3
Rich DiMarco 714-894-4113 richdimarco@yahoo.com

DANCE CLASSICS

HILL COUNTRY DANCE INSTRUCTOR
562-246-4136 Susan Marsan

ISRAELI DANCING

CALTECH FOLK DANCERS
Tuesdays
8:00-10:00 pm
Hillcrest Center for the Arts, 403 W. Hillcrest Dr.
310-284-3636 ❋ UniversityDanceClubs@yahoo.com

JCC of Orange County
Saturdays
8:30-11:00 am
818-503-4577 ❋ www.celticartscenter.com

MAIRE CLERKIN

NEW YORK DANCING

REDONDO BEACH

SCOTTISH DANCING
AGUARA HILLS
Sunday 1:00 - 3:00 pm Beginner
Agusa Hills Performing Arts Center, 9151 Cornell Rd.
933-2277 ❋ info@aguara.com

ANAHEIM

BONITA SPRINGS

BRISTOW

CRAWFORD

DIABLO DANCE
with Maire Clerkin
731 South Bundy Drive
joda_rogers@altrionet.com

EUROPEAN DANCING

FLORIDA DANCING

GERMAN DANCING

GREEN DANCING

HUNGARIAN DANCING

HUNGRY DANCING

IMPORTED DANCING

Jewish Center

Jewish Community Center

KIRK 오피스

LAGUNA DANCERS

NARODNI FOLKDANCERS

O'CONNOR-KENNEDY SCHOOL

RESEDA INT'L FOLK DANCERS

RUTHERFORD DANCE CLUB

SACRAMENTO FOLK DANCING

SAN FRANCISCO FOLK DANCERS

SCOTTISH DANCING

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SILVERADO DANCE

SKANDIA DANCE

SMITH FAMILY FOLK DANCERS

SOFT SHOE DANCERS

SOFT SHOE DANCERS

SPRINGFIELD DANCE

TARABA DANCE

TANGO DANCE

TEXAS DANCE

TRADITIONAL FOLK DANCING

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TRADITIONAL DANCING
Hindu Wizard Rings and Magical Beans

One October, just a few years before the new millennium, I found myself in the curious hands of very strange circumstances. I was bumping along a remote dirt road outside of New Delhi with a company of street magicians, jadugar, who I met only the day before. They heard about my arrival, found me, and insisted I leave with them the following morning. So I did. The elderly and brittle bicycle-rickshaw wallahs took us to a small village with great struggle. We arrived in a dusty, sweltering market area. People seemed to notice us right away and they began to stare. I was the only Westerner in a very rural setting, so I figured they were looking at me. I was wrong. They were nervous and agitated for another reason.

A mongoose was tied to a spike on the dirt ground, a cobra was coiled a meter away, and two jadugar began playing the drum and flute while circumambulating the creatures. Villagers immediately left their wages and tea huts to gather around. However, they kept their distance. They’ve seen these itinerant magicians before. In the hour that followed, I witnessed incredible sleight of hand magic, beans that transform into fruit trees within seconds, a heckler emotionally blackmailed into paying for his restoration. With the spectral incantation, “Gilli, gilli,” the boy was restored in front of the crowd. When the “supernatural” spectacle was wrong. They were nervous and agitated for another reason.

As fast as you can utter, “Gilli, gilli, gilli,” they’ll have the return of the child. I couldn’t believe what I was watching. Everyone thought it was real. Old men shook with fear, children cried, and all were vicariously felt the group’s horror and fear even though I knew it was just a trick. The onlookers were asked to donate money so an animal could be purchased the following day for sacrifice. This would give the gods a life in exchange for the return of the child. I couldn’t believe what I was watching. Everyone thought it was real. Old men shook with fear, children cried, and all were emotionally blackmailed into paying for his resurrection. With the spectral incantation, “Gilli, gilli, gilli,” the boy was restored in front of the crowd. When the “supernatural” spectacle reached its end, dreams were then purchased.

Magical rings with the power to cure disease, adultery, erectile dysfunction, baldness, poverty, and death were displayed. The poor villagers were watching. Everyone thought it was real. Old men shook with fear, children cried, and all were emotionally blackmailed into paying for his resurrection. With the spectral incantation, “Gilli, gilli, gilli,” the boy was restored in front of the crowd. When the “supernatural” spectacle reached its end, dreams were then purchased.

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I have been on the radio since the age of thirteen, in Chicago, where we were known as “Radio Brats”. I have been with KPFK since the first week we went on the air, doing interviews, public affairs programs, documentaries, plays, poetry readings, book reviews, and, finally, my present show, *Halfway Down the Stairs*, a highly produced hour of stories, music, poetry, live concerts, plays, bilingual holiday celebrations — in the words of my opening theme by A.A. Milne, "...it isn't really anywhere—it's somewhere else instead." Heard every Saturday morning from eight to nine,* Halfway Down the Stairs* is a multi-level program for listeners of all ages, the misnomer, “Kids’ Show” being both an inaccurate and inadequate description.

When I am all by myself, the format is a montage of themes, such as gay teens, atypical families, death, dogs, folktales, war, peace, and sometimes, just plain silliness, like Sandra Boynton’s “Philadelphia Chickens” or the poetry of Jack Prelutsky or Shel Silverstein.

I receive a great deal of music in the mail, with the result that at home I have a studio and house filled to the brim, and bursting at the seams with CDs and children’s books.

Let’s confine this column to just the music. And that brings us to a sobering truth which I now must share with you, and that truth is that ninety percent of everything, especially in the world of recorded music, is Crap. There! I’ve cleaned it up a lot, but I have put forth the most provable postulate of our planet’s cultural life. And this searing statistic also encompasses art, food, drama, and even so-called “children’s books.”

Every week, I receive on the average of seven CDs in my KPFK mailbox. It’s a big thrill to listen to each one, or at least, to a part of each one or, sometimes, I must confess, to only twenty seconds of each one, before I throw up and listen. Because you can never tell. Sometimes, not very often, on an album of fifteen really dreadful songs, there is one real gem! A song that sounds good, touches the heart, and is just right for a particular story or poem on my program.

Before I get to the happier task of telling you about the one out of ten songs that gladdens my heart, let’s talk about what constitutes a really Horrible children’s CD. The first clue is usually the cover, which shows Monty and Myra, The Musical Mushkemelons; two aging hippies clothed in Cantaloupe costumes. The CD cover is four ears of corn each and their feet are encased in bunny rabbit bedroom slippers. The inside liner notes consist of pale yellow, totally unreadable, “mice type” on a pale pink background. If you are unlucky enough to decipher this verbiage, you will learn more than you’ll ever want to know about these two from their caesarean and breech births to their heartbreaking childhoods as the neglected offspring of inner-city social workers / folk singers. The songs are listed on the back insert, with no times included, and nowhere on the actual CD do the song titles or the times occur. What we do see on the disc are faded photos of The Artists As Infants.

The CD, should you be sufficiently masochistic to actually play it, begins, with God’s written sound, the synthesizer, but with a loud lisp— voice bellowing Hey Hey Hey, Hi there, Boys and Girls and Welcome to the Magical World of Monty and Myra! There are two minutes of giggling by the ADD Children’s Chorus, followed by four minutes of a deafening synthizer mercilessly drowning out lyrics like I have a green and purple parrot. Yeah yeah yeah! His favorite treat is a chocolate covered carrot! Yeah Yeah Yeah! Oh Baby Baby Baby Clap Your Hands!

Monty and Myra’s lyrics, and those of their ilk, are either didactic, or silly, or often, both — their only redeeming social value being that they are generally impossible to understand, due to Monty and Myra’s philosophy of “More is More!”

So, what do I do about all the CD’s I receive? It’s a real problem, so I am very very lucky to have not only my quiet but efficient business manager, Jennifer Fordyce, but I also could not function without the help of my wonderfully committee. These two entities entered my life after years of verbal abuse from the hundreds of people who send me their work. They always began by saying, “Uncle Ruthie, You can be straight with me. I can take it. I really want your input. Tell me exactly what you think of my album and I will not be upset or hurt. I will be so very Appreciative, Uncle Ruthie, for your valuable feedback.”

So when I received a really dreadful album, I tried to be gently critical. I tried to find something, anything, positive to say about these really terribl songs, but I finally found out that people do not want criticism of any kind. After the mildest of criticisms these people would explode with, “Well, that’s very strange, because, do you know, Uncle Ruthie, I have sent this album to hundreds of people and, except for you, they have all loved it!” So now I have my committee and I tell Monty and Myra of Muskmelon Music, “Thank you so very much for sending me your music. I loved it, but the committee felt it was not quite right for the program!”

Let me stop right here and try to help all of you who send me CDs. I can’t do much about your actual music, but I can give you a few of the rules, the most important one being:

1. Put the number of each cut, the title, and the time on the actual disc.
2. Put this information on the back of the CD case and on the inside.
3. Without this information, especially the time of each cut, your music stands little chance of ever being played.
4. Be sure everything in print is easy to read.
5. Keen it brief. Try not to thank your entire extended family, everyone in your building, and all your elementary school teachers, even if they did teach all the verses to The Blue Tail Fly.
6. Don’t be cute. Be creative. If you don’t know how to make a great CD cover, you can’t go wrong with a picture of yourself singing with kids. Kids like to know what you look like (For many reasons, not all of them good.)

Although I said I can’t help you with the actual music, here are a few suggestions. Try to use real acoustic instruments, and some real performers. Synthesizers should be used rarely, like seasoning. They are machines.

Try to listen to many of the wonderful children’s songwriters and performers. Listen to Pete Seeger, Woody Guthrie, Malvina Reynolds, Charlotte Diamond, Dan Crow, Sam Hinton, Bob Blue (there are hundreds more)…draw on Folkways and Smithsonian collections. If you haven’t already, make a long list of your favorites…those terrific tunes that constitute the ten best.

Music, “Thank you so very much for sending me your music. I loved it, but the committee felt it was not quite right for the program!”

UNCLE RUTHIE'S TEN BEST LIST

(These are in no special order, and are not really the ten best, just chosen at whim among hundreds of great CDs. Each CD contains two or more of my favorites).

THE BEST OF BOB BLUE (Bob Blue) (BSP 21 Black Socks Press) [www.filbert.com/cd/BobBlue]

THE BEST OF MARCIA BERMAN (Marcia Berman) (MT201 CD) [www.cdbaby.com/cd/lesliezak1]

FOK! SONGS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE (Pete Seeger) (SFW CD 45024) [www.cdbaby.com/cd/lesliezak1]

NEVER GROW UP (Anne Hills and Cindy Mangsen) (Flying Fish FF671)

MAIL MYSELF TO YOU (John McCutcheon) (Rounder CD 8016)

THE WORLD’S GONNA LISTEN (Joanne Olhansky Hammel) (JHO 102D)

MY JEWISH DISCOVERY (Craig and Company) (Craig Taubman) [www.cdbaby.com/cd/craig1co1]

UNCLE RUTHIE is the producer and host of HALF WAY DOWN THE STAIRS, heard every Sunday morning on KPFK Radio, 90.7 FM. She also teaches music at The Blind Children’s Center in Los Angeles. Ruthie does concerts for children, families and adults, as well as teacher workshops. She teaches beginning piano, and especially welcomes students with special needs. She can be reached at 310-838-8115, or at uncleruthie@aol.com.

UNCLE RUTHIE

THE COMMITTEE SAID....”
One day last year, while walking up the hill to my son's house, I saw my neighbor, Roslyn, watering her lawn, not calm and contemplative but with a determined stride to her gait, as if she were about to tackle the task, but wild-eyed and glaring fiercely over her shoulder. Soon her mother, twitching with anxiety, emerged from the house, wringing her hands. Her soft, lazy Texas accent belied her distress as she asked, "Honey Lamb, where's Daddy?"

She had the faded version of the same accent, Roslyn said, "Daddy's been dead twenty years, Ma; but you remember our neighbor, Valere, don't you?"

That turned a switch. Her hands stopped wringing and her face relaxed. "I didn't know you were going to ask me that, honey," she replied. "Daddy was never 'drifting too far from the shore.'"

No Direction Home

DYLAN

November-December 2006

where it also referred to the lowest class.

dangerous and revolutionary than a communist."

And you won't find it in the collected songs of labor's greatest bard—Joe Hill.

She developed her sway to a degree of agility you probably haven't seen in someone whose feet don't move. When their big dogs tussled in her space, she shuffled back, formatted fingers, to walk on the floor like a hawk swooping after its prey. Kirra, her prey, stood smack in the middle of the room, refusing to be relocated. Kady soon learned to steer around her sister or to tuck her legs up for spectacular near misses. Kirra learned to keep her feet planted firmly on the floor and to sway out of Kady's trajectory.

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as suited the task, but wild-eyed and glancing furtively over her

"I don't, but she's a pretty little thing, ain't she? Howdy, Vivian."

I soon joined Roslyn's team of friends who dropped in once a week to chat with her mother while she got some peaceful time with her husband, Billy.

She had the faded version of the same accent, Roslyn said, "Daddy's been dead twenty years, Ma; but you remember our neighbor, Valere, don't you?"

That turned a switch. Her hands stopped wringing and her face relaxed. "I didn't know you were going to ask me that, honey," she replied. "Daddy was never 'drifting too far from the shore.'"

As a word, which is a poet's stock-in-trade, it even predates Karl Marx's. He is an artist. And "proletariat" is a word that would appeal to an artist.

"My gift!" exclaimed Roslyn. "I play by ear because I couldn't learn all those notes!"

Dylan's return swoop. It looked like one of those square dances with everyone simultaneously chanting across the square to the other side with no collisions.

I speculated a lot about what Kirra was thinking and about her innate wisdom, in seeking a stability. Would this assist the rest of her life? Would it become part of her personality and character as well as her physical being?

I continued visiting Genevieve. It was a bit like the movie Groundhog Day, with its interchangeable conversations. Once, desperate to change it, I interrupted Genevieve: "Do you remember any songs from when you were a girl?"

She snapped back into reality with a coy smile. "Well, yes, I surely do. A young man used to court me with this song," and she sang a sweet, silly old song about walking together.

The next week I took my Fireside Book of Love Songs with Sweet Genevieve marked. "That's my song," she declared, and sang it through. We found others. Some she knew right off and some she had to study for a sec- ond or two. If I knew the melody, she harmonized. When Roslyn came to the door, Genevieve said, "Don't send her away yet, Honey, I want to learn this song.

Roslyn watched in amazement. "Ma," she said, I never knew you could sight read.

"Oh piffle," said Genevieve dismissively, "sight-reading's nothing compared to your gift."

"My girl!" exclaimed Roslyn. "I play by ear because I couldn't learn all those notes!"

As I left, Genevieve said "It was real nice of you to come sing with me, Vella. Her hands started wringing. "That lovely lady who just left," she asked, "is she my daughter or my sister?"

Two months from the day she first stood up, Kirra honored me with her "My gift! exclaimed Roslyn. "I play by ear because I couldn't learn all those notes!"

Dylan's long-standing practice of borrowing from the tradition he inherited, and even his uncredited quoting may be defended by reference to no less an authority than T.S. Eliot, who wrote in his 1922 work of literary criticism, The Sacred Wood, that "liberal imitation is good poetry."

Dylan is so scrutinized by his legion of fans and critics alike that before Modern Times was even released there was a web site up with all of its song lyrics annotated for their sources. There is no hiding place up there.

The title Modern Times echoes Charlie Chaplin's working class classic of 1936, and similarly leans on symbols and imagery that have stood the test of time. They burned my barn and stole my horse is the way he describes the personal descent of his narrator into poverty; Sometimes no one wants what you got, sometimes you can't give it away, epitomizes his lament on the catastrophe faced by the dispossessed industrial worker today; They say low wages are a reality if we want to compete abroad underscores the consequences of both Republican and Democratic policies that have led to our dying industrial heartland and new service sector economy; I can live on rice and beans, perfectly captures the steady resolve a sixty-five year old radical American songwriter still at the top of his game.

How lucky we are to have this national treasure still around, still out there on his "never-ending tour," and still making music that makes a difference.

In the chorus to Working Man's Blues #2, he asks his companion to Meet me at the bottom, don't lag behind / Bring me my boots and shoes / You can hang back or fight your best on the foreground / Sing a little bit of these working man blues.

As Modern Times makes clear, Dylan long ago made his choice—he's fighting his best on the frontlines. And with little fanfare, he may have painted his masterpiece. 
and the son took hold. Among the musicians nurtured in this environment were sonero Papo Lucca of the groundbreaking Fania All-Stars, bass player Bobby Valentín, singer Hector Lavoie, known for his emotional, fluid improvisations, and bandleaders Tito Puente and Tito Rodriguez. By the 1960s and 1970s, New York was bustling with talented individuals like a magnet.

RECOMMENDED LISTENING: La Sonora Ponceña de Puerto Rico (Charly, UK) Papo Lucca’s talents as a bandleader and pianist stand out in this compilation of brilliant salsa recordings.

THE COLUMBIAN CONNECTION
But we’re not ready to dive into the New York scene yet. First, we need to explore the cumbia phenomenon and how the Columbia recording industry eventually expanded along the models of the Cuban bands heard in radio broadcasts. Equally influential in where salsa was to become Columbia’s salsa was Joe Arroyo who joined Fruko y Sus Tesos at age 17. Originator of music tropical, Arroyo incorporated Caribbean-influenced music to his bandleader, and music producer in the New York scene.

By the 1970s, cumbia bands had appropriated from Cuban the improvisatory montuno section. They also had established the repeated syncopated piano patterns known as guajira.

RECOMMENDED LISTENING
The Godfather of Salsa (Discos Fuentes, Columbia; Mango, UK)

THE NEW YORK CONNECTION
The ingredients of salsa came together in New York dance halls, the Palladium serving as the mecca for mambo and charanga bands. The polyrhythms in the percussion sections of big bands of Tito Rodriguez and Tito Puente inspired high-energy acrobatics on the dance floor.

In 1971, a group of recording artists Fruko called the Fania All Stars began recording and touring around New York. In 1973, the group had sold out Yankee Stadium. Somewhere along the line, their spirited brand of music became known as salsa. It is said that “Salsa!” was the cry of approval from its early audiences.

Enter Celia Cruz, joining the All Stars in 1974 and soon salsa had its reigning queen. The warmth and vibrancy of Celia’s vocal delivery mesmerized listeners. Her improvisations were like a spirited conversation we were having with the audience. Other stellar Fania artists included Puerto Rican singers Hector Lavoie and Cheo Feliciano, pianist Eddie Palmieri and conga virtuoso Ray Barretto. Fruko himself became known as the “godfather of salsa,” and Colón, who played with his later band, introduced the Puerto Rican cuatro to the salsa ensemble through the talented Yomo Toro.

Recommended Listening: Fania All-Stars Live At The Cheeter, Vol.1 (Fania Records, 1971)

This record beams you back to one of New York’s premier discotheques and exuberant performances of the band and various salseros at their peak.

Exitos Eternos (Universal Latino 2003) The cream of Celia Cruz, salsa’s reigning queen in a field that has been dominated by male vocalists.

THE MIAMI CONNECTION
Cuba’s loss of musical talent was Little Havana’s gain. Son, mambo, and charanga found their way to Calle Ocho, a fertile creative environment for musicians such as Carlos Oliva de Los Sobrinos del Juez, who developed the salsa-rock style in the 1970s. Willie Chirino, originally a salsa bass player, having played with the band, changed the Miami salsa sound, which blends salsa with rock and pop. That sound generally has a more forceful percussion section than the New York-based salsa. Originally Miami-based, Gloria Estefan has taken the sound to new pop directions and strayed the definition of salsa.


This is a good starter recording to experience the Miami sound and the work of a beloved composer and performer.

ENDLESS CONNECTIONS
According to The Rough Guide to World Music, Celia Cruz, insisted that salsa was synonymous with Cuban music. “It’s mambo, cha-cha-cha, rumba... son,” she said of the music under one name.

But multiple influences continue to act on what was originally an Afro-Cuban form. In the Dominican Republic, the centuries-old beat pattern known as merengue influenced the salsa sound on that island and beyond. Dominican Roberto Valdiviezo became a Fania recording artist, influencing the bandleader, and music producer in the New York salsa scene. Venezuela saw a big salsa boom in the 1970s and its star bandleader, Oscar D’Leon, eventually shared concert stages with Celia Cruz. After the seminal 1970s, Panamanian Ruben Blades, who played with Willy Colon, replaced lyrics about fickle love with political commentary. In the 1980s, a Puerto Rican-influenced softer style of salsa emerged, known as salsa romantica. Lalo Rodriguez represented this style with his not-so-subtle hit, Ven devorame otro corazon (Come and devour my heart again).

In this brief exploration, it is impossible to name all the great contributions to salsa. We can conclude, however, that this musical sauce with its polyrhythmic base and structure for improvisation can incorporate many flavors depending on where it is played and what people are listening to. It is seasoned with cumbia or merengue rhythms, rock or pop overtones, or even hip-hop attitude. To emphasize its multicultural aspect, we should note that in the late 1970s and early 1980s, salsa band, Orquesta de la Luz, made its mark with musicians singing in Spanish, phonetically.

No one can provide a static definition of salsa because it continues to evolve... which makes me wonder: Is there a West Coast style of salsa? Surely our LA Latino musicians have added something to the mix? In my research, I came upon a website for a West Coast Salsa Congress which took place last May. Unfortunately, the FolksWorks deadline approached and there wasn’t time to dig deeper. But this intriguing thread leads to further research, expect your musical detective to return with Salsa: The West Coast Connection.

Audrey Coleman is a writer, educator, and passionate explorer of world music and culture. Research for the above article came from classes she took in UCLA’s Department of Ethnomusicology, from forays into The Rough Guide to World Music, Volume 2 (Rough Guides Limited, London, Penguin Books, 2000), and from obsessional listening and web-surfing on the subject.

DRUMMING


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When I first came to live in Los Angeles I was very excited to see Robbie Conal’s “counter-infotainment” posters plastered on my local traffic signal box. I took it to mean that somewhere nearby were people willing to get out there and probe random minds to consider “politics, power and the abuses of both” (as Conal puts it on his website: www.robbieconal.com). You can see his artwork monthly in the LA Weekly ArtBurn column and now at the Craft and Folk Art Museum’s exhibition, Street Signs and Solar Ovens: Socialcraft In Los Angeles which runs from October 22nd and December 31st. It’s curated by Marc Herbst (who I spoke with) and Robby Herbst, editors of the Journal of Aesthetics and Protest - a magazine, a website - www.joap.org, and curators of various art events and lectures. They’ve put together a show covering different aspects of creative means of activism pursued in the Los Angeles region grouped into four main topics. 

One topic is that of traditional crafts re-worked to have political content, such as the latch-hooking of Karl Erickson and Lisa Anne Auerbach’s knitwear. Her sweaters and banners bear such text as, “If Nothing Changes, It Changes Nothing” and “If there’s Nothing Left to Burn, Set Yourself On Fire”. She chose knitted sweaters for their relative longevity compared to T-shirts, and because she considers the appearance of less restrictive knitwear in women’s fashion to be a positive step towards women’s rights and therefore radical. See www.stealthissweater.com. A “parade” of mannequins will be sporting politically charged garb.

Then there are specific protest crafts, such as welded lockboxes (designed to make the process of being dragged away from a protest site that much more lengthy), pirate radio kits, and banners from the anti-war women’s protest group, Code Pink for Peace. Oscar Sanchez will also have a big ol’ cardboard Hummer on display.

Examples of Green technologies to help make the world better Right now include the titular solar ovens built by Chris Nyerge and Eric Enim (who uses satellite dishes for some of his designs). The Pasadena household “Path To Freedom” who (except for water) are living “Off The Grid” and support themselves with the food they grow. They will have examples of their people-powered machines and jams. “Fallen Fruit,” a group that publishes regularly updated foraging maps of fruit in the Los Angeles area, www.fallenfruit.org, will be exhibiting as well.

The area of Social Crafts include getting people together to meet and create projects together in order to overcome the isolation of an urban technologically based culture, such as Craft Night in Silverlake. Mark Blockstein works with high school students to consider how the skills they’ve been learning might be used to solve design problems that could address social problems. I think The Bicycle Kitchen fits into this category as well as the Green Technologies. They have workshops and classes in bike building and maintenance, community outreaches, and group rides. See www.bicyclekitchen.com.

Get down there and check it out.

Street Signs and Solar Ovens: Socialcraft In Los Angeles
October 22 to December 31, 2006
Craft and Folk Art Museum
5814 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90036
323-937-4230 • www.cafam.org

Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 11:00 am to - 5:00 pm
Thursday 11:00 am to - 7:00 pm
Saturday and Sunday 12:00 noon to 6:00 pm

Admission: General $5, Students and Seniors $3, Children under 12 Free.
Free admission the first Wednesday of the month.

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

Vive la Révolution d’amour, 2005
Wool

Lisa Anne Auerbach
Vive la revolution d’amour, 2005
Wool
H\h i\ folks. As always, please remember that this article does not constitute legal advice and that you should consult appropriate and competent legal counsel before acting on anything discussed in this column. With that in mind, let’s dig in!

I am a painter and a folk musician here in beautiful Southern California. I’d like to include a painting I did of Woody Guthrie on my next album. The painting is based on a famous photograph of Woody. I included it in a painting I did of several folk artists entitled “Legends of Folk.” It’s in the attic for a while until I could figure out what to do with it. I’d also like to sell t-shirts with prints of the painting at my concerts. Are there any legal issues I should worry about?

The short answer is that your painting of Woody Guthrie places you in the realms of the law of publicity, copyright and trademark. Each of these areas need to be analyzed before you should utilize the painting commercially.

Publicity - Since you are located in California, you should know that you are subject to California’s laws on rights of publicity. Under California law, any person who knowingly uses another’s (whether dead of alive) name, voice, signature, photograph, or likeness, in any manner, on or in products, merchandise, or goods, or for purposes of advertising or selling, or soliciting purchases of, products, merchandise, goods or services, without such person’s prior consent (or that of his heirs) is liable for any damages sustained by the person or persons injured as a result thereof. While, with respect to a deceased person, a single piece of art bearing that person’s likeness is not something upon which a lawsuit can be brought under this law, it is an infringement of a copyright.

In the seminal case interpreting this statutory right, the California Supreme Court was reviewing a series of lithographs and t-shirts bearing the likenesses of the Three Stooges. Those products were, in turn, based on a charcoal drawing of the Three Stooges by an artist. The artist argued that all reproductions of, products, merchandise, goods or services, without such person’s prior consent (or that of his heirs) is liable for any damages sustained by the person or persons injured as a result thereof. While, with respect to a deceased person, a single piece of art bearing that person’s likeness is not something upon which a lawsuit can be brought under this law, it is an infringement of a copyright.

In your case, unlike the one above, there may be a good argument that your use of the likeness of Woody Guthrie under the First Amendment trumps the California right of publicity, as the portrait is intended to be a part of a much larger artistic expression concerning the artist’s expression on the “masters of folk.”

Trademark - Here, the issue is whether your use of Woody Guthrie’s likeness would cause confusion in the market as to whether this is an official use of his likeness. In a recent case, Tiger Woods sued an artist who had drawn his likeness in a painting, including several golf giants, and used the words “Tiger Woods” under his likeness. That name is a registered trademark. goods argued that both the name and his likeness were “trademarks” as their use in the painting implied Woods’ endorsement of the painting. The court found that Woods’ likeness could not be construed to be a trademark and that the artist’s first amendment rights superseded Woods’ publicity rights.

The same is true with you. Your painting of Woody Guthrie should fall within the rulings of the federal courts on this issue. Hence, it seems to me that you should be able to use the painting, both on the album cover and the t-shirts, without fear of a lawsuit!

Richard Gee is an attorney specializing in the entertainment industry and is a Celtic and acoustic singer, guitarist, songwriter, arranger and music producer in his spare time. You can reach him at rgee@gee-law.com.

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**CALTECH presents**

**A Scottish Christmas with Bonnie Rideout**

Imagine a crisp Scottish winter day—air spiced with the scent of strong wassail and the call of bagpipes over the Highlands. A Scottish Christmas presents a lively collection of Scottish carols and traditional Highland music and dance. A perfect family holiday event!

**Saturday, December 9, 2006 • 8 p.m.**
**Sunday, December 10, 2006 • 3:30 p.m.**
**Beckman Auditorium**
$29, $25, $21; $10 Youth
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**Family Nights Out Event**

Call for tickets: (626)395-4652
or if outside the Pasadena area, (888)2CALTECH
www.events.caltech.edu
You may be one of the many people who purchased a copy of the CD Our New Orleans last December. It was composed entirely of newly recorded songs by artists from New Orleans’ music community and was issued by Nonesuch Records as a means of raising funds for musicians whose homes were affected by Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath. On August 29, Nonesuch was able to present its first donation, a check for $1 million to Habitat for Humanity International. The donation will go toward providing housing in partnership with low-income musicians and others through the New Orleans Habitat Musicians’ Village.

I’m not sure exactly why I feel compelled to share this bit of information, but here it is, and make of it what you will: Paris Hilton’s music video Stars Are Blind has been banned in India because of “sexual connotations.”

Stars Are Blind
Censorship or taste – you decide!
This means that it cannot be broadcast on any television channel in India.

It cannot be broadcast on any television channel in India.

“Life has got a habit of not standing hitched. You got to ride it like you find it. You got to change with it. If a day goes by that don’t change some of your old notions for new ones, that is just about like trying to milk a dead cow.”

— Woody Guthrie

Celine Yo-Yo Ma has been working toward simplification of non-immigration visa policy that over past years have made it difficult – and sometimes impossible – for musicians from other countries to enter the United States. Ma testified before Congress in April saying that the process for artists obtaining visas presents hassles that span months and can cost thousands of dollars.

Folk and World music performers often operate on small budgets and either cannot afford the expending cost of $1,000 to have their visas processed in a matter of weeks, or cannot wait the months it would take otherwise. Ma has found support from California Democrat Henry Waxman, who said “In the long run, our security is enhanced and not diminished by the exchange of people and ideas.”

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LARRY WINES’ TOP TEN - 2006

Rather than a one-through-ten hierarchical rating, here are the best in each of ten categories. Venue and event picks are local, the best in the LA region in 2006. As for CDs, I now must listen, primarily, to a great many individual tracks to program the radio, so I find it impossible to select “best CDs.” Too many deserving artists who carefully craft complete albums would be shortchanged.

Best Indoor Acoustic Music Venue (small, medium, large). Evaluated for acts booked, sound quality, atmosphere, comfort: Small: COFFEE GALLERY BACKSTAGE, Altadena, is easily the repeat winner, with far more first-rate acts booked than any other venue in LA (www.coffeegallery.com). Honorable mentions to HAUENBECK’S GENERAL STORE, North Hollywood; HOTEL CAFÉ, Hollywood; BOULEVARD MUSIC, Culver City. Medium: McCabe’s GUITAR SHOP, Santa Monica, with a fine show each week, is the repeat winner (www.mccabes.com). Large: LANCASTER PERFORMING ARTS CENTER, Lancaster, which delivered Arlo with the best sound of his Southern Cal concerts, Natalie McMaster where you didn’t need binoculars, and many other folk greats; avoid the first row balcony, all other seats are good or better (www.lpacs.org).

Best Outdoor Acoustic Music Venue (small, medium, large). Small: (tie) “SUMMER AT THE SQUARE” series at Pershing Square, downtown LA (laparks.org); and, any of the fine house concert series, under the stars (okay, indoors or out, call this a salute to all the stalwart presenters). Medium (3-way tie): WILL GEER THEATRICUM BOTANICUM, Summertime Music Series, in Topanga Canyon, (www.theatricum.com), SKIRRILL SUMMER MUSIC SERIES, Skirball Cultural Center, atop Sepulveda Pass, (www.skirball.org); CULVER CITY SUMMER SUNSET MUSIC SERIES, City Hall Courtyard, (www.culvercitymusic.org). Large: JOHN ANSON FORD AMPHITHEATER, Cahuenga Pass, with a hillside garden behind the stage, good sound, all the advantages of the Hollywood Bowl, but small enough that there’s no need for a telescope and bottled oxygen; (www.fordamphitheater.org).


Best Monthly Listening-Room (tie): AMERICANA MUSIC CIRCLE, schedule varies, visiting and local acts produced by singer-songwriter Lauren Adams at Kulaks Woodshed (www.lauradenadams.com) (repeat winner, but new venue); and, BLUEGRASS AT BREAEMAR COUNTRY CLUB, third Tuesdays, Woodland Hills; produced by Bluegrass Association of Southern California. Hon. Mention last year) (contactbasc@earthlink.net).


Best Every-Other-Month Event: LA WoMen in Music’s Performing Songwriter SOIREE, at Wyndham Bel Age Hotel, Ten 20 Supper Club. $15 buys dinner, parking AND the show, in a respectful listening-room atmosphere (www.lawim.com). (Repeat winner.)

Best Multi-Day Festival (by category): Folk/World: CTMS SUMMER SOLSTICE FESTIVAL, Soka University, Aliso Viejo, in June; Southern Cal’s premiere teaching festival, and fun just to listen (www.ctmsfolkmusic.org). Ethnic American: LONG BEACH BAYOU FESTIVAL, Queen Mary events park, in June, they still have problems with the blues stage being drowned by the main stage, but the musicians include Louisiana’s best, the food is authentic, and they have workshops, too (www.longbeachbayoufestival.com). Western Music: SANTA CLARITA COWBOY FESTIVAL, April, one of the best in America (www.cowboyfestival.org). Bluegrass: HUCK FINN FESTIVAL on the Mojave River near Victorville, in June; bring two folding chairs, one to position for the main stage evening shows, the other to move with the shade of the trees during the day; (www.huckfinn.com). Folk/Acoustic Renaissance: LIVE OAK MUSIC FESTIVAL, above Santa Barbara, in June; (www.liveoakfest.org).


WANTED

ECLECTIC ROOTS MUSIC

Tied to the Tracks with Larry Wines - Sat 6 am
Twang with Cowboy Nick - Sat 10 am
Ann the Raven - Sat 5 pm
Bluegrass Etc., with Frank Hoppe - Sun 6 am
Tangled Roots with Pat Baker - Sun 4 pm
Down Home with Chuck Taggart - Thur 7 pm

REWARD

TUNE IN TO: KCSN 88.5 FM
A rts & Roots Radio
www.kcsn.org

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Judy / May Mesanger

Ron Milberger / Gail Smashy

Aaron / Barbara Miranda

James Menghi / Linda Dow

Gitta Morris / Gie Martin

Jamea Morenstein

Sabrina Motley

Nioma Nouradlan

Walt Nycz / Carol Kugler

Brendan O'Gorman

Gabrielle O'Neill

Stephen / Susan Parker

Russie Paris

Priscilla Parrish

Lemey Potlak

King Reilly

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Milt / Stefan Rosenberg

Gary Rose

Duane Shuman

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FolkWorks has been around now for 5 years. You have come to rely on being there as your primary source of information about new and exciting events that you would not hear about otherwise.

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In no particular order:

1. Martin Nadel - The Saga of Mayflower May

2. Pauline Scanlon - Ay, Caramba

3. Jose Gonzalez

4. Elijah Wald

5. John Doyle

6. Baksheesh Boys

7. City of Prague Phil.

8. Wrembel Trio

9. The Stephane Wrembel Trio - Gypsy Rumble

10. James Lee Stanley - Keep This Coupon, 'til the wee hours

THE GUITAR OF JOSEPH SPENCE (DVD)

The very unique style of the Bahamian string bender and singer is revealed to the serious player and an interview and collection of songs are included for listeners and air pickers everywhere.

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The Swift-Boating of Pluto

Pluto, you’re doing a heck of a job,” was the only thing missing from the International Astronomers Union no-confidence vote meeting in Prague, where they demoted him to the status of a dwarf planet. Like FAA in New Orleans during Hurricane Katrina, Pluto failed to “clear out his neighborhood.” It was no longer enough to orbit the sun and have a round body to qualify as a planet.

There are new rules in place: You have to clean up your neighborhood of debris or asteroids and other heavenly detritus that litter the “Kuiper Belt” in which Pluto moves around the sun at the FAMA’s glacially slow pace of once every 248 years. Having failed to meet the new definition—which was adopted for the express purpose of removing him from the list of accepted planets—Pluto now belongs to a new category: “dwarf planet.”

There is a cosmos underdog, the intergalactic outcast, the closest thing the universe had to a planet—not less, as he became in the eyes of the IAU. Pluto was the hero to the comparable status of “dwarf veteran.” I’m surprised they didn’t insist on him returning his two purple hearts and a silver cross to the Admiral.

Pluto is the folk singer’s dream planet in that he represents all of those characters—both real and imaginary—on a cosmic scale.

Pluto is Woody Guthrie’s four-year-old daughter Cathy Ann Guthrie, who inspired the song “Songs to Grow On like Little Sack ‘a Sugar.” Pluto is Mr. Rabbit in the song Burl Ives sang, “Mr. Rabbit, Mr. Rabbit / Your tail is mighty small / Yes bless God it’s hard- ly there at all / Every lit- tle soul must shine, shine / Every little soul must shine along / Mr. Rabbit, Mr. Rabbit / Your eyes are mighty red / Yes bless God I’m almost dead / Every little soul must shine, shine / Every little soul must shine along.”

Small is beautiful, we told ourselves in the 1970s, after fuel shortages and long lines at the pump led people to downsize their vehicles, alas only temporarily. We now live in a “Super-size Me” culture, where bigger is once again better, and biggest is best. Try to find a small station wagon at a used car lot these days. I have. They don’t exist: all you see are mastodons, SUVs, and in the front, leading the pack, humongous Suburbans and Hummers. And every tank full of gas winds up in the pockets of the terrorists.

Where are the Swift-Boat Veterans for Truth when you need them?

Ross Altman has a Ph.D. in English. Before becoming a full-time folk singer he taught college English and Speech. He now sings around California for libraries, unions, schools, political groups and folk festivals. You can reach Ross at Greygoosemusic@aol.com.
Lucinda Williams & Miller Williams
Poetry Said, Poetry Sung
RARE ENGAGEMENT!
Thu, Nov 30 at 8pm
Royce Hall

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SPECIAL EVENTS (continued from page 32)

****SAN DIEGO****

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 3
6:30pm LITD PROJEKT Live at LITD
2324 4th Ave, San Diego
$15

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 4
8:30pm GEORGE LYNCH 
www.georgelynch.com
North Park, San Diego
$20

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 9
7:00pm EDDIE & THE CRUCIFIXES
2500 3rd Ave, San Diego
$15

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 10
8:30pm MELISSA RICE 
www.melissarice.org
North Park, San Diego
$15

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 11
8:00pm THE GRAHAM BUSH BAND
www.langley101.com
North Park, San Diego
$15

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 18
8:00pm JANIS IAN 
www.janisian.com 
North Park, San Diego
$50

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 19
2:00pm THE WILKINSON BROTHERS
North Park, San Diego
$15

TUESDAY NOVEMBER 28
2:00pm THE WRIGHT BROTHERS
North Park, San Diego
$15

****SANTA BARBARA****

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 16
8:00pm ROYAL DRUMMERS OF BURUNDI
805-965-5593 www.northstarcoffee.com
916 State St., Santa Barbara
North Star Coffee

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 17
8:00pm THE VELVET UNDERGROUND
916 State St., Santa Barbara
North Star Coffee

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 18
7:00pm JONI MITCHELL 
www.joniMitchell.com
793 El Paseo, Ojai
Matilija Auditorium

SATURDAY DECEMBER 1
8:00pm VENICE 
www.venicecentral.com $25
SOHo Santa Barbara

SATURDAY DECEMBER 9
8:00pm RON ANTMAN
www.venicecentral.com $25
SOHo Santa Barbara

SUNDAY DECEMBER 10
7:00pm THE WRIGHT BROTHERS
805-965-5593 www.northstarcoffee.com
916 State St., Santa Barbara
North Star Coffee

November 18, 2006
10:00 am till 8:00 pm
Irvine Meadows Fairgrounds

**** SANTA BARBARA ****

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 4
8:00pm LUCY Dacus 
www.lucydacus.com
793 El Paseo, Ojai
Matilija Auditorium

SATURDAY DECEMBER 2
8:00pm VENICE 
www.venicecentral.com $25
SOHo Santa Barbara

SUNDAY DECEMBER 3
7:00pm THE WRIGHT BROTHERS
805-965-5593 www.northstarcoffee.com
916 State St., Santa Barbara
North Star Coffee

**** WINTERFEST ****

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 11
7:00pm CHRISTOPHER DEAN 
www.cairneyhill.com $15
UCSB Arlington Theatre

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 18
8:00pm LES PALADINS
805-965-5593 www.northstarcoffee.com
916 State St., Santa Barbara
North Star Coffee

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 19
2:00pm THE WRIGHT BROTHERS
805-965-5593 www.northstarcoffee.com
916 State St., Santa Barbara
North Star Coffee

FRIDAY DECEMBER 1
8:00pm RON ANTMAN
www.venicecentral.com $25
SOHo Santa Barbara

FRIDAY DECEMBER 8
8:00pm EDDIE & THE CRUCIFIXES
2500 3rd Ave, San Diego
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Woodgrain
Bury Bogdards
Hiho Hoyos

*** Celtic Spring ***