



# Newsletter

A bi-monthly publication of the American Accordionists' Association

July-August 2017



American Accordionists' Association

www.ameraccord.com

AAA SqueezeFest

July 11-15, 2018

Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites

625 First Street

Alexandria, VA 22314



Sponsored by the American Accordionists' Association

### From the Editor:

Welcome to the July/August 2017 edition of the AAA Newsletter. As the musical memories of the summer festival in Princeton, NJ resonate the variety of concerts, competitions and activities that took place, the countdown is now on leading up to the Gala AAA 80th Anniversary Festival to be held in Alexandria, VA (Washington, DC) from July 11-15, 2018. We hope you all are able to include this important event in your plans. It promises to be an exciting and important musical event.

Once again my sincere thanks to the AAA Past President, Linda Reed and Board of Director, Rita Davidson for their kind assistance with the AAA Newsletter.

We invite you to submit your news items for publication so that your fellow members can see the incredible array of accordion activities happening throughout the country. Items for the September/October Newsletter can be sent to me at goaccordion@yahoo.com or to the official AAA e-mail address at: ameraccord1938@gmail.com. Please include 'AAA Newsletter' in the subject box, so that we don't miss any items that come in. Text should be sent within the e-mail or as a Word attachment. Pictures should be sent as a high quality .jpg file, and the larger the file size the better. We can always reduce/crop the picture if necessary, however we are unable to increase the quality from smaller pictures.

Thanks for your support, and I look forward to hearing from you all!

Sincerely,

Kevin Friedrich - AAA Newsletter Editor



### From the President:

Hope you have had a GREAT summer. It is rapidly coming to a close, and Fall will be upon us soon. With the change of seasons comes a renewed interest in "learning" for all of us. School begins, we all look for something new to do, clean up old projects that have remained incomplete, etc., etc.

Looking back over the summer and its events, I feel blessed that I have had the opportunity to meet and spend time with accordionists (and musicians) from around the world...at the AAA Festival in Princeton, on my trip to Italy for the Peter Soave Music Academy, in Portland, Oregon for the Rose City Accordion Camp at Silver Falls, and so much more.

My wish is for all of our AAA members to experience these joyful and educational experiences. Keep tuned to the AAA website, this incredible newsletter, and our AAA YouTube Channel for highlights of all the events...you will be amazed at what the accordion is up to these days...and be sure to note all the young people who are dazzling us with their talents. The accordion is ALIVE and WELL...and I might add...in good hands for the future. Ideas from the AAA Open Meeting held July 16th at our Festival Farewell Breakfast are in the works, and we appreciate input from ALL AAA members to help guide us in presenting the events and interests that YOU have suggested. Feel free to send suggestions and comments to the AAA email address: ameraccord1938@gmail.com.

We send our support and best wishes to Nathan

Chapeton, the AAA Representative to the Coupe Mondiale Masters Category in Osimo, Italy. The event begins September 5th with accordionists from around the world competing for honors and prizes in the multiple categories. Keep an eye out for the "Daily Reports" and videos from the event, which will be posted to the Confederation Internationale des Accordeonists website at www.coupemondiale.org ...click "enter" on the home page, and then on the 2017 Italy icon and look for the videos! You will be entertained and amazed.

AND...Be sure to "Save The Date" for our 80th Anniversary Celebration and Festival, July 11-15, 2018 at the Holiday Inn and Suites in Alexandria, Virginia. Guest Artists include Joseph Natoli, Stas Venglevski with Tatyana Krasnobaeva, and yours truly - Mary Tokarski; Conductor for the 80th Anniversary Festival Orchestra will be our beloved Joan Cochran Sommers; and a Lifetime Achievement Award will be presented to Louis F. Coppola during the festivities. Remember to get your hotel reservations in right away... the hotel will cut off our special rate one month prior to the start of the Festival. Stay posted to the website for more up-to-date information as it becomes available. Don't miss this one! See you there!



# Accordions Around the World in New York, NY

AAA Board member Mario Tacca was one of the many featured artists performing in heart of New York City as part of the annual Accordions Around the World celebration.

Performing in the shadows of the magnificent New York City skyscrapers, the July 12th celebration included artists on Concertina, Bandoneon, Accordion and Harmonium performing a variety of styles from Cajun, Tex Mex, Folk, Jazz to Indian Chant and more. Pictured are a sampling of the many artists performing on July 12th, including Rachelle Garniez, Dick LaVine (Concertina), Vitor Goncalves, Laura Vilche (Bandoneon), Eddie Van Tuba, John Sherman, Kenny Margolis, Albert Behar, Melissa Elledge, Mindra Sahadeo, Smörgåsbandet, Gregory Grene and Sadys Rodrigo Espitia. Internationally acclaimed vocalist Mary Mancini and husband accordionist Mario Tacca are pictured with event coordinator Ariana Hellerman.

'Accordions Around the World', a four-week series of free music involving over 100 accordionists and players of free reed instruments, representing different musical genres ended in grand style on Friday July 21st with an 'Accordion Festival' hosted by New York-based accordionist Rachelle Garniez, and featured the Bil Afrah Project, Zlatni Balkan Zvuk, Osnelda (Brazil), Gregorio Uribe (Colombia), and more!

The series opened when producer Ariana Hellerman, a New York arts consultant hosted "The Great Accordion Rendezvous, a "Make Music New York Mass Appeal and Celebration of the NYC Accordion Community" on June 21st. Bryant Park is located between Fifth and Sixth Avenues, 40th and 42nd Streets, New York. We'll be sure to keep you posted on the 2018 series as plans are made next year. ■



"The Great Accordion Rendezvous, a Make Music New York Mass Appeal and Celebration of the NYC Accordion Community"

## Masters Graduate Michael Bridge

The University of Toronto proudly announces that Michael Bridge is a Class of 2017 graduate of U of T's Masters of Music Performance program. An accordion virtuoso, the U of T featured Michael in their ongoing spotlight on exceptional class of graduates. This Fall, 25-year-old Michael Bridge will start a doctoral program in accordion, becoming the third person at U of T to take it that far.

Michael Bridge is a captivating young musician, redefining the sound and image of his traditional instrument. Named one of CBC's "30 Hot Classical Musicians Under 30", he is internationally recognised for his dynamic stage-presence and unique musical versatility.

His repertoire includes classical masterworks, baroque, jazz, world music, folk dances, contemporary classical, and digital accordion compositions showcases the diverse genres possible with the accordion and removes stereotypes concerning the limitations of the instrument.

Michael made his solo orchestral debut with the Boston Pops at 17, and has performed on four continents, now playing over 100 concerts per year. He is a founding member of Double-Double Duo having toured Ecuador, Poland, France and across Canada with his collaborator Dr. Kornel Wolak (clarinet). Their debut album launched in 2015, enti-



Michael Bridge



Mary Mancini and Mario Tacca pictured here with Ariana Hellerman

itled 'Rock Bach'. He performs in Lodom Ensemble, an acoustic Iranian-Serbian-classical-tango quartet.

An ardent supporter of new music, Michael has over thirty world premieres to his credit, including works by Anna Pigdorna, Airat Ichmouratov and Pouya Hamidi. As a composer, he wrote and recorded two folk albums and is the primary arranger for several of his chamber ensembles.

He has gratefully received support for his academic work and touring from the Canada Council for the Arts, the Social Sciences & Humanities Research Council, The Sylva Gelber Music Foundation, the Government of Alberta and the University of Toronto.

On September 3, 2017, Michael will perform with the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra in their program "Symphony under the Skies" under the direction of Bob Bernhardt. For more information, please visit [www.michaelbridgemusic.com](http://www.michaelbridgemusic.com). ■

## Ksenija Sidorova in New York City

On Saturday, August 5, 2017, Ksenija Sidorova made her "Mostly Mozart" debut at Lincoln Center's Stanley H. Kaplan Penthouse in New York City.

The Mostly Mozart Festival is a week-long classical music festival that takes place in New York City every summer. Ms. Sidorova's performance was branded as the first accordion soloist recital in the history of the 51-year-old festival.

Her program featured the following selections: Scherzo-Toccata (Londonov); Variations on "Ah vous dirai-je, maman," K. 265 (Mozart); Autumnal Sceneries (Kusyakov); Barcarolle, Op. 10, No. 3 (Rachmaninoff); Revelation (Voitenko); Tanti Anni Prima (Piazzolla); Sentido Unico (Piazzolla) and S.V.P. (Piazzolla). Most of the arrangements were by Ksenija Sidorova herself.

The audience in the sold-out venue was charmed by Ms. Sidorova's artistry, technical capabilities, showmanship, and congeniality. She masterfully explained the capabilities of the accordion as a classical music solo instrument to a crowd filled predominantly by classical music enthusiasts with minimal accordion experience.

Encouraged to take up the instrument by a grandmother steeped in the folk tradition of accordion playing, Ksenija started to play the instrument aged eight under the guidance of Marija Gasele in her hometown of Riga. Her quest for more exposure to both classical and contemporary repertoire took her to London where she became a prize-winning undergraduate at the Royal Academy of Music studying under Owen Murray. She subsequently received her Masters Degree with Distinction.

In 2009 Ksenija made her debut at London's Wigmore Hall and appeared in the Park Lane Group Young Artists Showcase prompting The Times to single her out as "one of the real finds of the series". In May 2012 she became the first International Award winner of the Bryn Terfel Foundation, and this year appears at the Royal Albert Hall as part of his 50th birthday celebrations alongside Sting.

A recipient of both the Philharmonia Orchestra's Martin Musical Scholarship and Friends of the Philharmonia Award, as well as the Worshipful Company of Musicians Silver Medal, Ksenija has just been appointed a Junge Wilde Artist by the Konzerthaus Dortmund.

Ksenija regularly collaborates with Miloš Karadaglić, Juan Diego Flórez, Nicola Benedetti, Thomas Gould and Joseph Calleja. She works extensively with Avi Avital who, along with Itamar Doari, comprise the trio for the "Between Worlds" project which recently enjoyed performances at Shakespeare's Globe, throughout Germany and on a substantial US tour (including dates in Boston, Washington and New York). She has also appeared on Arte's "Stars von Morgen" with Rolando Villazón.

Forthcoming highlights include performances of Erkki-Sven Tüür Prophecy with the NHK Symphony and Paavo Järvi; a tour with Latvian National Symphony Orchestra; and concerts with the Luzerner Sinfonieorchester, WDR Rundfunkorchester, and at the Cheltenham and Bad Kissingen Festivals. She made her debut at the Vancouver Recital Series in September 2016.

Some of her upcoming festival performances include the Jurmala Festival in Latvia, the Rheingau Musikfestival in Germany, the Baltic Sea Festival in Sweden, and the MITO Festival in Italy. Ksenija Sidorova will return to New York City in 2018 for a concert series at famed Carnegie Hall.



Ksenija Sidorova



Ksenija Sidorova pictured above with Frank Busso, Jr.

## Will Holshouser at Monterey Jazz Festival

New York based accordionist Will Holshouser will join renowned violinist Regina Carter in concert at the famous Monterey Jazz Festival in Monterey, CA on September 17, 2017.

The 60th Annual Monterey Jazz Festival will take place at the Monterey County Fairgrounds, located at 2000 Fairground Road in Monterey, California, from September 15-17, 2017. Considered one of the finest in the country, the festival will feature over 500 artists who will be performing non-stop on eight stages for three nights and two days of the world's best jazz.

Voted "World's Best Jazz Festival" by the readers of JazzTimes Magazine in 2006, 2007, 2008, 2013 and 2014, the Monterey Jazz Festival offers 20 acres of magnificent oak-studded grounds for fans to enjoy, featuring films, conversations with the Festival's stars, exhibitions, food and beverages, an international shopping bazaar, and eight stages of live jazz entertainment spread throughout the grounds.

Will Holshouser was given an accordion as a surprise when he was still young and impressionable. He has since found a unique niche for himself as an accordionist, improviser, and composer in many differ-



Will Holshouser

ent areas of music. He tours regularly with jazz violinist Regina Carter and her band Reverse Thread. He also plays in a collaborative trio with Amsterdam-based improvisers, drummer Han Bennink and saxophonist/clarinetist Michael Moore. This group has a new CD out and has toured in Europe, the US and Africa.

Will's long-standing trio features Ron Horton on trumpet and David Phillips on bass. Together since 1998, these three have developed a truly unified group sound. The trio has three CDs out on the Portuguese label Clean Feed. Their third CD, Palace Ghosts and Drunken Hymns was recorded in Portugal with the late, brilliant pianist Bernardo Sasseti as special guest.

Will has also played with David Krakauer, Antony and the Johnsons, Martha Wainwright, Loudon Wainwright, Andy Statman, Phillip Johnston, Matt Munisteri & Brock Mumford, the Raymond Scott (tribute) Orchestrette, Roberto Rodriguez, Mark Morris Dance, New York City Ballet, Brooklyn Philharmonic Orchestra, and many others.

Will studied composition with Anthony Braxton and Bill Barron at Wesleyan University, where he received a grant to research Cajun and Creole music in Louisiana. After moving to New York in the early 1990s, he studied accordion with Dr. William Schimmel. He now lives in Brooklyn, New York with his wife and daughter.

For Sony Masterworks artist Regina Carter, the violin isn't simply an improvisational vehicle; it's a passport to unexpected realms. It's a Rosetta Stone that unlocks the doors to a myriad of cultures, sounds, and worlds apart. Her quest for beauty combined with her passion for excellence did not escape the attention of the MacArthur Foundation, which awarded Regina their prestigious MacArthur fellowship "genius grant." San Francisco Performances also took note of Regina's exceptional work and appointed her Artist-in-Residence for five years.

*continued on page 4*

## Carrefour Mondial de l'Accordeon Festival

The Carrefour Mondial de l'Accordeon Festival takes place from August 31 to September 4, 2017 in Montmagny, Quebec.

About 34 miles east-northeast of Quebec City, Montmagny is a proudly French-speaking town that is over 300 years old and has 11,885 residents. During the annual festival, the population swells to more than 50,000, most of them intent on hearing some of the finest accordionists in the world.

Quote from a TripAdvisor contributor: "If you love accordion music (or even if you hate it), this place is an adventure. The Carrefour Mondial brings accordionists from all over the globe, and it seems as if every man, woman, and child in Montmagny plays some version of a squeezebox. We camped out, dined where we could (the locals provide their hearty version of baked beans), line danced, and heard the accordion stretched to its ultimate performance abilities. It was so much fun. Highly recommended."

The line-up of 2017 performing artists include: Renzo Ruggeri (pictured), Roman Jbanov and Marie-Noëlle Cros, Trio Martin Bellemare, Alexandre Boivin Caron, Antoine Pigeon-Bourque, Marie-Brousseau et Guillaume Turcotte, Georges Camitsis, Duo Montanaro-Cavez, Club Carrefour, Sébastien Clermont, Vladimir Denissenkov, Francine Desjardins, Keven Desrosiers, Joaquin Diaz, Dina Swing, Serge Duchesne et Luciano Testani, Samuel Garcia and Mario Cimenti, Sabin Jacques and Rachel Aucoin, Alexandre Juan, Diamik, Duo Silb, Bernard Lafargue, Jean-Claude Laudat and Jean-Yves Dubanton, Réjean, Lizotte, Topsy 3, TokaTaNoka, Jesse Mea and R. Bourgeois, Gas-



ton Nolet and Michel Béchar, Patrick Nolet, Denis Pépin, Cati Plana and Pau Puig, Valérie Plante, Gorkata, Loïc Primeau-Vinetti, Vildà Tapia eta Leturia, Simon Thoumire and Mark Maguire, Timi Turmel and Erin Leahy, Paolo Vani and Gerry Vironne.

For further information: [accordeon@montmagny.com](mailto:accordeon@montmagny.com) ■

## Coupe Mondiale in Osimo, Italy

CIA President Raymond Bodell is delighted, on behalf of the Coupe Mondiale organizers to be welcoming contestants, delegates, International Jury members and visitors from all quarters of the world to participate in the 70th Coupe Mondiale in Osimo, Italy from September 5-10, 2017.

This year the competition and festival will feature exactly 100 of the world's finest young contestants, registered from 27 different nations for the seven different categories of competition. This year there are 20 entries in each of the classic solo categories, promising a treat of competitive performances.

President Bodell added: "During the 2017 Coupe Mondiale, there will be exciting and unique concerts, the "World Accordion Orchestra IX" under the direction of Joan Cochran Sommers and the CIA Delegates will hold their 138th General Assembly in which a variety of International business will be discussed including the election of a new CIA President.

The host city Osimo, is a charming and historical city just a few miles from Castelfidardo, the home of many accordion factories. Many visitors will take the opportunity to visit Castelfidardo and the surrounding towns of Ancona and the charming seaside towns of the Adriatic coastline while on their trip to Italy.

For those who are unable to attend the 2017 Coupe Mondiale, extensive Daily Reports, pictures, information and videos of each competitor, including the final Prize Winners Concert on Saturday, September 10th and the World Accordion Orchestra can be seen at the Coupe Mondiale website at [www.coupemondiale.org](http://www.coupemondiale.org) ■

## Holshouser & Carter at Monterey Jazz Festival, cont'd from p. 3

She also served as one of the Resident Artistic Directors for the discerning San Francisco JAZZ during its inaugural season in its spectacular new home.

In 1987, she joined the all-female pop-jazz quintet Straight Ahead and appeared on their first three albums before leaving the band in 1991 and moving to New York. Almost immediately, Regina was tapped for session work with the likes of Aretha Franklin, Mary J. Blige, Lauryn Hill, Billy Joel and Dolly Parton. She also performed and toured with Ray Brown, Kenny Barron, The String Trio of New York, Cassandra Wilson, Oliver Lake and Steve Turre, among others. In 1995, Regina released her self-titled solo debut on Atlantic Records. Two years later,



she released her sophomore album, *Something for Grace*, which was dedicated to her mother. That same year, Carter toured with Wynton Marsalis. Subsequently, Regina signed to the venerable Verve label, where she released *Rhythms of the Heart* in 1999 and *Motor City Moments* in 2000: a tribute to her beloved hometown of Detroit.

Regina continued her dynamic musical journey with her 2014 release *Southern Comfort*, in which she investigated her family history, exploring the traditional folk songs her paternal grandfather would have heard as he toiled in the coal mines of Alabama. The expanded project includes a blend of folk tunes and spirituals, serving as Regina's interpretation of her roots through a modern lens.

For more information on Will, including his work with Regina and other musical adventures, please visit: [www.willholshouser.com](http://www.willholshouser.com). ■

*Will was also guest artist at the AAA SqueezeFest in Princeton, July 12-16, 2017*

## Two weeks and two Accordion related Guinness World Records

On opposite sides of the Globe, two accordion related Guinness World Records were set including the longest continuous playing record and the largest accordion orchestra record.

Sponsored by RedBull, on August 4-5, 2017, multi International competition Champion accordionist Cory Pesaturo broke the longest continuous accordion playing record. Surpassing the previous record of 31 hrs and 25 minutes, Cory played for 33 hours 14 minutes at a location in Graz, Austria. Performers attempting the record are allowed a 30 second break between songs

and a five minute break every hour. Sponsor RedBull video taped the entire event and also provided the witnesses. Guinness regulations require two witnesses changing every four hours and never repeating a witness. During the record attempt, musical selections cannot be repeated within any four hour period.

The previous longest marathon accordion playing lasted 31 hours 25 minutes and was achieved by Anssi Laitinen



*continued on next page*

## Two World Records, cont'd, from p. 4

(Finland) at the Koljonvirta Camping Area, Iisalmi, Finland from July 31 to August 1, 2010.

Meanwhile in China, Confédération International des Accordionistes (CIA) Ambassador Kevin Friedrich joined 2,259 fellow accordionists in Shenzhen, China to break the Guinness World Record for the largest accordion orchestra with 2,260 players on August 24th, 2017.

Also conducted under strict guidelines, this attempt required that all participants start and finish the performance in its entirety, the piece performed must be an organized piece such as a multi part piece (ie: accordionists getting together for a mass Jam Session would not meet Guinness record criteria), each person must perform their part, with neutral monitors allocated one per 50 performers to make the final count and ensure that all performers play each of their parts and complete the piece, which must be at least six minutes long. Kevin also participated in the previous record setting performance in Tacheng, China on August 20, 2016 when 1,517 players broke a previous record of 1,361 players. Pictured are some of the CIA guests including President Raymond Bodell, Ambassador Kevin Friedrich, Vice President Herbert Scheibenreif and CIA World Champion Grayson Masefield.

The Guinness Record for the largest accordion orchestra was the grand opening to the 2017 China Shenzhen Bao'an International Accordion Art Festival and Competition. The 2nd biannual competition to be held in Shenzhen, the festival was run under the auspices of the Publicity Department of Communist Party of China of Shenzhen, the China Accordion Association of Chinese Musicians Association, the Bao'an District People's Government, the Shenzhen Literary and Art Association China Accordion Association and the CIA. The CIA Executive Committee, invited guests of the festival, supported the various concerts, Guinness World Record event, competitions as well as the various Master Class workshops and social activities. CIA Executives in attendance pictured are Kevin Friedrich (USA-Ambassador), Li Cong (China-Vice President), Herbert Scheibenreif (Austria-Vice President), Raymond Bodell (UK-President), Viatcheslav Semionov (Russia-Vice President), Mirco Patarini (Italy-Chairperson of the Music Committee) and Harley Jones (New Zealand - Public Relations Manager).

Competitions categories ranged from solo to orchestra and included all age categories from 4-6 years old through to adults. For a sampling of the various activities such as concerts and competitions and the Guinness World Record performance, please visit [www.accordions.com/china/shenzhen](http://www.accordions.com/china/shenzhen). ■



World's Largest Accordion Orchestra  
Shenzhen, China  
2,260 players



Cory Pesaturo, Guinness World Record for longest continuous accordion playing record, 33 hours and 14 minutes!



Pictured above: CIA President, Raymond Bodell, Ambassador Kevin Friedrich, Vice President Herbert Scheibenreif and CIA World Champion Grayson Masefield



CIA Executives in attendance pictured at left are Kevin Friedrich (USA-Ambassador), Li Cong (China-Vice President), Herbert Scheibenreif (Austria-Vice President), Raymond Bodell (UK-President), Viatcheslav Semionov (Russia-Vice President), Mirco Patarini (Italy-Chairperson of the Music Committee) and Harley Jones (New Zealand - Public Relations Manager).

## Accordion Pops Orchestra

The East Coast based group The Accordion Pops Orchestra, comprised of accordionists from several East Coast states, will perform a series of concerts in the upcoming months including concerts in Audobon, PA and Tinton Falls and Begefield, NJ.

The orchestra's roots can be traced to 1970, when it was organized by the Accordion Teachers' Association of New Jersey. Over the next ten years it performed at various community functions throughout the state under the direction of its first conductor, Dr. Jacob Neupauer of Philadelphia.

In 1980 the orchestra members took a leave of absence, but four years later the membership was reorganized under the direction of the late Eugene Ettore of Livingston, New Jersey. In 1985, Daniel Desiderio was invited to act as a guest conductor of the orchestra and a few years later the A.T.A. of NJ appointed him as conductor in residence. The name of the orchestra was formally changed to the Accordion Pops Orchestra and its membership was expanded beyond the original members from New Jersey to include performers from Connecticut, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, New York, Delaware, Maryland, and Rhode Island. Maestro Desiderio retired as conductor in May 2011 and turned over the baton to Al Terzo.

Most of the twenty-five plus members of the orchestra are profes-

sional musicians or teachers. Many are soloists in their own right. The orchestra performs a repertoire of light classical, Broadway, big band and popular music. It has entertained audiences at concert halls, county fairs, festivals, schools, and playhouses at many locations primarily in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and New York.

The upcoming performances are as follows:

**Sunday, September 17, 2017 at 3:00 PM**

Shannondell at Valley Forge - Auditorium  
10000 Shannondell Drive  
Audobon, PA 19403

**Sunday, October 8, 2017 at 2:00 PM**

Seabrook Village  
3000 Essex Road  
Tinton Falls, NJ 07753

**Sunday, November 19, 2017 at 3:00 PM**

Conlon Hall Auditorium  
19 North William Street  
Begefield, NJ 07621

For more information, please visit: [www.accordionpops.com](http://www.accordionpops.com) ■



## Musical Tribute to Dick Contino

Lady of Spain, written by the English bandleader and composer, Tolchard Evans was made extremely popular by the legendary American accordionist Dick Contino (January 17, 1930 - April 19, 2017). The handsome young heartthrob played it as a solo on the Horace Heidt Radio Show and kept winning week after week after week. Although he played many other pieces, Lady of Spain became his most recognizable and most popular one, even more so after his 1950 appearance on the Ed Sullivan TV Show.



A regular performer at the Las Vegas Accordion Convention, Dick Contino's last appearance there was in 2014 when he stood up as usual and played a very long set of pieces with his back-up guys as well as singing. Dick brought the audience to tears with his inspirational and poignant commentary.

It has been the tradition for the Las Vegas International Accordion Orchestra to close the Convention on Thursday Evening and many

times Dick was in the audience with his family and his many friends. This year will be different. It will be the first Convention after Dick's death.

As a tribute to Dick, Joan Cochran Sommers has arranged Lady of Spain for the festival Orchestra to play as the closing piece on its program. She thought it would be inspiring and exciting to have Cory Pesaturo, Grayson Masefield and Stas Venglevski join the orchestra on a couple of choruses – ala The Three Tenors, following along the lines of how the Three Tenors performed all over the world with various symphony orchestras. Cory, Grayson and Stas will be the Star Performers at the 2017 Las Vegas Accordion Convention and when they join the festival orchestra, they will show the audience some of the bellows shakes that were made so popular by Dick Contino, better known in Las Vegas as Mr. Entertainment. ■



## Coast to Coast

*...a sampling of accordion events across the USA!  
Contact the individual organizations for updates.*

LAS VEGAS, NV  
The line-up for the 18th annual Las Vegas Int. Accordion Convention (LVAC) starts with Guinness World Record holder for the longest playing, Cory Pesaturo, and bookends with a grand finale starring Grayson Masefield, CIA World Champion and the International Accordion Orchestra under the direction of Professor Joan Sommers. Event organizer Paul Pasquali writes: "By popular demand we are back to the fall – a great time of the year to come to Las Vegas to hear a superb list of star performers. The event will take place from October 23-26, 2017. For more information, please visit [www.accordionstars.com](http://www.accordionstars.com).



COTATI, CA  
The 27th Annual Cotati Accordion Festival took place on August 19 & 20, 2017, Saturday & Sunday, 9:30 AM to 8:00 PM each day. The Cotati Accordion Festival is a yearly event. The venue is open under the shade trees of La Plaza Park in Cotati, CA. If you plan to stay for the whole day, bring your own comfortable, short-backed folding lawn chair. A shuttle was provided from Park and Ride at the corner of Highway 116 and Old Redwood Highway on St. Joseph Way. Handicap parking is available at 102-104 W. Cotati Ave. (Kitty cornered from the Korean Baptist Church) and in front of the Korean Baptist Church at 81 West Cotati Ave. Annual attendance reaches 2,000-3,000 a day.

The Honorary Director this year was Marjorie Konrad. Performers included: AlpenBand California, Amy Jo Sawyer, Big Lou's Dance Party, Cory Pesaturo, En Canto with Jamie Maschler, Future Accordion Stars 2017, Gail Campanella, Ginny Mac, Gordon Kohl, Jim Gilman, La Familia Peña-Govea, Lizeth Olivo, Ljubinka Kulicic - Serbia, Mark St. Mary, MotorDude Zydeco, Oddjob Ensemble, Royal Jelly Jive, Squeazy Peezy, T-Luke and the Tight Suits, The Golden State Accordion Club Band, The Great Morgani, The Mad Maggies and a free accordion jazz 101 workshop by Paul Betken. Please call 707-664-0444 for questions about next year's event. Customer Service: 1-888-559-2576.



PRINCETON, NJ  
Cody McSherry, age 14, is the recipient of the 2017 Carmen Carrozza Scholarship Competition, Junior Division. His performance included four pieces performed on piano accordion. The



pieces were "Pioneer Concerto" (Eugene Et-tore); "Parisian Musette" (Carmen Carrozza); "Evan-essence" (Guy Klucevsek) and "Magic Fingers" (Charles Camilleri). Cody would like to thank the family of the great Carmen Carrozza, the American Accordionists Association, and his accordion teacher, AAA President Mary Tokarski. Cody is the youngest member of the NJ based Accordion Pops Orchestra, and has his own band, "Polterabend." In addition to performing on the piano and diatonic accordion, Cody also plays the theater and pipe organ, and performs in various stage productions as an actor. (See July USA news for more info on Cody). For further information: [pat@lmsetch.com](mailto:pat@lmsetch.com).

VANCOUVER, BC, CANADA  
The Accordion Noir Festival has announced its headlining acts for this year's festival, taking place September 7-10, 2017 at various venues in Vancouver, Canada. Celebrating its tenth anniversary as Canada's only festival of alternative accordion music, this year's special anniversary edition of Accordion Noir presents a pantheon of international and local accordion talent, including the North American debuts of Finnish accordion shaman Antti Paalanen and all-female Russian ethno-rock quartet Iva Nova, the Canadian debut of Accordion DJ Lykaire from Louisiana, as well as the launch party for Geoff Berner's latest album, *Canadiana Grotesquica*. For more information, please visit [www.accordionnoirfest.com](http://www.accordionnoirfest.com).

EAST NORTHPORT, NY  
La Villini Restaurant of East Northport, NY is sponsoring the next meeting of the Long Island Accordion Alliance (LIAA) on Wednesday, September 6, 2017 at 6:00 PM.



The featured guest artist will be Emilio Mag-notta. Emilio performs professionally in the NY-metro region and is sought-after for events, such as performing at the Intrepid Sea & Air Museum in NY, Bryant Park, United Nations, as well as weddings and major events. The event will take place at La Villini Restaurant, 288 Larkfield Road, East Northport, NY 11731, phone: (631) 261-6344 or email: [lavillini@yahoo.com](mailto:lavillini@yahoo.com).  
[www.facebook.com/LongIslandAccordionAlliance](http://www.facebook.com/LongIslandAccordionAlliance).



WASHINGTON DC  
This September, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) is celebrating nine of our nation's master folk and traditional artists at two free events in Washington, DC. These artists are the recipients of the NEA National Heritage Fellowship, the nation's highest honor in the folk and traditional arts. Among the 2017 recipients are conjunto accordionist and bandleader Eva Ybarra and Danish button accordionist and Missouri-style fiddler Dwight Lamb.

On Friday, September 15, 2017, at 8:00pm, the 2017 recipients will be honored at a free concert in Washington, DC, at George Washington University's Lisner Auditorium. This concert will also be streamed live at [arts.gov](http://arts.gov). Presented by the National Endowment for the Arts, the concert will feature performances by and conversations with the 2017 NEA National Heritage Fellows – including Eva Ybarra and Dwight Lamb – and will be hosted by Martha Gonzalez of the Grammy Award-winning band Quetzal. Free tickets are available at [lisner.gwu.edu](http://lisner.gwu.edu).

Eva Ybarra is one of only a few professional women accordionists in conjunto music. As the leader of Eva Ybarra y Su Conjunto, Ybarra has specialized in writing and composing original conjunto music while also exploring non-standard chord progressions, advancing the art form's evolution. Besides being a professional musician, Ybarra is also a music educator. More information about Ybarra is available at [arts.gov](http://arts.gov).

Dwight Lamb is a master of Danish fiddle and accordion traditions, as well as Missouri Valley old-time fiddling. With more than 60 years' commitment to collection, recording, preservation, and teaching, Lamb has mentored generations of regional and international musicians. More information about Lamb is available here. In addition, prior to this concert on Thursday, September 14, the NEA will recognize these artists at an awards ceremony at the Library of Congress. The ceremony will begin at 5:30 p.m. ET in the Library of Congress's Coolidge Auditorium in the Thomas Jefferson Building at 10 First Street SE in Washington, DC. Following the ceremony, there will be a reception with the artists. This event is open to the public and no tickets are required.

*Elizabeth Auclair, Natl. Endowment for the Arts*

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