



AMERICAN ACCORDIONISTS' ASSOCIATION Newsletter

A bi-monthly publication of the American Accordionists' Association

July-August 2018



SAVE THE DATES:

July 27-29
AAA MasterClass & Concert
Tenri Cultural Center
NYC

September 9, 2018
Guest Artist
PETAR MARIC

July 17-21, 2019
2019 AAA Festival
Valley Forge Resort Hotel
& Casino
Valley Forge, PA 22314
Guest Artist
MICHAEL BRIDGE

Sponsored by the
American Accordionists' Association

From the Editor:

Welcome to our milestone anniversary celebration, the AAA's 80th Anniversary, fittingly taking place in the Nation's Capital where accordionists from around the world convene in Alexandria, VA (Washington, DC) from July 11-15, 2018. With the showcase of talent ranging from soloists to groups performing a variety of genres, the festival will host four days of activities planned to inspire us all! For those of you that were not able to attend in person, we invite you to visit the extensive online coverage at our user friendly website www.ameraccord.com.

As always, I would like to offer my sincere thanks to the AAA Past President, Linda Reed and Board of Directors member, Rita Barnea 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 2018 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.

We look forward to hearing from you soon!

Sincerely, Kevin
Kevin Friedrich, Editor



From the President:

Happy 80th Birthday AAA

I hope you are planning on celebrating our 80th birthday with us in beautiful Alexandria, Virginia from July 11th to the 15th. The schedule is posted on our website and it is exciting to say the least! We will have guests from around the world attending, including Harley Jones from Accordions Worldwide. Harley will be there all week to video, document and post our spectacular events on the Accordions Worldwide website so the "world" will see our festivities and celebrate with us . . . you don't want to miss this!

Individual registrations can still be accepted (specially priced packages are not available at this time), and you can even register AT the event, but there is no guarantee you can get seats for the food events if you wait – so call us or email right away! There are events for EVERYONE . . . workshops, concerts, exhibits, great entertainment, competitions, an awards concert featuring our up and coming young artists, the "After Hours Club" where YOU are the star . . . and so much more.

AAA's Lifetime Achievement Award for Louis F. Coppola will take place at the 80th Anniversary Banquet on Saturday evening, and as a "special" treat, the United States Air Force Strolling Strings will be performing for us. If you have not had the pleasure of hearing this magnificent group, you don't want to miss this. Make your reservations today.

There will also be our annual Open Meeting and Breakfast on Sunday July 15th at 9:00 a.m. at the Holiday Inn Hotel and Suites and finishing up with an opportunity to tell us all about YOU, and what you would like to see at festivals in the future! Make your voice heard!



Grayson Masefield in US Concerts

Internationally acclaimed accordionist Grayson Masefield will be featured in a House Concert on Saturday, July 7, 2018 hosted by Rita Barnea in West Orange, New Jersey.

Grayson will also perform at a special concert at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC on Monday, July 9th and at the 80th Anniversary of the AAA in Alexandria, Virginia on July 11, 2018 at 4:00 PM. The performance at the Kennedy Center Millennium Stage will include transcriptions and original works for accordion, including songs by Bach, Scarlatti, Mozart, Chopin, Angelis, Hermosa, and Nuevo Tango.

The Millennium Stage is a free performance series and part of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Washington, DC. It features a broad spectrum of national and International performing arts companies, from dance and jazz, to chamber music and folk, comedy, storytelling and theater, every day of the year. Performances always begin at 6:00 PM. and is streamed live.

Grayson's concert seeks to promote the AAA 80th Anniversary Festival starting two days later and promote the accordion generally. The concert has a large international reach, with high quality video available online after the concert for the world to view.

Grayson is a recent graduate, with a Masters Degree, from University of Music in Lausanne, Switzerland and five-time world champion. ■



Meet Vesna Mehonovic

The Festival Orchestra for 2019 will perform under the baton of Vesna Mihonovic, conductor of the Hamden (CT) Symphony Orchestra.

Vesna Mehonovic is known as the first woman conductor in her native country of Bosnia and Herzegovina. She studied conducting in the class of Professor Julio Maric, a student of Herbert von Karajan. Mrs. Mehonovic specialized in conducting at the Academy for Music and Performing Arts in Graz, Austria, in the class of Milan Horvat.



She was conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra. Due to war in her native country, Mrs. Mehonovic came to America with her husband and two sons. She obtained her U.S. citizenship on the basis of her extraordinary artistic talent and pedagogic excellence. She received her MA in Conducting at Wesleyan University, where she studied with Angel Gil-Ordenez, a student of the legendary Maestro Sergiu Celibidache.

She has won multiple awards as an orchestra and choir conductor, as well as a pedagogue. In her early years Vesna conducted with an accordion orchestra, to great acclaim. Later she conducted with the Sarajevo Philharmonic, the Symphony Orchestra of Radio Television of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Zagreb Philharmonics, Mostar Symphony Orchestra, Sarajevo FAMOS Chorus, State Radio and Television of Bosnia and Herzegovina Chorus, Symphony Orchestra of the Music Academy in Graz, Austria, Scottsdale Art Chorale in Arizona, Wesleyan University Symphony Orchestra in Middletown, CT and finally with the Danbury Art Chorale, also in CT.

Vesna is currently the music director and conductor of the Hamden Symphony Orchestra in Connecticut. Under her leadership this ensemble grew in quality as well as number (from eight members to more than sixty). Vesna is celebrating a decade of work with the Hamden Symphony Orchestra this year. She is also a professor and the conductor of the Quinnipiac University Orchestra, also located in the town of Hamden. Vesna lives with her family in New Haven, Connecticut. Selections for the AAA Festival Orchestra 2019 will be announced soon. ■

25th Anniversary of the Leavenworth International Accordion Celebration

The Leavenworth International Accordion Celebration (LIAC) was held on June 21 – 24, 2018. This was the 25th Anniversary of the event and the 9th year the Northwest Accordion Society has produced the festival. It was a fun, educational and entertaining event.

Features included Alicia Baker on Roland Digital Accordion, Music and Dancing to the Ken Olendorf Tribute Band, Former Leavenworth Open competition Winners, Murl Allen Sanders, Music and Dancing to Bruce Gassman, Michael Bridge, Cory Pesaturo, Music and Dancing LIAC Jam Dance Band. Judges for the LIAC competitions this year will be Michael Bridge, Bruce Gassman and Cory Pesaturo.

Workshops included: "Accompanying Effectively and Beautifully" with Murl Allen Sanders; "Tony Lovello Techniques" with Cory Pesaturo; "Crafting Linear Jazz Solos" with Gabe Hall-Rodrigues; "Types of Bellows Shakes" with Michael Bridge; "Working with the Roland V-Accordion" with Alicia Baker; "Authenticity of Styles" with Cory Pesaturo; "Entertaining with the Accordion" with Gary Malner; "How to Perform The Music You Grew Up With" with Bruce Gassman; "Playing in a group; performing at the gazebo" with Jim and Shirley O'Brien and "The Button Box Across Two Centuries: Exhibit and Demonstration" With Thomas Tilton of Alpen-Folk.

LIAC is a celebration of the accordion's versatility and its presence in many cultures. Accordion music is what this event is all about. For further information: bonnieburch@msn.com

More about Leavenworth can be found on pages 11 and 16. ■

Guy Klucevsek Releases "Carousel of Dreams"

Guy Klucevsek's new recording, "Carousel of Dreams," was released on June 18, 2018. The recording features Guy's solo compositions, including "Three Tributes," commissioned by the American Accordionists' Association, and a trio and quartets for Bellows Brigade, where Guy is joined by fellow accordionists Will Holsouser, Nathan Koci (doubling voice) and Kamala Sankaram (doubling voice). The feature piece is a 17-minute suite, "Pauline, Pauline," dedicated to the memory of Guy's long-time friend, composer/accordionist Pauline Oliveros.

The title composition is dedicated to Cody McSherry who premiered the piece on May 6, 2018 in a concert by the Accordion Pops orchestra, with Guy and his wife, Jan, in attendance.

Produced by AAA Governing Board Member Jeanne Velonis, "Carousel of Dreams," will be released both as a physical CD, to be available through CDBaby, and digitally through CDBaby, Amazon.com, itunes, and many other digital and streaming outlets.

On Saturday, June 23, 2018 at 2 PM, Guy took part in Relâche's 40th Anniversary concert, performing two of his solo compositions. The concert includes three pieces by Guy Klucevsek: The Swan and the Vulture (2014), Little Big Top (2014), and Haywire Rag (a Waltz, 2010), with the former two pieces featuring Guy on the accordion.

Support the AAA's Youth Programs.
Send your tax-deductible donation to AAA and
indicate "Youth Programs."

AAA - 15 Maplewood Lane, Northford, CT 06472

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Klucsevsek's "Carousel of Dreams"

From 1980-1990, Guy served as composer, Music Advisor, and ensemble member with Relâche. "Relâche" is taken from Erik Satie's 1924 collaborative ballet whose absurdist title on the theatre marquis translated to "no performance today." Since 1977, the band's work with composers such as John Cage and James Tenney, and with the most thoughtful (and fun!) organized sound of today has tested music's limits – if not its strict definitions then certainly the cultural boundaries negotiated by so called "art music."

Relâche's aim has never been to play "safe" music. In music, when composers and performers relinquish their assumptions of structural and social parameters, the audience's thrill – our thrill – of the unexpected catches us vulnerable, and the results can be frightfully sublime, innocent, or hilarious.

As one of Relâche's founding members, Guy Klucsevsek knows this as well as anyone. Revisiting his compatriots with a set of works whose explorations of modality are deceptively simple on first hearing, Klucsevsek's echoes of Eastern Europe reflect both the dance repertoire of his accordionist training in the outright catchy Wing/Prayer, and the sobriety of (dare we say) Górecki in Still Life With Canon. Placed in contrast to the epic introspection of Cynthia Folio's work and Mark Hagerty's gear shifting,

Klucsevsek's punctuations, particularly his dances, subversively offer a more wry notion of the "play" in this recording's title is a new music ensemble that for over 40 years has maintained an international reputation as a leader in commissioning and performing the innovative music of our time. Relâche has a unique sound - flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, viola, piano, bass and percussion, and performs works that are neither classical, nor popular, but somewhere in between a melding of Western classical traditions with jazz, rock, electronica, world music, and more.

Guy Klucsevsek is one of the world's most versatile and highly-respected accordionists. He has performed and/or recorded with Laurie Anderson, Bang On a Can, Brave Combo, Anthony Braxton, Anthony Coleman, Dave Douglas, Bill Frisell, Rahim al Haj, Robin Holcomb, Kepa Junkera, the Kronos Quartet, Natalie Merchant, Present Music, Relâche, Zeitgeist, and John Zorn.

Guy Klucsevsek is the recipient of a 2010 United States Artists Collins Fellowship, an unrestricted \$50,000 award given annually to "America's finest artists." Guy and his music are included in two documentaries about the accordion, "Behind the Bellows" and, most recently, "Accordions Rising" by Roberta Cantow.

Guy has premiered over 50 solo accordion pieces, including his own, as well as those he has commissioned from Mary Ellen Childs, William Duckworth, Fred Frith, Aaron Jay Kernis, Jerome Kitzke, Stephen Montague, Somei Satoh, Lois V. Vierk, and John Zorn.

Performances include the Ten Days on the Island Festival (Tasmania), the Adelaide Festival (Australia), the Berlin Jazz Festival, Lincoln Center, Spoleto Festival/USA, BAM Next Wave Festival, Cotati Accordion Festival, San Antonio International Accordion Festival, Vienna International Accordion Festival, and the children's television show "Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood."

His 1987 project, Polka From the Fringe, a collection of commissioned polkas by Fred Frith, Elliott Sharp, Bobby Previte, Carl Finch, et. al., toured around the world and was released on 2 cds on the eva label, and were named "best recordings 1992" on WNYC-FM's "New Sounds" program.



Guy Klucsevsek

In 1996, he founded Accordion Tribe, an international ensemble of composer/accordionists Otto Lechner (Austria), Maria Kalanemi (Finland), Lars Hollmer (Sweden), Bratko Bibic (Slovenia) and himself. They toured internationally from 1996-2009, are the subjects of Stefan Schwieter's award-winning documentary film, Accordion Tribe: Music Travels, and released 3 cds on the Intuition (Germany) label.

His music theatre scores include "Chinoiserie" and "Obon" with Ping Chong and Company, "Hard Coal," with the Bloomsburg Theatre Ensemble, "Industrious Angels" for Laurie McCants, "Cirque Lili" for French circus artist Jérôme Thomas, which has been performed over 250 times world wide, always with live music, and his own piece, "Squeeze Play," an evening of collaborations with Dan Hurlin, David Dorfman and Dan Froot, Claire Porter, and Mary Ellen Childs. He and Dan Hurlin were awarded, jointly, a BESSIE for, "The Heart of the Andes," which has played the Henson International Puppetry Festival, The Barbican Center in London, and the Ten Days on the Island Festival, Tasmania.

Guy has released over 20 recordings as soloist/leader on Tzadik, Winter & Winter, innova, Starkland, Review, Intuition, CRI, and XI. Stereo Review cited his Starkland recording, Transylvanian Software, as a recording of special merit" (1995). He can also be heard on John Williams's orchestral scores for the Steven Spielberg films, "The Terminal," "Munich," "Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull," and "The Adventures of Tin-Tin," and on A. R. Rahman's score for "People Like Us."

On Saturday, June 30, 2018 at 8:PM, Guy was part of PS21 Theatre's Opening Night Celebration and Revue, in Chatham, NY, also playing his solo compositions. For further information: gklucsevsek@mac.com. ■

Cody McSherry will be performing Klucsevsek's "Carousel of Dreams" at the AAA 80th Anniversary Celebration in Alexandria, VA at the Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites in Old Town, Alexandria, on Wednesday, July 11, 2018 at 4:00 p.m. in the Wythe Room.

This performance is part of the introduction of the AAA's recently commissioned piece for accordion solo by Joseph A. Natoli, Sonata in F.

Also on the program will be award-winning accordionist, Grayson Masefield of New Zealand.

Petar Maric in Concert

Serbian accordionist Petar Maric performed for the Brooklyn Accordion Club on Sunday, June 17, 2018 from 2-4:00 PM at the Great Room at South Oxford Space, 138 South Oxford Street (Between Atlantic Avenue and Fulton Street), Brooklyn, NY 11217. The meeting opened with the regular open mic. If you are interested in performing please email: brooklynaccordionclub@gmail.com



Petar Marić was born in Serbia (Belgrade) in 1990 and began to play the accordion at the age of 5 years. His tutors include: Aleksandar Nikolić (Serbia), Frederic Deschamps (France), Franck Angelis (France) and Tibor Racz (Slovakia).

Petar has won many International accordion competitions including: the CIA 2006 Junior Coupe Mondiale, Norway; Klingenthal 2009, Germany - Senior Variété; CMA Trophee Mondial 2009 (Senior category, field: classical music); Citta Di Castelfidardo, Italy – 2009 (Senior variété music); CIA Coupe Mondiale Croatia - 2010 (Senior classical and variété); CIA Coupe Mondiale (World Champion title), Italy - 2012 (Digital accordion category); Primus Ikaalinen, Finland – 2014 (Popular Music).

In addition to classical music originally written for accordion or transcriptions for compositions written for other instruments, Petar also plays virtuoso-compositions from the variété genre consisting of music from different countries and of different styles, enabling this world-class young artist to show the audience all the attraction and possibilities of accordion as an instrument.

In addition to his classical and variété music, Petar's wide repertoire offers something new and original: electronic accordion and electronic sound presenting the instrument from a new perspective which has wide appeal to the public. For further information: brooklynaccordionclub@gmail.com ■

Welcome New AAA Professional Members

Darl D'Orsagna
Beverly Fess
Ina Yakubeika
Phyllis Edamatsu
Eva Tantsyura
Daniel Tantsyura
Peggy M. Hart

We hope you will sending us articles and pictures for our bi-monthly AAA newsletter.
Send material to Kevin Friedrich at
goaccordion@yahoo.net

ATG Honors Harley Jones with Hall of Fame Award

Harley Jones, founder and director of Accordions Worldwide, will be the special honored guest at the July 2018 ATG Festival in Lisle, IL. from July 25-28, 2018.

In 1996, Harley Jones started the Accordions Worldwide group of internet sites. These include: accordions.com, akkordeon.com and acordeon.com, accordionusa.com the largest and most visited accordion internet sites in the world. These sites hosting websites for companies and artists, attract a very large readership, enhanced by free community services such as the Weekly News in eight languages, US monthly news, CD Reviews, Celebrity Interviews, Articles, major event reports etc.



Additional sites include: Accordion Yellow Pages Search-Accordion AccordionLinks.com largest accordion links site in the world, MusicForAccordion.com a site which sells eSheet music (sent by email to the client), CD's for world known artists, music catalogs for publishers in different parts of the world.

Harley Jones, himself a virtuoso accordionist, has appeared on T.V. and National Radio in New Zealand many times, and has performed extensively in the USA, Canada, England, Germany, Holland, Austria, Italy, Switzerland, Turkey, Hong Kong, Singapore and China as well as his home country of New Zealand.

Harley was soloist with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra on a CD of symphony orchestra works composed by Gary Daverne, recorded in 1992 and now released internationally by EMI. "Rhapsody for Accordion and Orchestra" was written by New Zealand composer Gary Daverne especially for Harley Jones.

Harley premiered this work in New Zealand with the Auckland Symphony Orchestra, conducted by the composer in December 1987. He also performed "Rhapsody" at the International Piano Accordion Competition and Festival in New York (August 1988) and at the Prize Giving of the 1990 Coupe Mondiale held in Germany in 1990. Harley has performed this work over 120 times worldwide, usually with composer Gary Daverne as the conductor, including performances in Europe, North America, Australasia, China and Turkey.

Harley Jones has been involved with the Confédération Internationale des Accordéonistes (CIA) for many years, having been an adjudicator on a number of occasions and Chairman of the Coupe Mondiale Adjudicators in 1976 in Washington. He has served on the Music Committee for the CIA for about 16 years (the committee which guides all aspects of the Coupe Mondiale competitions) and is currently the Public Relations Officer for the CIA, a position he has held for some 16 years. ■

Support the AAA's Scholarship Fund.
Send your tax-deductible donation to AAA and
indicate "Scholarship."

AAA - 15 Maplewood Lane, Northford, CT 06472

Youth Involvement Jazz – Celebrating Our 8th Year!

Rising: Bob Vitale Youth Involvement Jazz Program, 2018

By Marilyn O'Neil

For Bob....

As Our festival orchestra performed last year in Princeton, a beloved member of our Connecticut Accordion family, former accordion teacher in Waterbury, CT and devoted AAA member, Bob Vitale lost his battle with lung cancer. In recognition of his love of all things accordion and for his service to the accordion cause, the AAA has renamed the Youth Involvement Jazz Program after Bob.



Here we are in Alexandria, where Bob conducted this jazz ensemble in 2015. We honor our Bob in a poignant way, nearly a year to the day of his passing. He is profoundly missed.

Bob Vitale Youth Involvement Jazz Program

I began the recruitment process for this ensemble in February. In my quest to locate young Alexandria musicians to embellish the ensemble on sax, trumpet, bass, drum set and trombone, I re-connected with Mr. Vaughn Ambrose, a teacher in Alexandria who sent one of his students to us in 2015. The reunion bore fruit. Mr Ambrose came through with a complete complement of musicians for the ensemble. Currently, Vaughn is Director of Jazz at St. Stephen's and St. Agnes Upper School in Alexandria.

As I got to know Vaughn, he revealed himself to be very much like Bob, not only insofar as his love of jazz, but in the way he relates to his students and how he views his role as a teacher in general. He is a teacher of music and a teacher of LIFE. He practices what he preaches... and he practices hard, serving as a role model to his students. His musicianship speaks for itself. His humanity shines through. And his students love him.

Heads up: Vaughn will be playing along with Don Gerundo at our open mic event on Wednesday, July 11, at 7:00pm!!!!!!

About Vaughn Ambrose:

Vaughn is a saxophonist. A native of North Carolina, he earned his BM in Music education and MM in Jazz Studies at East Carolina University. He credits 2 mentors who continue to have a profound influence on his life.

Mr. Perry Ditch came into his life when Vaughn was a senior in High School. A band director, Ditch was not only enthusiastic, but served as a humanitarian role model, going on to develop a Charity



Music Project in Kenya. They have remained close. Vaughn will soon be joining Mr. Ditch in a teaching gig in Kenya.

At East Carolina, a second major influence was Carroll Dashiell, who provided not only intense formal musical training, but provided Vaughn with opportunities to perform all over the world, including airtime on the Tonight Show. Off the field, they break bread together.

To this day, both mentors are like family. Dashiell was there when Vaughn lost his dad. He gave Vaughn's bride away at his wedding!!! Both men treat him as if he is a son. In his own words, Vaughn states: "No matter how hard a music lesson may have been, when it was over the love was evident. The music takes care of itself. We take care of each other."

Vaughn and his wife, Robyn, are the parents of 4. Two of his sons are sax players. His daughter is a violin player and his youngest has started learning music on recorder.

Vaughn has been the recipient of numerous awards in recognition of his contributions to music education. He is an adjudicator for Festivals of Music, an internationally recognized music festival series for middle and high school performance groups. In 2005, Mr. Ambrose developed the District X all District Honors Jazz Band weekend, a program that has continued to thrive since inception.

Vaughn's musical experience includes performances with Bob Mintzer and the Yellowjackets, Vanessa Ruben, Little Anthony and the Imperials, the Dells, Ashford and Simpson, The Spinners, The Temptations, Lou Rawls, Aretha Franklin, Gladys Knightand others.

He leads his own Jazz quartet in the DC metro area and free-lances up and down the east coast at various well known jazz festivals. His performances have taken him all over the world.

I was not surprised to hear that Vaughn is experienced at playing alongside accordionists. He plays with a member of the "President's Own." Pianist Russell Wilson dons his childhood instrument, the accordion, to play alongside Vaughn at outdoor sunrise services at their church.

Speaking directly to Vaughn, I find him to be a regular guy; warm, friendly and clearly open to bringing new experiences to his students, all of whom see our jazz ensemble as a "cool experience."

In his own words, Vaughn says "We're only successful if we can help someone or bring them together, working towards the same goal." So are we not surprised that he gathered up a group of fine young musicians to accompany our young accordionists this year???

Introducing: the Alexandria area musicians!

Julian Mosley, age 15, bass guitar

Julian has been playing bass for 6 years, introduced to it in the 6th grade and has played in jazz bands both in and outside of school. He credits Mr. Ambrose for providing him with a strong work ethic and cites him as "teaching by example."

Emilio Pilapil, age 18, drum set

Emilio has been attracted to and has been playing the drums since he was a toddler! He is also a semi professional video gamer. "Because of Mr. Ambrose, I have learned how to be more confident in my ability to play."

Brian Gilday, age 18, tenor saxophone

Brian will be attending the University of Virginia in the Fall as an Engineering and Applied Science Major. He is drawn to Bio-medical Engineering, as he has a strong desire to help people. He is skilled on a number of instruments. "If there's one activity that I could do daily for the rest of my life, it would be music..."

Brian has lived and studied sax abroad, but cites Mr. Ambrose as "having had the most influence" on him musically. Mr. Ambrose sets high standards, but feels like a close friend, going the extra mile, being a role model and a life mentor."

Isaac Ahdoot, age 15, alto saxophone

Isaac has been playing sax for 7 years, and is also a clarinet player. He is excited about working with other fine musicians and expanding his jazz experience. He's honored to represent his school, his teacher, Mr. Ambrose, and his community in the ensemble.

Shamiah Scott, age 16, bari saxophone

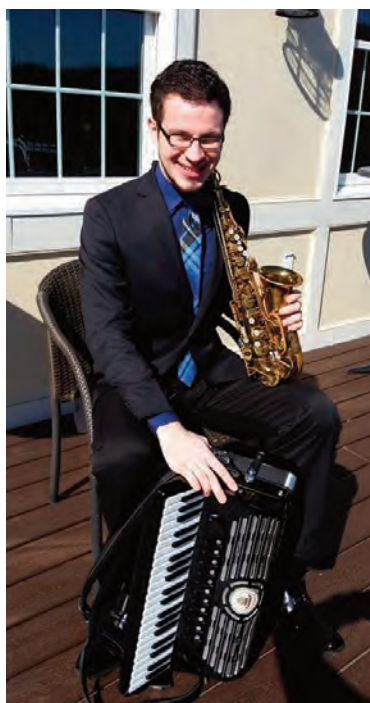
Shamiah has loved listening to jazz all his life, and sax was always his favorite instrument. He has had no prior exposure to the accordion. He is a humanitarian, volunteering at food distributions whenever he can. Shamiah is an avid, all around running athlete. He credits Mr. Ambrose with having had the most musical influence on him to date. "I learned from Mr. Ambrose that life is full of second chances and opportunities and if you make a minor mistake, it won't have an everlasting negative impact on your life."

Colin Cowdrey, age 18, trumpet

Colin will be attending James Madison University in the fall. He's been studying and playing trumpet since he was in 5th grade. His mom works with Mr. Ambrose and encouraged him to join the ensemble. He cites his grandfather, a trumpet player, as having had a huge influence on his decision to play the instrument.

Our Rising Star Accordionists!***Our Conductor,
Mitch Guido***

This will be the 3rd year that Mitch Guido has served as Conductor of the Jazz Ensemble. Mitch is a devoted, extremely gifted sax player who joined the Jazz Ensemble in 2013. He returned for 2 additional years. His gift was recognized by the likes of Eddie Monteiro, Don Gerundo and others, and he's shared his musical talent regularly in accordion circles. He quickly saw the light with respect to what the accordion can do and was honored to accept the title of Con-



ductor in 2016.

Mitch holds a Bachelor's degree from the Aaron Copland School of Music at Queen's College in New York. He majored in Music Education with a concentration in Jazz and Classical Composition and received multiple awards for his work. He currently teaches at School 5 and Thomas Cornell Academy in the Yonkers Public School District. He's teaching pre-k through 8th grade music. At last year's festival, Mitch played ACCORDION in the festival orchestra!!! He recently began introducing the accordion to his students at school.

Mitch's arrangements are superb. His connection with the kids in this ensemble is as smooth as his improvisational skill. His hard work and contribution to the accordion earned him a spot on the AAA Board of Directors. Do we LOVE MITCH???

Introducing: Our Accordionists

It's a pretty well known and accepted fact that school aged youth have a number of opportunities to learn and perform on traditional band instruments in a school setting. In my own home town of Cheshire, CT we offer concert, symphonic band, marching band, jazz band and jazz vocal ensemble for our high school students. This training is introduced at the elementary school level. Opportunities abound if and when they continue on their instruments in college.

But what happens to a young accordionist? Outside of our own accordion circles, there are few formal opportunities for them to share their talent. They have to actually learn how to market themselves, sell themselves, create their own opportunities. That is just what our young accordionists are doing. The jazz ensemble has been in existence since 2011. Not only have several of our players continued in the group since its inception, they have furthered their involvement by taking on clear leadership roles to further the accordion cause.

The Returnees:**Rising Star: Rachel Quirbach, age 21**

Since last year, Rachel has graduated from Arizona State University with a Bachelor's Degree in Music Therapy and a Minor in Criminology and Criminal Justice. While at ASU, Rachel played accordion for community events and church cantatas. She concertized with her women's music fraternity. She brought her accordion into a prison to expose ex-offenders to the instrument.

Rachel collected numerous awards for her achievements while working towards her music therapy degree. Her thesis, "Building Hope Through Music," utilized music therapy as a tool to help ex-offenders at a prison in Phoenix achieve recovery and community reentry. She is now in the process of attaining her music therapy board certification by doing her clinical internship at Florida State Hospital, where she will conduct music therapy on an individual and group basis with forensic and civil patients with psychiatric disorders.

Rachel delivered a workshop last year at festival and will deliver a workshop at this year's festival entitled "Wellness for Accordionists" on July 12 at 10:00.

Her devotion to all things accordion led her to be added to the AAA Board of Directors.



Rising Star: Will Comer, age 19

Will has used his unique personality to further the accordion cause as he works towards a degree in Jazz Studies at Rutgers. He is a ballet accompanist through the Rutgers and Princeton American Repertory Ballet School. He is a member of the top large ensemble at Rutgers. He's serving as a church music director at Vibrant Church in New Brunswick, NJ. He gigs regularly in NYC and within the tri-state area. And finally...he's an accompanist with several improv comedy troops!



As a gift to this year's Jazz Ensemble, Will arranged "Embraceable You" in honor of Bob Vitale.

Rising Star: Nathan Chapeton, age 17

Nathan's accomplishments in competitive accordion circles both nationally and internationally have been well documented. He has made us and his teacher, Mary Tokarski, immensely proud in that respect.



In this past year, Nathan competed and won at the Elite Music Competition of 2018, performing at their recital on February 25.

Nathan's love of writing original pieces for solo accordion has taken off, and he worked with high school peers to create arrangements that include accordion. Additionally, he transcribed pieces written for solo accordion in the classical repertoire. He's working with a peer to compose a piece based on a serious muse.

It's on to college in the Fall! He's been accepted at Central Connecticut State University, where he plans to pursue his studies in Music.

Rising Star: Cody Mc Sherry, age 14

Cody, at the tender age of 10, approached me to be in the Jazz Ensemble. He entered as the youngest member of the Program in 2014 and has continued ever since. His skills were already being recognized on accordion. His ability to connect with people was what I first noticed about Cody.



Since last year, Cody performed in Jazz Band as well as Pit Orchestra on accordion at Lancaster Catholic High School. He was cast as the sole instrumentalist feature in Servant Stage Company's "Old Time Gospel Christmas" as well as their current show, "I'll Fly Away." On May 6, 2018 he premiered Guy Klucsevsek's new composition, "Carousel of Dreams," at the East Brunswick Community Arts Center. He performed for the 6th time at the National Button Accordion Festival in Sharon, PA. At the time of this writing, Cody is competing at the Leavenworth Washington International Accordion Celebration. From July 15-20th, he will attend the American Theater Organ Society's Summer Youth Adventure.

Our Newbies!

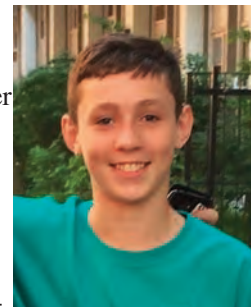
Rising Star: Vince Demor, age 21

Vince is a veritable powerhouse of energy! Currently a student at St. Petersburg College studying privately with professor Nina Wegmann. Vince is majoring in Music Industry and Recording Arts, with a plan to pursue his Bachelor's Degree in Business. He received an internship with NAMM (National Association of Music Merchants). Formerly a cellist, he became enthralled with the accordion at the age of 13, studying with Lorraine Jennings and William Cosby. He loves the movement of the accordion. Vince regularly plays in various bands in the Orlando area, doing private parties for people of all ages. He plays all kinds of music and is known for engaging his audience.



Rising Star: Daniel Tantsyura, age 13

Daniel is a student at Riverdale Country School in Riverdale, NY. He has played piano for 7 years and trumpet for 1 year. He's been playing accordion for just under one year. His teachers are Cory Pesaturo and David McAfee. He loves how much he can do on accordion, especially with the left hand. He was inspired by his grandfather who played accordion and convinced him to study the instrument. He's already performing in a Klezmer ensemble at his school! Daniel says his peers love the fact that he plays accordion....because it's different!! He comes across as a youngster who strives to do the best at whatever he does.



Rising Star: Sonora Sherman, age 12

Sonora is the youngest member of this year's ensemble, and I have begun to refer to her as "our little darling!" A student of Mr. Jim Rice of Accordion Renaissance in Williamsburg, VA, she is a student at Poquoson Middle School. She's been studying accordion for almost a year and a half. Sonora was exposed to the accordion by her grandfather, who had one but never played. Hearing Jim Rice playing at a restaurant and noticed how it made everyone happy! She loves its portability and the many sounds it can produce. Her friends all think it's cool and want to hear her play. She has already played alongside her teacher in an ensemble format, but never dreamed she could be part of a jazz ensemble like this one. She states with obvious enthusiasm that "I want to try to get to be like other people who play really well!!"



In closing, I'm honored to work with all of these extremely gifted and dedicated young musicians. I am especially thankful to Mr. Vaughn Ambrose, whose love of music and firm commitment to his students helped to make this ensemble possible for our 80th anniversary celebration! ■

The Youth Jazz Ensemble will perform at the AAA's 80th Anniversary Awards Concert on Saturday, July 14, 2018 at 1:00 p.m. in the Ballroom of the Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites in Alexandria, VA. The Concert is open to the public without charge.

WMAS 2018 Spring Members Concert



The **Washington Metropolitan Accordion Society** (WMAS) held its annual Spring Members Concert on June 10. Many members participated and played a nice variety of musical styles, including a few selections with vocal accompaniment!

Our annual Fall Guest Artist Concert on September 16 will feature the wonderful **Will Holshouser!** Please join us! Check our website for constant updates and information on accordion events around the Washington, DC area: www.washingtonaccordions.org

Gia Ciccone Plays for Classmates at the Somers (NY) Intermediate School

Thursday June 14, 2018 was a very exciting morning in Mrs. Groner, Mrs. Peppe and Mrs. Cohen's 5th grade class rooms at the Somers Intermediate School in Somers NY; as they watched 11-year-old classmate, Gia Ciccone perform on her Titano Accordion. They were Amazed by Gia's performance as she played a variety of songs including Banderas (by Palmer & Hughes), Can You Feel the Love Tonight (by Elton John), Waltz Theme (by A. Durand), finishing with Carnival of Venice (Arr. By Mario Tacca). The class showed an immediate interest in the Accordion and both students and teachers had many questions for Gia.

We all know that kids do not often get to see the Accordion in Public Schools, so this was an opportunity for young students to be exposed to this amazing instrument. There is a definite need to showcase this beautiful instrument to the children in the Elementary, Intermediate, Middle and High schools. Nowadays, the Accordion is an instrument that most children have never seen or

heard before in person; but once they do, it sparks an interest. The American Accordionists' Association is looking for just that... to see more children interested and wanting to play the Accordion. This can only happen if the Accordion can get this type of exposure in the school system.

The AAA's Youth Outreach Program headed by chairperson Don Gerundo, has been working tirelessly to achieve these exact goals for the Accordion. Mr. Gerundo and the Youth Outreach Program are committed to succeed in their mission.

If you are interested in supporting the Youth Outreach Program please contact the AAA at www.ameraccord.com for more information. Remember to send in an article if your child plays the Accordion at school.

– Dr. Joseph Ciccone



Above, Gia Ciccone dazzled her classmates performing selections by Elton John, Palmer-Hughes and a spectacular version of Carnival of Venice arranged for her by Mario Tacca.

UMKC Community Accordion Ensemble Concerts include School Performances

The UMKC Community Ensemble recently performed a series of concerts in the greater Kansas City area. The concerts included a private School Concert on June 22 and a well attended free public concert on June 23, both held at the Global Montessori Academy in Prairie Village, KS. The private School concert for the Montessori students was followed by a mix and mingle with the young students who enjoyed the opportunity to visit with the players and see the instruments up close. Seen in photo at right, is Betty Jo Simon demonstrating the accordion to an enthusiastic group of youngsters.





AAA 80th Anniversary Festival – July 11-15, 2018

Schedule of Events

WEDNESDAY, JULY 11, 2018

- 3:00 p.m. Registration Desk Opens (until 5:00 p.m.) Ballroom Foyer
Registration Fee is \$35
which allows admission to exhibits, workshops and all regular competition categories.
- 4:00 p.m. Premier of AAA Commissioned Work by Joe Natoli;
 Grayson Masefield & Cody McSherry - By Invitation Only Wythe Room
- 5:00 p.m. Exhibits Open (until 9:00 p.m.) Pendleton & Marshall
- 6:00 p.m. Coupe Mondiale Qualifying Category Audition Stevenson Room
- 7:00 p.m. Meet and Greet Area surrounding Registration/Reception
 Informal performances by competitors and guests alike!
 Special guests from the local media - newspapers, radio and TV
- 8:00 p.m. Reception for Registered Guests (TICKET REQUIRED) Ballroom A & B
- 9:00 p.m. After Hours Club – Guest Hostess: Joan Grauman Ballroom A & B
Bring your instrument and be a part of the entertainment! Everyone's welcome!

THURSDAY, JULY 12, 2018

- 8:00 a.m. Junior Orchestra Rehearsal (until 9:00 a.m.) Ballroom D
Mary Tokarski, Conductor
- 9:00 a.m. Registration Desk Opens (until 11:30 a.m., 1:00-3:30 p.m.) Ballroom Foyer
 Exhibits Open (until 11:30 a.m., 1:00-3:30 p.m.) Pendleton & Marshall Rooms
 WORKSHOP: Presenter, Joseph A. Natoli (until 9:50 a.m.) Wythe Room
Inexpensive Studio Recordings (Beginner)
- 9:30 a.m. Standard Intermediate Solo Stevenson Room
 Note: *All Solo and Duet Competitions will be in the Stevenson Room*
- 9:45 a.m. Duets – Standard Advanced, Open Juniorette,
 Open Junior, Open Intermediate, Adult Open Duet Stevenson Room
- 10:00 a.m. WORKSHOP: Presenter, Rachel Quirbach (until 10:50 a.m.) Wythe Room
Wellness for Accordionists
- 10:45 a.m. Open Solo – Junior and Senior Divisions Stevenson Room
- 11:30 a.m. LUNCHEON AND CONCERT (TICKET REQUIRED) Ballrooms A, B & C
 Trifilio Tango Trio, Grayson Masefield & Lionel Reekie
- 1:00 p.m. Registration Desk Reopens until 3:30 p.m. Ballroom Foyer
 Exhibits Open until 3:30 p.m. Pendleton & Marshall Rooms
- 1:30 p.m. WORKSHOP: Presenter, Emmanuel Trifilio (until 2:40 p.m.) Wythe Room
Tango Rhythms
 Ethnic Solos (all divisions) Stevenson Room
- 2:30 p.m. Pop Solos (all divisions) Stevenson Room
- 3:30 p.m. Festival Orchestra Rehearsal (until 5:30 p.m.) Ballroom D
Joan Cochran Sommers, Conductor
 Bring your accordion, a pencil, music stand & your orchestra music!
- 6:00 p.m. PASTA NIGHT (TICKET REQUIRED) Ballrooms A, B & C
 Entertainment provided by Pat & Connie Racioppa, Joe Cerrito,
 Ray Oreggia and Cody McSherry
- 8:00 p.m. THURSDAY NIGHT CONCERT Ballrooms A, B & C
 Featuring the UMKC Community Ensemble, Joe Natoli Quartet, Lionel Reekie
- 9:00 p.m. After Hours Club - Guest Hosts: Rachel Quirbach & Mitch Guido . Ballrooms A, B & C
Bring your instrument and be a part of the entertainment! Everyone's welcome!

continued

AAA Headquarters located in the Martin Room.

Competitions, Workshops and Exhibits are open to Registered Participants only!



AAA 2018 Festival – July 11-15 - Alexandria, VA

Schedule of Events

FRIDAY, JULY 13, 2018

- 8:00 a.m. Junior Orchestra Rehearsal (until 9:00 a.m.) Ballroom D
Mary Tokarski, Conductor
- 9:00 a.m. Registration - open until 1:00 p.m. (Re-opens at 6:00 for ticket sales) Ballroom Foyer
- 9:00 a.m. Exhibits Open (w/Lunch Break 12 noon) Pendleton and Marshall
- 9:00 a.m. WORKSHOP: Presenter, Dr. Robert McMahan (until 9:50 a.m.) Wythe Room
Kurt Weill and the Accordion
- 9:30 a.m. Founder's Solo, Senior & Adult Stevenson
- 10:00 a.m. WORKSHOP: Presenter, Rita Barnea (until 10:50 a.m.) Wythe Room
The Life and Music of Eugene Ettore
- 10:00 a.m. Youth Involvement Program Jazz Ensemble - Rehearsal Ballroom D
Mitch Guido, Conductor
- 11:00 a.m. Adult Pop Solos Stevenson Room
- 11:30 a.m. Adult Ethnic Solos Stevenson Room
- 1:00 p.m. Open Juniorette Solo Stevenson Room
- 1:30 p.m. Adult Open Solos Stevenson Room
- 1:30 p.m. WORKSHOP: Presenter, Grayson Masefield (until 2:20 p.m.) Wythe Room
Movements with the Accordion
- 2:30 p.m. WORKSHOP: Presenter, Joe Cerrito (until 3:20 p.m.) Pendleton Room
Easy Accordion Repairs
- 3:30 p.m. Festival Orchestral Rehearsal (until 5:30 p.m.) Ballroom D
Joan Cochran Sommers, Conductor
- 6:30 p.m. GALA CONCERT (TICKET REQUIRED) Ballroom A, B & C
Guest Artists:
Dr. Robert McMahan with Cecylia Barczyk and Emmanuel Borowsky
Mary J. Tokarski, Joseph A. Natoli, Grayson Masefield,
Stas Venglevski and Tatyana Krasnobaeva
- 9:00 p.m. Reception immediately following concert (TICKET REQUIRED) Stevenson
Entertainment by Russkie Musikanti

SATURDAY, JULY 14, 2018

- 8:00 a.m. Junior Orchestra Rehearsal (until 10:00 a.m.) Ballroom D
Mary Tokarski, Conductor
- 8:30 a.m. Evaluation Solos Stevenson Room
- 9:00 a.m. Exhibits (until 3:30 p.m.) Pendleton & Marshall Rooms
- 10:00 a.m. Jazz Solos - Jr., Sr., Adult Stevenson Room
- 10:00 a.m. WORKSHOP: Presenter, Lou Coppola (until 10:50 a.m.) Wythe Room
Making History at the White House with Accordion
- 10:00 a.m. Youth Involvement Program Jazz Ensemble (until 12:30 p.m.) Ballroom D
Mitch Guido, Conductor
- 11:00 a.m. Senior Ensembles Ballroom
- 11:30 a.m. Entertainment AAA Ballroom
- 1:00 p.m. Awards Concert Ballroom
Junior Festival Orchestra, Youth Involvement Jazz Ensemble
Bennett Competition Winners, AAA's Coupe Mondiale Representative, Prizes
- 3:30 p.m. Festival Orchestra Rehearsal (until 5:30 p.m.) Ballroom
Joan Cochran Sommers, Conductor
- 6:00 p.m. COCKTAIL RECEPTION (cash bar) Ballroom Foyer
Entertainment provided by Joe Cerrito
- 7:00 p.m. GALA BANQUET (TICKET REQUIRED) Ballroom
AAA 2018 Festival Orchestra, Joan Cochran Sommers, Conductor
- 8:00 p.m. LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD Presentation Louis F. Coppola Ballroom

SUNDAY, JULY 15, 2018

- 9:00 a.m. BREAKFAST (TICKET REQUIRED) and OPEN MEETING Ballroom A & B
AAA Headquarters located in the Martin Room.

Competitions, Workshops and Exhibits are open to Registered Participants only!

Accordion Stories from the Heart

Paul Ramunni from New England Accordion Museum has a new book in the making entitled "Accordion Stories From the Heart." The book will include a collection of accordions from around the world and their stories, inspired by extraordinary people who played them. Scheduled for release this summer, you can contact the NEACM to reserve your copy. See the New England Accordion Connection and Museum ad in the 2018 AAA Festival Journal or email Paul at ramunni@comcast.net



Thank you!

The following have sent donations since the May-June issue of the Newsletter. We appreciate your support!

\$1,000 and over
Fred Schwinger

Through the Irma Schwinger DeAngele Fund

\$500-\$999

Fernando Costa – General Fund

\$250-\$499

TBA

\$100-\$249

Linda Soley Reed – Festival
Peter Sbuttoni – General Fund

Up to \$100

Steve Balog – Youth Program
Father Ed Buchheit – Youth Program
George Curletto – Youth Program
Lynn Ewing – Youth Program
Ginger Grider – Youth Program
Tony Marcantonio – Youth Program
Gene McGinty – Youth Program
Laura Jean Niland – Youth Program
Marianne Pyster – Youth Program
Peter Sbuttoni – Youth Program
Pamela Tom – Youth Program

Dallas Vietty Performing in Kennet Square

Accordionist, Dallas Vietty has started a new project with Bryce Milano which explores jazz influenced music from South America: Brazil, Argentina and Venezuela. Compositions by Hermeto Pascoal, Astor Piazzolla, Egberto Gismonte, etc.

"The performances with Bryce at Longwood Gardens on 7/21 will be a mixture of this South American music and French swing and Parisian Waltzes. The Whole Foods performances on 7/4 and 7/8 will probably be similar."

Another exciting performance is at Longwood Gardens on 7/12, this will be more traditional French Swing material and I'll have the legendary Stan Slotter on trumpet and flute, as well as Alex Soudah on Gypsy Jazz guitar.



Check out Dallas at these performance venues:

7/1 6-9pm Musette Project Ft. Bryce Milano on mandolins, Longwood Gardens Beer Garden, Kennet Square, PA

7/4 12:30-2:30pm New Project with Bryce Milano, Whole Foods Cafe, Wynnewood, PA

7/8 12-2pm New Project with Bryce Milano, Whole Foods Cafe, Wynnewood, PA

7/12 6-9pm Musette Project Ft. Stan Slotter on trumpet, Longwood Gardens Beer Garden, Kennet Square, PA

7/15 10:30am-2pm Musette Project Duo with Alex Soudah at Hotel Bethlehem, Bethlehem, PA

7/21 6-9p Musette Project Ft. Bryce Milano on mandolin, Longwood Gardens Beer Garden, Kennet Square, PA ■

When I First Staggered Into the AAA Seminars

By Jeanne Velonis

I walked into my first Accordion Seminars in the summer of 2014 with my Titano and a double side order of curiosity. I had signed up for what I understood to be three days of lectures, masterclasses, and concerts, to be overseen by the mysterious Dr. Schimmel. I didn't yet know what the topics would be, or what the concert programs would be, or who exactly would be playing, but I was in love with the accordion and felt ready for adventure.

One thing that had particularly caught my attention was the masterclasses. It seemed that anyone who wished to could play, and I found the possibility of doing so thrilling. Why would an intermediate accordion student with paralyzing stage fright want to participate in such a thing, you ask? Hmmm?

Inside the Terri Cultural Institute I was welcomed by Dr. Schimmel, who assured me that yes, I could play in the masterclasses, and handed me a program for the afternoon portion of the day. This included the following:

Session playing/party playing/film playing/theatre playing/street playing/subway playing

The accordion in everyday life

Castaneda/quantum jumping and the accordion

Biviano, Creash, Geminani, Magnante, Cortese

The piano accordion as Esperanto

The Seminars are an accordion immersion experience. At the end of three days, a non-accordion instrument looks exotic. The programming is stylistically broad, and the topics of discussion varied. The concerts feature players at all levels of experience, not just known virtuosi. The masterclasses are integrated into the afternoon portion, along with discussion and demonstration, and plenty of audience involvement. With such variety, and every participant start-

ing from a different place in their personal accordion journey, the experience is bound to be a little different for everyone. Here is a little bit more of mine:

"Is there anyone who wants to play?" Dr. Schimmel asked.

I had brought my arrangement of Tchaikovsky's "Danse Arabe", which came to be when my little community orchestra had played the piece, and the woodwind section was composed of six flutes, one shy clarinet, and me. I had compressed all of the non-flute wind parts into an accordion part, and later realized I could play all of that as well as doubling the cello with my left hand. This arrangement was an expansion of that. The tambourine bits were simulated by brushing the rattley switches of my accordion.

All the bellows shakes were involuntary; any percussion besides the switch rattles was probably my heartbeat amplified in the bellows. I finished the piece, but that was just the start, as there was a lot to explore: how had I developed the piece, what did it make me think of, and how could I better convey that? Could I expand my dynamics, for instance? Could I make the swells in the charismatic theme more dramatic? I tried these things and more, and the piece grew immediately under my hands. It was exciting and hugely encouraging, and I didn't even need to be hospitalized afterwards. The vibe was one of growth and support and exploration of possibility, and this was the case of the rest of the weekend as well, afternoons and evenings alike.

I'm looking forward to the Seminars this year. What does Dr. Schimmel mean about the vitamins being inside the box? Do you know what he means? I don't know the answer, but I'm looking forward to investigating the question, and hearing some great things that I have never heard before. ■

Experience the AAA Master Class & Concert Series

Thinking Inside the Box

July 27, 28, 29, 2018

By Denise Koncelik

The AAA Master Class & Concert Series is an EXPERIENCE for accordionists and accordion lovers.

Each afternoon from 3-5:00 pm there is a Master Class with accordion relevant presentations and discussions. This is not a traditional "show up and play a piece for commentary" master class setting, it is an informative and thought provoking experience. Topics cover various aspects from the history of the accordion and performers to the philosophy of the instrument and its players. Often, moderator and curator Dr. William Schimmel will invite guest presenters and performers for the afternoon sessions. In 2016 Ted Nash (Jazz at Lincoln Center) spoke and performed, and in 2017, Elliott Sharp and Lauren Flannigan (NY City Opera) were presenters.

Support the AAA's Composer's Commissioning fund.

Send your tax-deductible donation to AAA and indicate "Composers Commissioning."

AAA - 15 Maplewood Lane, Northford, CT 06472

Each evening there is a two-hour concert from 7-9:00 PM. This is not your grandpa's accordion music. Every musical work is either solo accordion, or accordion and something or someone else. Many of the performances are of new music performed by the composer. The variety of styles and performers is phenomenal. Musical styles include; alternative, classical, electronic, eclectic, dark, serious, funny, all kinds of music are presented. The first time I ever heard a live Shō (Japanese free reed instrument) player was at one of these concerts.

While there is no participatory festival orchestra experience in NYC - the EXPERIENCE of the seminars is unique and exhilarating for any avid accordionist or accordion lover.

Honor the heritage of the accordion and immerse yourself in the innovative accordion of the 21st Century at the 24th Smash Year of the AAA Master Class & Concert Series "Thinking Inside the Box".

For information, please see www.ameraccord.com/annual-masterclass.php or call (212) 876-0827. ■

Reserve today for July's Master Class & Concert

Visit us online at ameraccord.com

Select MENU, then EVENTS then

AAA Master Class & Concert Series

Meet Michael Bridge (Guest Artist – 2019 AAA Festival)

Michael Bridge

Accordion & Digital Accordion



Please note: all biographies must be printed in full and without alterations.

Full Bio

Updated: May 2018

Lauded as “a wizard of the accordion,” Michael Bridge is internationally-renowned for his warm stage personality, stereotype-smashing versatility, and blazing virtuosity. Named one of CBC’s “30 Hot Classical Musicians Under 30”, he made his solo orchestral debut with the Boston Pops at 17 and gives over 100 concerts per year in Europe and the Americas. Encompassing the diversity of his live performances, his debut album, “Overture”, launched in 2018 and was named CBC Album of the Week.

More than a classical musician, Michael simply describes his repertoire as ‘concert music’ – encompassing baroque, classical, and contemporary works, along with a vast array of his own concert arrangements of folk and jazz music. Armed with both acoustic and digital accordions, all sounds emanating from the stage (up to the sound of a full orchestra) are played 100% live. Prolific in working with composers, Michael has given over 40 world premieres.

Equally adept performing with orchestras, playing an energetic outdoor festival, or giving a TED Talk, Michael is a recipient of the Lieutenant Governor of Alberta’s Emerging Artist Medal, and winner of the University of Toronto Concerto Competition, the Canadian Digital Accordion Championships and the Calgary Stampede Talent Search.

On tour, Michael performs solo or with orchestra, and with his two ensembles – Bridge+Wolak and Ladom Ensemble. He has toured in Poland, France, Italy, the U.K., Ecuador, the USA and in every Canadian province.

Michael is pursuing doctoral studies in accordion performance at the University of Toronto, studying with Joseph Macerollo. He gives frequent guest lectures at universities and festivals on topics including The Music Business for Student, Performance and Speaking Skills, and Composing for Accordion. He has adjudicated accordion competitions in Canada and the USA.

Michael’s first accordion was purchased at a garage sale for \$5 when he was five. Two decades later, he is active in many facets of the concert music scene, boldly redefining the perception of his traditional instrument. www.MichaelBridgeMusic.com

Nick Ariondo to Perform at Arcosanti in Arizona

Accordionist and Composer Nick Ariondo and guest vocalist extraordinaire Gregorio Gonzalez will entertain at "Italian Night at Arcosanti - Dinner & Concert under the Stars!" on June 30, 2018 at 6:00 PM dinner. Arcosanti is located at 13555 S Cross L Road, Mayer, AZ, Phone (928) 632-7135.

The evening begins with a fantastic Italian dinner served under the colorful vaults on the edge of the mesa followed by the virtuosity of accordionist/composer Nick Ariondo. Arcosanti is proud to welcome back Nick Ariondo, this time with guest vocalist Gregorio Gonzalez who have performed together with the L.A. Opera, Placido Domingo and the Long Beach Opera, including recitals at UCLA/Herb Alpert Foundation and others.

Ariondo exploits the accordion's dynamic range to orchestral proportions. Guests are invited to enjoy a musical evening of accordion and vocal virtuosity with International delights from Italy and beyond. Ariondo was recently the featured soloist with 2018 Oscar-winning composer Alexandre Desplat conducting his score "The Shape of Water" with the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra at Disney Concert Hall. Nick can be heard in the Oscar winning film "Life of Pi", has appeared on-screen in the ever-popular hit "Bridesmaids", has performed onstage with opera legend Placido Domingo and a Double Grammy Award winner with the Los Angeles Opera Orchestra.

He was awarded Italy's Ancona Prize and has appeared on national television with violinist Nicola Benedetti (CBS-TV). Nick Ariondo received 25 consecutive ASCAP awards for his compositions and performances as he continues to surprise audiences with his incomparable artistry. Nick Ariondo's Youtube videos have reached millions of viewers worldwide.

For further information about Nick Ariondo: accomusic@nickariondo.com



Cody McSherry in 'I'll Fly Away'

Cody McSherry will be bringing the accordion to people all across Lancaster County, Pennsylvania when he begins his run as a featured performer in Servant Stage's production of "I'll Fly Away," which runs from May through August. The production is billed as "a toe-tappin' tribute to folk, bluegrass and old-time gospel music."

This is Cody's third show with the unique Theater company. The mission of Servant Stage is to create outstanding professional Theater productions, but also to make those productions available to everyone, especially those who have financial or physical limitations that would limit their ability to experience live Theater. With this in mind, Servant Stage takes its shows on the road, performing in churches, parks and eldercare facilities. The Theater company does not charge for its shows, but asks for people to "pay as you will." The model has been working well and the company has been expanding rapidly.

In the show, Cody will be performing some high energy pieces on both piano accordion and diatonic button accordion. Each show has a variety of performers. As a featured performer, Cody will be appearing in twenty-two of the run's thirty shows. Performing with Cody will be the Backwoods Bluegrass Band (photo below) and several other acts

At the old age of fourteen McSherry is already a seasoned stage performer with different production companies having been in shows such as "Les Miserables," "A Christmas Story – the Musical," "Evita," "Old Time Gospel Radio Hour," and "Old Time Gospel Christmas Show." He also fronts his own polka band, "Polterabend," and is the accordionist for Kolo Club Mar-ian, a Croatian dance troupe. In addition, Cody performs on theater and pipe organ, baritone and tenor saxophone, and harp. He also serves as one of the organists at Historic St. Mary's, the fourth oldest Catholic parish in the original thirteen colonies.



25th Anniversary of the Leavenworth International Accordion Celebration, cont'd. from p. 2

Congratulations to all the winners in the various competitions. Cody McSherry and Emmanuel Gasser donned their lederhosen (photo right). Cody also received top honors in the Diatonic and Variety 3 Divisions while Emmanuel took the top prize in the Leavenworth Open, Classical Open, Old Time Open and Variety 2 Divisions. Emmanuel and Cody took 1st place in the Duet competition.

Photo on the right shows Emmanuel and Cody being congratulated by adjudicators, Michael Bridge and Cory Pesaturo. Emmanuel received 1st place in the division and Cody received 2nd.

Congratulations to both of you!



Mary and Mario Busy July & August...

La Villini Restaurant of East Northport, NY is sponsoring the next meeting of the Long Island Accordion Alliance (LIAA) on Wednesday, August 1, 2018. The featured guest artists will be accordionist Mario Tacca and vocalist Mary Mancini.

This August event will mark the Long Island Accordion Alliance (LIAA) "eighth anniversary of celebrating the accordion" on Long Island.

Come join us! It is a fun evening.

Check us out on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/LongIslandAccordionAlliance>

La Villini Restaurant
288 Larkfield Road.
East Northport, NY 11731
631 – 261 – 6344
lavillini@yahoo.com

Date: Wednesday, August 1, 2018

Time: 5:45 p.m.



Other performances include:

Sat., July 21, Mario at Magnanini Winery, 172 Strawridge Rd, Walkill, NY, (845) 895-2767, 7pm

Sun., July 29, Mario at Magnanini Winery, 172 Strawridge Rd, Walkill, NY, (845) 895-2767, 1pm

Wed., Aug 1, Mary & Mario at La Villini, 286 Larkfield Rd, East Northport, NY 11731, (631) 261-6344,

7pm Sat., Aug 11, Mario at Magnanini Winery, 172 Strawridge Rd, Walkill, NY, (845) 895-2767, 7pm

Sun., Aug 19, Mario at Magnanini Winery, 172 Strawridge Rd, Walkill, NY, (845) 895-2767, 1pm

Wed., Aug. 22 Mario, with Mary, at Bryant Park, NYC, 6pm

Fri., Aug. 31 Mary & Mario at The BeanRunner Cafe, So. Division St., Peekskill, NY, (914) 737-1701, 8pm ■

A World of Accordions Museum Celebrating Chmielewski PolkaFest

Contributed by Helmi Harrington, Museum Curator

My acquaintanceship with Florian Chmielewski's PolkaFests began in 1989 at Ironworld Discovery Center USA in Chisholm, MN. It was a glorious three-day attraction that brought thousands of people from many states and Canada to the relatively remote area. Visitors came from throughout the USA and Canada. They danced, camped, ate in local restaurants, and in all ways supported the economy of the area. The Chmielewski PolkaFest was the area attraction, and, in fact, encouraged other events to the site. The Discovery Center's genealogical resources flourished, the gift shops and restaurants grew, and the grounds added rides and children's attractions. An Accordionists Polka Hall of Fame was added, citing about two dozen famous musicians' accomplishments in glass enclosures, many containing accordions.

For about 12 years I was in charge of events in the IDC's air-conditioned theater where I showed museum accordions, performed, presented guest artists, and offered accordion repair sessions.

When the Discovery Center ended the Chmielewski PolkaFests, the area suffered commercially from loss of visitors and national publicity. The Hall of Fame was dismantled. (I'm told the displayed instruments languish in the basement.) But Chmielewski revived the fun by presenting polkaFests in other locales. I stayed with them in open fields and wherever they were held in the hope of supporting Florian's efforts to keep the old-time music alive. My appreciation of Florian has never wavered; it grew into friendship as I taught his grandchildren for years, and has continued throughout the

decades in many mutually cooperative events.

Now held at the Grand Casino under the direction of daughter Patty Chmielewski and Michael Bell, the Chmielewski PolkaFest continues to attract many thousands through the pleasures of contact dancing and traditional music made by headliner bands. Even larger audiences enjoy the programs through public television broadcasts on RFD TV and region-wide cable stations.

Continuing our usual agenda this May 18-20, a contingent of accordionists and I presented museum treasures and favorite music from 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM each day. I also fixed a few instruments between scheduled sets. This year Paul Vargason, Rob Dingmann, Richard Skarie, and Ruth Maciejewski were our "stars" on chromatic and diatonic instruments. For us, it is great fun to air repertory skills and to meet again with friends of long standing. The featured head-liner bands are great to hear—and we are too!

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Florian Chmielewski

UMKC Community Accordion Ensemble in Concert

Leading up to their performance at the AAA 80th Anniversary Celebrations, The University of Missouri - Kansas City (UMKC) Community Accordion Ensemble will perform two concerts in the Kansas City area.

The two concerts included a private School Concert on June 22 and a well attended free public concert on June 23, both held at the Global Montessori Academy in Prairie Village, KS. The private School concert for the Montessori students was followed by a mix and mingle with the young students who enjoyed the opportunity to visit with the players and see the instruments up close.

The ensemble comprising members Kevin Friedrich, Cathy Sue Weiss, Ronald Barrow, Ron Dake, Betty Jo Simon, Samantha Wagner, Joyce Davis and Joan C. Sommers performed a selection of works including: La Cabeza Loca by Sergio Castelli; Danse (Tarantelle Styrienne) by Claude Debussy; Nocturne (Movement 3 from String Quartet in D Major, No. 2) by Alexander Borodin; Concerto per Archi by Nino Rota (Preludio, Scherzo and Finale); Arrival (Movement 3 from Flight) by Ian Watson; Blue Swan and Fuga by Stas Venglevski; Danse Bacchanale (from the Opera Samson & Delilah) by Camille Saint-Saëns; Fuga 9 by Astor Piazzolla and Beauty and the Beast Medley by Alan Menken.

All players are alumni of the University of Missouri - Kansas City, and former members of the renowned UMKC Accordion Orchestra. The players make their living in various careers, but each have remained devoted to promoting the accordion and its varied repertoire, which includes transcriptions, commissions and other original works.

They have recently performed in Chicago, San Francisco and Kansas City. In addition, they have participated in the USA contributions to World Accordion Day, when videos of their performances were broadcast during the live presentation.

The UMKC Chamber Accordion Ensemble performs under



UMKC Community Accordion Ensemble, left to right top row: Kevin Friedrich, Joyce Davis, Cathy Sue Weiss and Ron Dake. First row: Betty Jo Simon, Ron Barrow, Samantha Wagner, Joan C. Sommers, Director.

the direction of Joan C. Sommers who also plays as a member of the ensemble. Joan C. Sommers was awarded the title of Professor Emerita upon her retirement from the University of Missouri - Kansas City Conservatory of Music (USA), where she established and taught the accordion degree program for forty years. She has arranged innumerable works for both Accordion Orchestra and Chamber Ensemble over many years, works that have been performed around the globe.

Joan C. Sommers has held numerous positions in several music organizations, including the Accordionists & Teachers Guild International (ATG) and the Confédération Internationale des Accordéonistes (CIA - IMC-UNESCO) where she was recently awarded lifetime Honorary Membership.

Today she enjoys performing with fellow accordionists in duo, with other instrumentalists and with the UMKC Chamber Accordion Ensemble which will appear in concert on Thursday, July 12th, 2018 at the AAA 80th Anniversary Festival. For more information please contact: joansommers@kc.rr.com. ■

Peter Soave Music Academy (PSMA)

The prestigious Peter Soave Music Academy (PSMA) will take place from July 22nd to August 5th, 2018 in Sauris, a picturesque tiny alpine village nestled in the Dolomite mountains of Italy, bordering Austria.

From the first seminars in 1999 organised by Internationally renowned accordionist Peter Soave, the PSMA is a high-level music academy dedicated entirely to the accordion and its belated relatives.

In the 2018, Manuel Šavron will be the teacher of the diatonic accordion course which is being presented for the first time. Other tutors include host and multiple World Champion title holder Peter Soave (USA), Mady Soave (France), Viatcheslav

Semionov (Russia), Eddie Monteiro (USA), Mary Tokarski (USA) and others!

PSMA generously offers a rich musical experience that plunges each participant into the depths of musical artistry. This summer session includes workshops, intensive coaching, master classes, chamber music, and rehearsals culminating in concerts where participants and professionals will be playing side by side.

The PSMA strongly recommend a full two-week immersion, although an "à la carte" program can also be arranged upon request. Full details regarding the event can be found on the website <http://www.petersoavemusicacademy.com> or you can e-mail petersoavemusicacademy@gmail.com ■

Celebrating Chmielewski PolkaFest, *continued from p. 12*

Our next events are planned for July 4. We'll play on our decorated float travelling along Superior's Fourth of July Parade (ca. 10:00-12:00) as organized by a Citizens Committee. Using Ron Askegaard's truck pulling a 40' flatbed, we load as many band members as can be crammed together to play patriotic favorites. My "singing dog" Knute II may be the star attraction! After each of the previous ten annual parades, plaques and trophies have been our rewards.

Then at 4:00 PM we head to Cloquet, MN, to perform our 8th annual concert at the beautiful Carlton County Historical Society Museum. Its curator/director Rachel Martin is focusing on the 1918 fires and asked us to play music of the era. We'll also inject some surprising humor into the program! Our much-loved Florian Chmielewski intends to perform during this program, as he has in past years. So come early for a seat in the small area that usually fills to SRO. ■

Ladies Take Center Stage

Beautiful and talented Hanzi Wang and the glorius Ksenija Sidorova are both scheduled in U.S. concerts during the month of November. Hanzhi will be appearing at the Kennedy Center's Terrace Theater on October



11 at 7:30 p.m. Ksenija Sidorova is currently touring in Austria and will return to the U.S. Concert stage in early November 2018. Watch for details in future AAA Newsletters.



Not Just Oom-Pah Accordion Workshop & Concert

Contributed by Laura Niland

The Not Just Oom-PAH! Accordion Workshop and Concert was held on June 16-17, 2018 which was supported by a grant from the City of Austin, Cultural Arts Division and sponsored by Texas Folklife Resources. The project was written and coordinated by Shirley Johnson from Austin and Laura Jean Niland, from San Antonio. Partici-pants (22 total) ranged in age from 8 to 80, making this a truly generational work-shop! Many thanks go to Charlie Lockwood of Texas Folklife Resources for his support in making this project possible.

The Not Just Oom-PAH! Workshop offered two scholarships to accordionists under age 18. The two scholarship recipients were: Isaak Wolfshohl & Kyle Crusius. The additional scholarship was made possible with sponsorship from Jim Rice and Dale Wise of Accordion Renaissance, a Virginia-based non-profit, and support from the San Antonio Accordion Association. Our youngest participant, 8 years old, was Ella Grace Broussard, who exhibited great poise throughout the weekend, demonstrating her skills on accordion, fiddle, guitar and voice! Robert Herdridge assisted Ella with her music, while her father watched with encouragement. Later in the evening, Robert and Ella produced a YouTube video with assistance from instructor, Traci Goudi of Austin.

The program instructors included: Ginny Mac (Dallas, TX) teaching Gypsy Jazz, Jan Fleming (Austin, TX) teaching South American rhythms, Mario Pedone (Sugar Land, TX) teaching eclectic world music and accompaniments, Shirley Johnson (Austin, TX) teaching Eastern European music styles, and Traci Goudie (Austin, TX) demonstrating YouTube video techniques with equipment recommendations and demos. The day-and-a-half workshop sessions were packed with interesting music and instruction which were included in their workshop notebooks.

Saturday instruction occurred from 9AM-8PM, with breaks for breakfast, lunch, dinner, where folks greeted Nick Ballarini who brought accordions and other items for demo and sale. Ginny Mac demonstrated how to accompany a vocalist, and also taught "how to improvise" with simple transitions in popular gypsy jazz music and swing styles. Jan Fleming also demonstrated different bass styles and rhythms typical in South American music and taught how to "make your performance interesting by varying transitions, comping, bass patterns, and more." Both Jan and Ginny played along with participants, eventually asking individuals to test their skills at improv with positive feedback and encouragement. Shirley Johnson moved the group into different tempos including 7/8, and others typical in Eastern European dances. Shirley presented a variety of music that gave participants a chance to experience the versatility of the accor-

dion in application to different genres of music. Traci Goudi wrapped up the day with valuable instruction on "How to Produce a YouTube Video", which included discussions on the latest inexpensive equipment, lighting techniques and more. Goudi was very helpful in demonstrating different types of equipment and assisted several individuals in producing their own recording on site. It was a lengthy, but enjoyable Saturday with a plethora of great information and instruction.

Sunday instruction continued with eclectic world music from Mario Pedone. Workshop attendees participated in orchestral arrangements (trios), improved their speed with practice drills, learned how to embellish their music, and how to "Play along with Mario" by keeping tempo with background music. Afterwards, it was time to say our "good-byes" for the workshop and get ready for the evening concert.

The Sunday evening Father's Day concert was held at the Trinity United Methodist Church in Austin, with outstanding performances by Mario Pedone, Ginny Mac and Jan Flemming with Grupo Massa (Flemming, Michael Longoria-percussion, Ben Bradshaw-bass). The audience was thrilled with the musical variety and styles. Ginny Mac joined in with Jan Flemming and Grupo Massa playing Brazilian music and swing styles. Ginny also played some of her latest music, including a beautiful waltz she wrote. She is an accomplished vocalist, song-writer, accordionist and musician and her performance was superb. Mario Pedone played a variety of popular music including jazz, modern, American classics, South American and European music as well. Jam Flemming and Grupo Massa brought the audience to its toes with dancing music. The concert performance was fabulous and the audience gave a standing ovation for these fine musicians. We all wished there was more time and more music!

Many thanks to all who participated in the Not Just Oom-PAH! Workshop and Concert. We look forward to additional projects that support our favorite instrument, the accordion! ■



Pictured above: Ben Bradshaw, Ginny Mac, Jan Flemming, Laura Niland, Shirley Johnson and Michael Longoria

Shanghai welcomes CIA Executive Board Members

CIA Ambassador and AAA Board of Director Kevin Friedrich was invited along with current CIA President Mirco Patarini (Italy) and Public Relations Manager Harley Jones (New Zealand) to attend a series of events in Shanghai, China including the gala 10th Anniversary Concert of the Accordion Orchestra of the Shanghai Normal University.

The event included numerous school visits, including to a local Elementary School, one example of a pilot program among many schools across Shanghai. At these Elementary Schools, young accordionists are offered accordion lessons as part of their after school program. In the school visited, there are 65 children enrolled in the accordion lesson program. Free lessons are offered for one year and includes free instrument loan. As they transition to paid lessons/accordion purchase at the conclusion of the complimentary year in the after school program, they retain approximately 60-70% of the young students.

This highly successful program is set up to ensure the students embrace their time with the accordion. They play to backing

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CIA Execs in Shanghai *continued from p. 14*

tracks, they have extensive kid friendly graphics projected on screens behind them, they play the latest kids songs, the young students sing and engage in movements, they dress up and after one year, the accordion has become an integral part of their daily musical life. Most of the children only practice at the school, five days a week during the class lessons in the after school program, with the music and instructional materials being provided on large electronic screens. The parents are involved and care has been taken to ensure the classrooms are painted in the latest colors to ensure an uplifting learning environment.

A visit was also made to the Xuanjing Art Center, the school that then takes the young accordionist as they transition to their paid lessons. Using state of the art technology, students are taught in class settings of approximately 8 to 12 at a time. Parents are invited to sit in on the class lessons, or can observe from a central viewing area, where the class lessons are projected on large monitors in common areas throughout the facility. Director of the School Professor Li Cong can access the class live feed monitors online from anywhere in the world, enabling him to monitor the school during his extensive world travels. In addition to accordion, lessons are offered in voice, dance, piano, flute and violin. Approximately 500 accordion students are enrolled



across three branches of the Xuanjing Art Center.

Other events include a visit to a new software company profiling new online learning educational tools and the Gala concert celebrating the 10th Anniversary of the Shanghai Normal University Accordion Orchestra..

The software company has designed an App allowing music tutoring services to students enrolled in accordion, piano, violin and zither. The App allows tutors to assist young students outside of their normal private lessons, by monitoring elements of their daily practice such as accuracy, tempo and dynamics etc.. The tutor monitors the student via live feed and the interactive music displayed on an e-reader shows real time updates between the tutor and the student as the tutor is marking such details as an accidental or other areas to be addressed. The new company employs some 500 staff in product development, research, tutor training and production, occupying a five floor office building near the heart of Shanghai. Students desiring tutor sessions pay for 100 session packages, and via the online app, choose their tutor based on their online profile, and also schedule their practice/tutor sessions. Tutor sessions are approximately 10 US Dollars for 50 minutes. While the majority of those 80,000 enrolled students thus far are piano students, approximately 15% are accordionists, with other instruments being violin and zither.

The Shanghai Normal University Accordion Orchestra, co-directed by Crystal Wang and Li Cong, presented a live televised 10th Anniversary Concert including a grand finale of a performance by many former students when the 55 piece accordion orchestra performed an arrangement by Joan C. Sommers of West Side Story.

The visit also included a gala of the students at the Xuanjing Art Center where Kevin and Harley were presented a showcase of accordion students ranging from 4 years old to more advanced students.

With hundreds of accordion students actively enrolled, it is encouraging to see the commitment to ensure the larger base of the pyramid of young accordion students is maintained to always provide the continuing cycle of higher level students. It is also encouraging to see many of the University accordion graduates continuing on teaching on all levels from the beginning students through to the more advanced levels, as well as other areas of future involvement including technology and production. For more information and pictures and videos from the series of events, <http://www.coupe mondiale.org/china/shanghai/2018/07June.htm> ■

Student Accordion Band in Queens School Spring Concert

On May 15, 2018, Public School 203Q presented its Spring Concert to the families of the Bayside Queens Elementary School. The concert, which lasted about 2 hours, included the following groups: The Suzuki Violin Program which consisted of approximately 50 violinists; Squeezebox 10 Accordion Club Band; Les Chanteurs - Dancing & Singing Group; School Chorus and Dance Club.

A special feature that night was the PS 203Q Accordion Band, conducted by Ms. Linda Holcomb, which consists of 10 accordionists. "Papa Joe" De Clemente from Queens, NY provides assistance during band practices sessions and for the concert. A week prior to the concert, some of the kids' groups, including the accordion band, performed for the residents of the "Chapin Home of the Aging" in Jamaica Queens, NY.

The accordion band performed the following selections; Come to the Sea, In The Mood, La Donna E Mobile, Chicken Dance and Star Wars Theme. They also accompanied the School Chorus with "Something Just Like This".

A special note of thanks was made to Ms. Holcomb for all of hard work she did as evidenced by the excellent performance of her students and the very enthusiastic reception by the audience.

Public-school 203Q, in Bayside, Queens may be one of the only elementary schools in the five boroughs of New York City that has a student accordion band. It is made up of ten 4th and 5th graders and is conducted by the school's music teacher, Mrs.

Linda Holcomb.

The school started their accordion band fifteen years ago. They meet once a week, at the beginning of the school day to practice various songs that they will perform throughout the year. "We enjoy performing for concerts and events in our school, and we love taking our show on the road, into our community," says Holcomb. During December, the group braved the frigid weather and played holiday songs outdoors for the Bayside Hills community holiday lighting celebration. They also entertained at the Clearview Senior Center located in that same area.

Holcomb adds, "Performing for nursing homes and Senior Centers brings such joy to the people there. They love to see the children play their accordions. Our students always come home from those trips so excited, having experienced how their music can really be a blessing to others."

For the past two years, the group has been fortunate to have the guidance of community member and professional accordionist, "Papa Joe" De Clemente. Papa Joe volunteers his time to join the students for rehearsals and he inspires them to be better accordionists. Among the many things he does for them, he also fixes their accordions!

As a special treat for the school, Cory Pesaturo is going to graciously share his talents at PS203Q on Tuesday, June 5, 2018 at 1:00 PM.

For more information about the school's accordion program,

June was a Busy Month for Squeeze-Play

If you are visiting the Albany area, check out Squeeze-Play who will be performing in several venues throughout the month of July including Glenmont, Van Etten Farm in New Baltimore, at the Gazebo in Voorheesville, Niskauna, German Club in Edison as well as the July 25th concert in Bethlehem (NY) Library from 7:00-8:00 pm. ■



Accordions on the Waterfront

On June 2, 2018 the BWAC Brooklyn Waterfront Artists Coalition hosted "Accordions on the Waterfront" in Brooklyn, New York.

"Accordions on the Waterfront!" is a special presentation of NYC accordion ensembles, curated and hosted by longtime Red Hook neighbor Rachel Swaner (accordionist, singer, songwriter). The Famous Accordion Orchestra is led by composer/accordionist Bob Goldberg. The Famous Accordion Orchestra is an accordion ensemble that bridges the traditional and the post-modern.

The Orchestra's repertoire covers a broad spectrum that includes Bach, Offenbach, Duke Ellington, Guy Klucevsek, Lars Hollmer, and Andy Statman, as well as original compositions and folk tunes from American, Balkan, Klezmer, Basque, and Italian traditions. Performers include Bob Goldberg, Mark Nathanson, Rachel Swaner, Genvieve Leloup, Melissa Elledge

Also featured were Bachtopus, an accordion ensemble from NYC that performs music by contemporary composers and J. S. Bach. The ensemble is one of the few in the United States that focuses on new music. The group features original compositions by Bratko Bibič, Peter Flint, Philip Glass, Lars Hollmer, Guy Klucevsek, Sy Kushner, Arvo Pärt, Elliot Roman, and Stas Venglevski. Bachtopus performers include Robert Duncan, Peter Flint, Denise Koncelik, Mayumi Miyaoka, Jeanne Velonis. For further information: 718-596-2506/7 ■

ACCORDIONS ON THE WATERFRONT!
SATURDAY JUNE 2TH 2:00-5:00
 a special presentation of NYC accordion ensembles, curated and hosted by longtime Red Hook neighbor Rachel Swaner (accordionist, singer songwriter)

2-3:00 THE FAMOUS ACCORDION ORCHESTRA

3-4:00 BACHTOPUS







Leavenworth's traditional accordion parade brought out a bevy of accordionists as well as "parade watchers."

Rod Miller, "the leader of the pack," proudly "struts his stuff" and always with a smile!