



AMERICAN ACCORDIONISTS' ASSOCIATION Newsletter

A bi-monthly publication of the American Accordionists' Association page 1

November-December 2019



American Accordionists' Association

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'Tis the Season...

Kevin Friedrich to present Christmas Concert in New Zealand



New York based accordionist and AAA Board member Kevin Friedrich will return to his home town of Dargaville, New Zealand to host a Christmas Concert "Jingle All the Way" at the Dargaville Museum on December 8th at 1:00 PM. The Afternoon of 'Holiday' Music with Kevin Friedrich and Friends will feature an array of traditional seasonal favorites, some comedy and a Victorian style Christmas Carol Sing-Along joining the global celebration of Queen Victoria's 200th Anniversary. While in New Zealand, Kevin will also perform at the annual outdoor show *Christmas in the Gardens*.

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The Accordion Pops Orchestra Christmas Concert, Al Terzo, Conductor

The Accordion Pops Orchestra conducted by Al Terzo, pictured right, presented their annual Christmas concert on Sunday, November 17, 2019 in Bergenfield, NJ!




The Accordion Pops Orchestras' 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

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The Connecticut Accordion Association presents

CAA Holiday Concert

"Seasonal Melodies"

Saturday, December 7, 2019
3:00-4:30 PM

This concert will feature traditional holiday favorites, both contemporary and classical, performed by the CAA Orchestra under the direction of Peter Peluso

Gloria Dei Lutheran Church
355 Camp Street
Bristol, CT

Suggested donation is \$10.00 per person

Note: This concert is co-sponsored by the American Accordionists' Association*

RSVP or obtain additional information, call (203) 272-1202
Visit us on the web at www.CTAAccordion.com



CAA Orchestra,
Peter Peluso, Conductor

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From the Editor

Welcome to the November - December and final 2019 edition of the AAA Newsletter.

As another year draws to a close, we hope you have had an opportunity to enjoy the wonderful array of accordion activities held coast to coast.

As you enjoy the various events showcasing the accordion over the Holiday Season, be sure to keep us informed so that we can share the information with our readers.

As always, my sincere thanks to Past AAA President, Linda Reed for her ongoing work in making the final Newsletter Publication and in particular our Board of Director Rita Barnea for her outstanding work in helping source accordion events across the USA that we often include in our Newsletter publications.



Items for the first edition 2020, the January-February 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. As always, text should be sent within the e-mail or as a Word attachment if possible. 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. The deadline for the January 2020 Newsletter will be the 15th of December 2019.

Thank you in advance for your continued support with the Newsletter and we wish you all the best for a safe and happy Holiday Season.

Sincerely, Kevin

Kevin Friedrich – AAA Newsletter Editor

From the President

*Holiday Greetings to all
and best wishes for the
New Year!*



As the Holidays approach us, we are Thankful for another successful year of music through the Accordion.

A Special Thank You to our Board of Directors for their dedication and hard work making the AAA a truly special organization.

To our General Members, we Thank You for your endless

support and donations throughout the year. It makes a huge difference and we really appreciate all your efforts.

Thanks to Linda Soley Reed and Kevin Friedrich, our members can enjoy the AAA's outstanding Newsletters which are filled with great articles as well as concerts dates & events info..... Please support our upcoming Holiday concerts and remember if you have any Accordion News, please send it to Linda or Kevin.

Let's get ready for 2020! We have a full year ahead of us with Great Events on the Way!

Warm Regards,

Dr Joseph A. Ciccone
AAA President

Paris Street inaugurated as Promenade Yehudi Menuhin

At the recent International Music Council Congress in Paris, a road near the UNESCO headquarters was named in honour of violinist Yehudi Menuhin. The street in Paris in front of the UNESCO headquarters was inaugurated as the Promenade Yehudi Menuhin, in honour of the legendary violinist.

The inauguration took place on Tuesday 1 October, in the Place de Fontenoy in front of the Paris headquarters of UNESCO, overseen by Mayor of Paris Anne Hidalgo and in the presence of luminaries including Yehudi Menuhin's son Krov Menuhin, Renaud Capuçon (violinist) and Bruno Monsaingeon (filmmaker and musician), a delegation of Warner Music France and the president of Live Music Now France.

The date is significant as it marks International Music Day, first held on 1 October 1975, instituted by Menuhin during his tenure as president of the International Music Council.

It was in 1975 under Menuhin's Presidency that the Confédération Internationale des Accordéonistes (CIA) successfully petitioned their application for IMC Membership. There was some scepticism at that time about an accordion organization joining the IMC, however Menuhin's support justified the application by stating that the accordion was also a legitimate musical instrument, capable of making beautiful music, was in the hands of outstanding performers and had big name composers composing for it and was accepted at Academic institutions around the world. Thanks to this

leadership, the CIA was unanimously accepted into the IMC as the only instrument specific International organization.

The Promenade Yehudi Menuhin was an unnamed road running parallel to the Avenue de Lowendal from the Place de Fontenoy to the Avenue de Suffren. ■



Pops Orchestra, cont'd from p. 1

baton to Al Terzo.

The largest professional accordion orchestra of its kind on the East Coast, the group consists entirely of accordions plus percussion instruments. In addition, the orchestra often accompanies guest soloists including pianists and vocal artists.

Al Terzo, APO Conductor 2011-Present, is a teacher, arranger, and conductor who has been with the orchestra since its inception in 1970. He is a member of the Music Teachers National Association, New Jersey Music Teachers Association, and National Association of Music Educators. Mr. Terzo serves on the governing board of the American Accordionists Association and is a founding member of the Mid Atlantic Music Teachers Guild. He is an accomplished accordionist who has performed at the Garden State Arts Center and Newark's Symphony Hall. Currently Mr. Terzo teaches accordion and piano in New Jersey. ■

Christmas in New Zealand, cont'd from p. 1

Guest artists for Kevin's Jingle All the Way Concert will include The Music Makers Youth Accordion Orchestra from Auckland conducted by Dargaville Museum weekend Manager Christine Johnstone (also the International News Editor at the Accordions Worldwide weekly news), vocalist Wendy Hilliam, Sharon Hunter who will read a local writer's prose, former local resident Jone Yelcich, the Dargaville Ukelele Group, Narrator Barbara Adams, outstanding Auckland vocalist and accordionist and regular visitor to the USA - Lionel Reekie, Ray Palmer and the Whangarei Handbell Choir, Alanah and Maurice Jones and Dargaville's very own songsters, the Rivertown and Take 6 Singers.

There will be something for everyone with items ranging from Country songs like Tennessee Christmas to popular favorites White Xmas by Irving Berlin and O Holy Night. Readings will include locally written The Christmas Card and the famous 'Twas the Night Before Christmas. In addition to the scheduled artists, there will be guest appearances by several of the most famous characters of the Season including a big Reindeer with a red nose, a dancing Snowman and of course, the man in Red himself.

To conclude the concert, there will be a Victorian Christmas Carol Sing-Along. Most of the traditional carols were introduced during Queen Victoria's reign as Monarch, by her husband Albert, who also introduced and popularized the Christmas Card. Queen Victoria is being remembered worldwide in celebration of the 200th Anniversary of her birth and Dargaville is excited to have the chance to join these celebrations by hosting a Sing-Along of favorite Carols like Silent Night, Away in A Manger, O Come All Ye Faithful etc...

Kevin has presented annual fundraising concerts at the Museum for many years, showcasing not only the accordion in a variety of settings from solo, to orchestra to chamber music, but also local and visiting guest artists. All proceeds are donated to the Dargaville Museum in support of their efforts to showcase the history of the community.

One of the star attractions at the Dargaville Museum is Kevin's 'Accordion Gems, A Master Collection of Accordions through Time' exhibition, showcasing the accordion's history with instruments dating from as early as the 1830s. For more information, please visit:

<http://accordions.com/kevin/museum.htm> ■



Sam Falcetti honoured as first IDEAS Faculty Scholar

Joe Natoli and Michael Soloway, co-founders and directors of IDEAS (The International Digital Electronic Accordion Society) have instituted a program to distinguish those members whose activities and history are stellar and involved – and who have supported the IDEAS project since its inception, working to build the community all over the world, and who are deeply involved in the playing, performing, creation, and teaching of digital/electronic accordions. The Faculty Scholar position is a lifetime honorary appointment to the Symposium Faculty, and as IDEAS grows and continues to expand, the IDEAS SCHOLARS will form an impressive gallery becoming an increasing part of the history of an already historic organization and society. The award will be presented each year at the final celebration dinner on the final evening of the Symposium. Mr. Anselmo (Sam) Falcetti has been chosen as the very first IDEAS FACULTY SCHOLAR for 2019. IDEAS is pleased to begin this program of honor and history, and proud to have Sam Falcetti as its first recipient



Sam Falcetti

A long time AAA Board of Director, Sam Falcetti, from Westfield, MA, began studying the accordion at 10 years of age. By the time he was 16, he had developed a passion for teaching it. In fact, while studying for his bachelor's degree in Theory and Composition at the University of Hartford, he had already opened his first accordion teaching studio in Westfield.

Being an impressive musical entrepreneur – over the course of 50 years, Sam built and led Falcetti Music – a very successful chain of eight stores through Massachusetts and Connecticut. His

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Master Class & Concert Series Celebrated 25th Year

Dr. William Schimmel moderated and curated the 25th Anniversary of the American Accordionists' Association Master Class and Concert Series - THAT MEANS WHAT! It was wonderfully attended and the level was at its highest point. Five participants received AAA Merit Awards for their participation spanning 25 years: Dr. Robert Young McMahan, Micki Goodman Schimmel, Paul Stein, Godfrey Nelson, Lorraine Nelson Wolf and Lee Mc Clure.

The Seminars were brought to the AAA by Dr. William Schimmel with the idea of presenting all facets of the accordion to The New York Artistic Community, with the notion of finding ways to find new angles of expression, composition, video art, performance, dance, design, trapeze, as well as new takes on old ideas and bringing the Accordion Ancestry into fresh new light. The response has been overwhelming in the establishment of an accordion culture in New York City and its influence has gone global.

Participant Elliot Sharp Roads shared, "This is the 25th edition of Bill's annual accordion seminar! I was honored to be invited to take part again - my third year in a row. Besides being an incredible virtuoso with a musical history of unmatched breadth

cont'd. on p. 4

Sam Falcetti honoured, cont'd. from p. 3

reputation in the industry was large and he was often found on the cover of the most prominent trade magazines. At the 50th Anniversary of the University of Hartford, it was Sam on the cover of the Alumni magazine to be honored for his accomplishments.

During the 70's and 80's, Sam was an adjunct Professor at Holyoke Community College at Westfield University. Forming an accordion college ensemble during this period they had the distinction of playing twice in Carnegie Hall in New York City. A busy period for him – Sam also created and conducted the Springfield Accordion Orchestra that was chosen to perform all over the world in many diverse and exciting venues – the 1970 World's Fair in Osaka, Japan, the David Frost Show with Roberta Flack, toured Italy, Disney World in 1975, cruise ships to Bermuda, marching in the Boston Parade honoring Rose Kennedy's 100th birthday, and notably the 1980 Coupe Mondiale in Auckland NZ.

Sam has been a loyal advocate of the digital accordion since it's very inception, both in his business and by making it his per-

forming instrument early on – and to this day is New England's Roland digital accordion distributor. Sam founded the only digital orchestra in the USA playing custom arrangements in many prominent venues all over New England – opening for Deanna Martin and Bobby Rydell and has performed throughout Massachusetts in the "Summer Concert Series" concluding with "New Year's First Night on Cape Cod with 70 musical groups in over eight venues.

As Joe Natoli and Michael Soloway began creating and building IDEAS as the central community and home for the electronic and digital accordion players all over the world, Sam brought his considerable reputation, influence and access behind it.

IDEAS is proud to welcome Mr. Sam Falcetti as the very first IDEAS FACULTY SCHOLAR and look forward to many more years, now, of his participation with the Society and at the growing Symposiums.

He presented a series of seminars at Symposium 2.0 of his own choice and was honored at the final dinner on Saturday evening of Symposium 2.0 at the Avalon Inn in Warren Ohio. ■

Master Class 2019, cont'd. from p. 3

and depth, Bill is an amazingly nice guy and genial host. Audience and performers both are made to feel welcome and the programming is eclectic to the max. I brought the Telecaster Thinline that I had outfitted with a Charlie Christian-style neck pickup and plugged into a MaxiMouse portable amp for a gritty but well-defined sound. Bill suggested "Interpolations" as the theme for our 12-minute improvisation and that's what we ran with, exploring the implications of the definition with shards of noise and fragmented hints of bebop, Indian music,

blues, and free jazz in a breathless rush.

Highlights of the festivities included Le Chat Noir, the opening duet of Bill's with his wife, Micki Goodman-Schimmel, an electrifying dance performer; Will Holshouser's intricate and spellbinding solo pieces performed by himself on accordion; Benjamin Ickies' rendition of Kurt Weill's Nana's Lied; David Soldier's De Witt Etudes 2 & 3; and Robert McMahan's Meditation for Accordion and Flute performed by him and flutist Denise Kancelik.

For further information please contact Dr. William Schimmel at: billschimmel@billschimmel.com ■

Dr. William Schimmel Performance Schedule

Dr. William Schimmel is a leading accordionist, composer and academic, based in New York, where he organizes the annual 'Master Class and Concert Series (The Seminars)' sponsored by the American Accordionists' Association (AAA).

Keeping a busy performance schedule, his upcoming performances and projects in 2019 and 2020:

- December 1 - National Gallery - Klezmer with Alicia Svigals - Washington D.C.
- December 8 - Concert with Cristina Fontanelli - Carnegie Hall
- December 14 - Klezmer with Alicia Svigals - Providence, RI
- December 27 to January 22 - Wozzeck - Metropolitan Opera
- January 12 - premiere of Dr. Schimmel's Variations on a Waltz by Pee Wee KingNorth
- January 12 - premiere of Dr. Schimmel's MaterialSpiritual World - Kosavi World Salon
- February 22 - premiere of Topsy Steps by Noriko Koide - Music from Japa9 Festival
- February 27-29 - Jorg Widmann - Babylon Suite - NY Philharmonic - Lincoln Center
- May 21, 22, 23 - Mary Poppins in Concert - New York Philharmonic - Lincoln Center
- June 6 - Not Entirely Schubert - Curated by Dr. Schimmel - Bruno Walter Auditorium - Lincoln Center
- June 16 - The Met Orchestra -Jorg Widmann: Lied - Carnegie Hall
- July 31, August 1, 2 - 2020 AAA Seminars: Time Travel - Dr. Schimmel, curator – NY
- June 6 - Not Entirely Schubert - Curated by Dr. Schimmel - Bruno Walter Auditorium - Lincoln Center
- June 16 - The Met Orchestra - Jorg Widmann: Lied -

Carnegie Hall

- July 31, August 1, 2 - 2020 AAA Seminars: Time Travel - Dr. Schimmel, curator – NY

As a Juilliard trained musician, he is frequently asked to play with the Philharmonic and other orchestras around the country. He also performs in the pit orchestras on Broadway, his most recent performance being the accordionist for the award winning production of "An American in Paris." Over the years Bill's music has been included in television shows and films. His best known appearance is in the tango scene of "Scent of a Woman" starring Al Pacino.

In addition to receiving the AAA Merit Award for his fifty years of contributions to the accordion and music world, in 1988 he was announced "Accordionist of the Year". He has performed with many major symphony orchestras in the US, many chamber groups, as well as with rock, jazz, and avant-garde groups. ■



Michael Bridge at the Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts in Canada

Michael Bridge will perform at the Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts 10 Year Anniversary on Monday, December 2, 2019 from 7:30 PM – 9:30 PM in Richmond Hill, Ontario. ON! STAGE Series invites the audience to sit on their mainstage and be immersed in the world of live performance. This seven-part series features an eclectic collection of performers from across the performing arts world designed to push the boundaries and stretch the imagination.



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 presenting a lecture, 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.

Michael is pursuing his 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. 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.

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. For more information and upcoming activities and recordings, please visit: www.MichaelBridgeMusic.com ■

Dr. William Schimmel Performance Schedule, cont'd. from p. 4

Bill Schimmel learned accordion as a child and attended Julliard School of Music where he received his Doctorate in composition. While he was still a student at the school, his career was launched after he recorded songs by avant gard composer, Luiano Berio. An authority on Kurt Weill, Dr. Schimmel has recorded all of Weill's music with accordion. Beginning in 1981, Schimmel's Tango Project has released a string of acclaimed recordings on the Nonesuch and Newport Classic labels. The first Tango Project recording went to No. 1 on Billboard's classical charts and was named Record of the Year by Stereo Review magazine.

Schimmel has described the accordion as having a "built-in ironic duality," both "elegant and vulgar." That dual quality is captured in the tango scene of "Scent of a Woman," where it adds a spirit of fun and an undertone of raw sexuality. He has served and continues to serve as Artist in Residence of The American Accordionists' Association (AAA) where he also serves as Distinguished Lecturer in Residence and member of the Governing Board.

For more information on upcoming performances, please e-mail: accordionbill@gmail.com ■

The Divas



Meet the Divas

Linda Reed – Studied with Rudy Molinaro, taught accordion privately and as adjunct professor of accordion at UB (CT); performed with pop group "Odyssey" for 15+ years, conducted and performed with numerous ensembles & orchestras. Has served on AAA board since 1970.

Mary Tokarski is well known throughout the world for artistic solo and ensemble performances, serving as first chair for orchestras world-wide; works with students in the U.S., gives Skype lessons, and travels the world giving Master Classes, as a Master Teacher and Workshop Presenter.

Beverly Roberts Curnow is a former AAA US Champion & Coupe Mondiale winner, NYU & Columbia Grad (BS & MA), a 35 year music specialist in Wilson Area School district in Easton (PA), retired. Currently teaching accordion at Lafayette College with guest appearances with the Allentown (Concert) Band and community theaters.

Rita Barnea - National Editor of www.accordionusa.com for more than a decade. AAA Board member. Rita retired from teaching music in the public schools over 30 years. She writes about all aspects of the accordion, presents lecture/concerts about her teacher Eugene Ettore.

Joan Grauman's life has revolved around the accordion as a performer, teacher, director of an accordion ensemble, accordion orchestra and music camp, and she is AAA's historian writing numerous articles for AAA Archives as well as for the AAA Newsletter and annual journal.

Joanna Darrow - Director Acme Accordion School, private and group instruction; Conductor-Westmont Philharmonia Accordion Orchestra; Director of American Accordion Musicological Society.

Jeanne Velonis is a classical recording engineer and producer based in New York, and a member of the Bachtopus Accordion Ensemble.

Marilyn O'Neil - studied with Bob Vitale as a youngster, Mary Tokarski as an adult and has performed with numerous orchestras, most consistently in Connecticut. Currently also performs in a newly formed rock band in Connecticut called the Bretheren Horde.

Rachel Quirbach is a Board-Certified Music Therapist (MT-BC) currently practicing music therapy in forensic settings. She has been playing accordion for over 19 years, and serves as the Secretary for the AAA. ■

20th Anniversary of the Django Reinhardt Festival at New York's Birdland Jazz Club

Club, produced by Pat Philips-Stratta and her late partner, conductor Ettore Stratta. The festival, which began in 1999, has featured many talented musicians over the years who embody the gypsy jazz style of music by the great Django Reinhardt. Of these was guitarist Dorado Schmitt.



This year, he will be joined by sons Samson Schmitt (guitar) and Amati Schmitt (guitar), who over the years, have grown up on the Birdland stage and who have become virtuosos in their own capacity. With them are mainstays Ludovic Beier (accordion/accordina) and Pierre Blanchard (violin) who consistently leave the audience breathless with their performances. Joining them are more gypsies, cousins of the Schmitt family, Francko Mehrstein (rhythm guitar) and Gino Roman (bass).

The Django Reinhardt NY Festival brings the music of the great gypsy guitarist, Django Reinhardt, into the 21st Century. The high energy performances pay tribute to Reinhardt who is considered one of the greatest jazz guitarists of all time. Reinhardt's driving, swinging style became known as 'HOT JAZZ'. The Django Festival Allstars add their own interpretations and arrangements to some of Reinhardt's greats, as well as create new and modern compositions of their own.

Accordionist Ludovic Beier performed at the Django Reinhardt Festival with Dorado, Samson & Amati Schmitt, and Pierre Blanchard from November 12 - 18, 2019 featuring special guests: Ken Peplowski, Tim Ries, Joel Frahm, Grace Kelly and Roger Kellaway.

The Django Reinhardt NY Festival continues at Birdland, an exciting and renowned performance venue, for the 20th successful year. The festival carries on the legacy of legendary gypsy guitarist Django Reinhardt, with original music keeping it fresh, exciting, cutting-edge!

Born in 1978, Ludovic Beier learned the accordion from his father and benefited from being part of a musical family. He was brought up in the French tradition of the instrument and developed his jazz accordion skills. Along with his virtuoso playing, Ludovic composes and arranges, and has his own band, Ludovic Beier Quartet, to perform his "cool and latin" French jazz. He has an impressive technique and also a great dose of lyricism with a band that keeps him at full stretch.

Besides performing in Europe at top festivals and clubs, he is a regular visitor to the USA, appearing with the Django Reinhardt Project, performing at Birdland (NYC) with guests such as Paquito D'Rivera, at Lincoln Center with Joe Lovano, at Yoshis (CA) with David Sanchez, and last summer at the Montreal International Jazz Festival with Angelo Debarre and James Carter where he brought the house down. He also had the honor to perform at Carnegie Hall with Toots Thielemans among a prestigious line up including Herbie Hancock, Ivan Lins and Eliane Elias. ■

Joe Soprani and the Philadelphia Pops Orchestra

Accordionist Joseph Soprani performed with the 65 piece Philly Pops Orchestra in Disney's "The Nightmare Before Christmas" on October 24-25, 2019. In a nod to the Hollywood Bowl's productions of Tim Burton's masterpiece, the Philly POPS performed the film's classic score alongside the original film. Everyone was invited to attend in costume.

AAA Board of Director Rita Barnea attended the performance and was fortunate to meet Joe Soprani and the conductor before the program where they graciously explained the arrangement and process of live-to-film performing. Every musician wore a special headset which helped them to perform to the score of the film with the appropriate timing which is a challenging endeavor. They performed with great enthusiasm and all coordinated perfectly to the film. The performance received a rousing standing ovation!

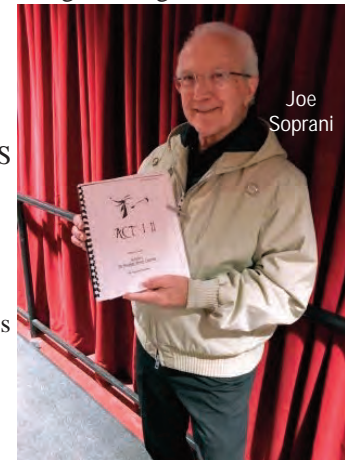
The performance was the POPS' first live-to-film concert and made possible by the Met Philadelphia's state-of-the-art audio and video equipment. This concert is part of The Philly POPS at the Met Philadelphia concert series, which brings innovative programming and contemporary artists to the Met Philadelphia's newly-restored stage.

Released in 1993, Tim Burton's "The Nightmare Before Christmas" follows the story of Pumpkin King Jack Skellington as he attempts to claim Christmas for himself, but his plan soon falls apart. This production has been performed three times at The Hollywood Bowl - 2015's Hollywood Bowl performance was named the #1 Concert of 2015 by the Orange County Register, topping major acts like The Rolling Stones and Shania Twain. The show returned in 2016 by popular demand and again in 2018 for the 25th Anniversary performance. This film is rated "PG."

Joe shared, "The score to 'The Nightmare Before Christmas' has a very powerful score and an interesting accordion part." In addition to performing in Broadway shows such as "Fiddler on the Roof", "Zorba", "Cabaret" and "Irma la Douce", Joe has performed in world premieres of "Frida," a musical that called for a virtuoso accordionist and "Another Kind of Hero," a musical which featured him on stage for an entire scene. Joe, who appeared on the Ed Sullivan Show and won the Arthur Godfrey Show, appeared with TV Star Nell Carter in a "Colors of Freedom" production at the Convention Center in Philadelphia in 1995. He also appeared with Peter Nero and the Philly Pops playing a special arrangement by Nero with Soprano Evelyn de LaRosa.

In November of 1997, Soprani became the first accordionist to perform in "La Traviata" by Verdi presented by the Opera Company of Philadelphia, at the Academy of Music in Philadelphia. Klaus Arp, the opera conductor from Germany, decided to use the accordion in the small ensemble on stage during "La Banda" sections. Joe has also performed with Russell Watson on Good Morning America, and continues to promote the accordion as a serious instrument at various clubs and organizations. His workshops at schools and colleges, where he demonstrates his skills as performer and arranger to young composers and arrangers, have been well received. For further information: joesoprani@gmail.com.

Joseph Soprani is pictured with the score and if you look closely, you can see Joe nestled in amongst the orchestra the second musician to the right of the two harpists. ■



Ginny Mac takes part in Leonard Cohen Celebration

Ginny Mac shares, "For the Austin area folks, and anyone wanting to get away for a weekend...I'm proud to be part of a very special Leonard Cohen celebration show on Saturday, November 9, 2019 at Congregation Agudas Achim with Ray Benson and Katie Shore of Asleep At The Wheel, along with many other fantastic musicians!"

Hailing from Fort Worth, TX, Ginny Mac fronts a dynamic group that brings a fresh and exciting twist to vocal and instrumental stylings in the Country & Western Swing, Americana, Hot Jazz, and International music genres. Ginny is also a former member of the two-time Grammy Award winning group Brave Combo based in Denton, TX.

Notable performances include: Grand Ole Opry in Nashville, TN, Accordion Kings & Queens Festival in Houston, TX, Opened for Marc Cohn at the Kessler Theater, Dallas, TX, Opened for Asleep At The Wheel in Gruene, TX, Cotati Accordion Festival in Cotati, CA, Dean Smith Celebrity Rodeo (Benefit for John Wayne Cancer Institute) in Abilene, TX, "Texas Cruise Jam" with Tanya Tucker, Bob Wills' Texas Playboys in Cancun, MX and many more.

Ginny has recorded four albums; "On The Street Where You Live," is a collection of classic tunes and originals, featuring many of her friends and greatest musical heroes. The project includes Grammy Award winners Woody Paul and Joey Miskulin (Riders In The Sky), legendary Nashville fiddler Buddy Spicher, the great bassist Bob Moore (Roy Orbison), and several of Nashville's premier musicians. "It was an unforgettable experience," she says, "I was fortunate to learn so much and make music with these wonderful people."

When she is not busy with an active touring schedule, Ginny is writing and arranging new original music for an upcoming album and collaborating on multiple musical projects. Her other passions include blogging, painting, and recently, exploring the world of photography. "I find inspiration in the world around me" she says. "Whether it is a stranger sitting on a park bench, or the shadow a broken chair makes on the sidewalk, there is beauty in ordinary, everyday things. And I love the way inspiration from my other interests finds its way into my music."

For questions about the Leonard Cohen event, please e-mail Cameron Nudleman at cameron.nudleman@caa-austin.org. ■



Mihoko Goto performs at A World of Accordions Museum

A World of Accordions Museum curator Helmi Harrington, Ph. D, is delighted to report that the Mihoko Goto concert on October 12, 2019, was a landmark experience for HARTS and AWAM. This "first" Japanese experience drew an audience of about a hundred people from the larger community as well as from Duluth's Sister City program.

Mihoko Goto astounded the audience in many ways. The petite woman with a standard 19" accordion literally danced around the stage. Always standing and fully memorized, her solos included concert pieces like Magnante's "Accordion Boogie", Confrey's "Dizzy Fingers", Piazzolla's "Libertango", and even Bach's "Toccatina in D-Minor". Her encore of "Dark Eyes" was an expansive version she had arranged. Most pieces included improvisational sections she composed that showed off her technical skills, but more significantly, proved her ability to conceive music imaginatively and realize it through exceptionally controlled dynamics. Often her fully expanded bellows curled around her small body as the voluminous sound belied her fragile appearance.

She also told us about her studies in Japan, complicated by lack of music and teachers, which necessitated learning through careful listening to recorded performances. But it also encouraged her to compose original pieces and to set traditional Japanese tunes in contemporary styles, a few of which she played. Mihoko became the accompanist when her friend Chiharu Ebihara took the lead voice in two American West duets. Their precisely coordinated ensemble and Chiharu's calm, tremolo melodies imitated a cowboy's harmonica as striking contrasts in the program.

It should be mentioned that Ebihara made the first contact with us to ask about playing at HARTS. After checking out Mihoko's website samples, I immediately agreed to set the date for our concert. The ladies did not ask for an honorarium, but were well rewarded by generous voluntary donations, many standing ovations and shouts of "Bravo." Many in the audience were overheard to call this concert "the best ever."

We were privileged to hear the skills of these women. For those who missed the event and for everyone who did not, their repeat appearance during our World Accordion Day Festival on May 2, 2020, will be a greatly anticipated event. ■



New York School PS203Q looking for 12 Bass Accordions

Joe De Clemente (Papa Joe) is hoping to locate additional 12 Bass Accordions to help expand the student accordion band in Queens, New York. The Oakland Gardens School, PS203Q Accordion Band, in Queens, New York presently has 11 Elementary School students lined up for their Accordion Band; however, there is a waiting list of about 20 more students who would like to be a part of the accordion school band this year, news which is met with great excitement. The school is sending out this message as a plea to try and locate some additional 12 Bass Accordions to be donated for use by the students.

"Papa Joe" De Clemente, who lives in Queens, New York, was brought up in an Italian family environment and started playing the accordion at the young age of nine years old in 1956. He was interested in playing because he used to visit his relatives, the IORIO's, who manufactured accordions in NYC, as far back as 1907. Joe has performed in numerous venues and loves to entertain people. He is also a member of the Long Island Accordion Alliance.

Joe DeClemente volunteers once a week early in the morning to assist the music teacher, Linda Holcomb, at an elementary school music program at Public-school 203Q, in Bayside, Queens which may be one of the only elementary schools in the five boroughs of New York City that has a student accordion band. 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. 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!

Joe shares his love for the accordion, "To me, music has been a language that crosses all barriers, speaking to all people and bringing joy to those who listen. The box has been my pal for over 60 years and I am glad the Lord gave me this special gift."

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. Last 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.

Linda 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."

If any of our readers know of anyone who has a 12 Bass Accordion that is not being used, please contact either: **Joedeclemente@yahoo.com**, Cell: 516-946-0198 or **Linda Holcomb: lindaholcomb203@gmail.com**. ■



Gia Ciccone in Christmas Concert

Gia Ciccone, 12-year-old Accordionist is a 7th grade student at Somers Middle School in Somers, NY. She started taking Accordion lesson at the age of 5 with her Great Uncle Maestro Carmen Carrozza.

Gia has consistently entered and won many prizes at the American Accordionists' Association's Annual Festival/Competitions and is a student of Maestro Mario Tacca, who she has been studying Accordion & Music with for the past 5 years. She has participated in The AAA's Youth Orchestra under the direction of Mary Tokarski and has been featured as a Guest Artist for: Mario Tacca & Mary Mancini's "A Candlelight Christmas Concert", The Connecticut Accordion Association, The Carmen Carrozza Scholarship Fundraiser Events, The Valtaro Reunion, Mario Tacca AAA's Life Achievement Award Concert, The Feast of St Joseph the Worker, The AAA's Youth Outreach Program, The Hudson Valley Accordion Ensemble, The Accordion Pops Orchestra and the 2019 American Accordionists' Association's Gala Banquet/Concert. Gia is the first student Accordionist to receive The DeBellis School of Performing Arts Music Scholarship on May 19th 2019 and was the First Place Winner of the 2019 Carmen Carrozza Scholarship Competition Jr Division which took place in King of Prussia PA July 16, 2019 at the American Accordionists' Association annual Festival/ Competitions. ■



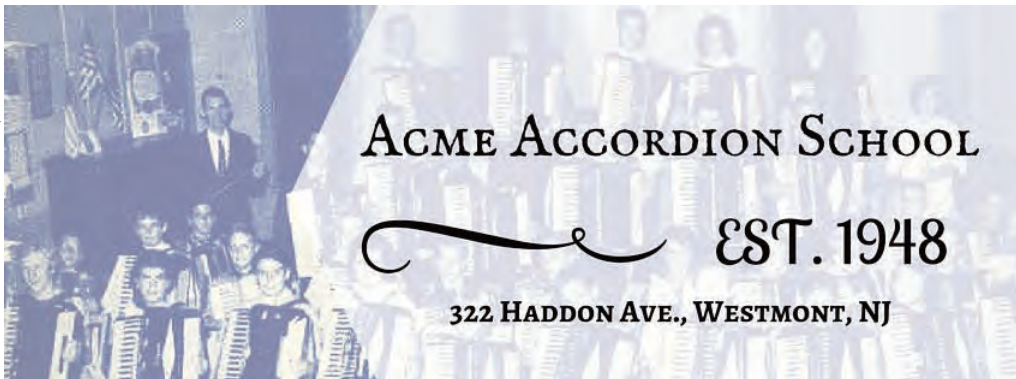
Acme Accordion School Celebrates 71st Year

The Acme Accordion School under the direction of Joanna Arnold Darrow, celebrated its 71st year on Sunday, November 3, 2019 from 10:30 to 3:00PM at their headquarters in 322 Haddon Ave., Westmont, NJ.

The featured Guest Artist was Al Terzo. Al Terzo started accordion lessons at the age of 7. Teachers and coaches included Flora Foscatto, Louis Iorio, Charles Nunzio and Eugene Ettore. He studied at Major School of Music in Irvington, NJ and was Concert Master of the Sano Accordion Symphony. Al earned the title of 1970 New Jersey Virtuoso Champion during the 1970 ATA of NJ competitions. Al was also a founding member of the ATA of NJ Teachers Orchestra. Currently he is conductor of the Accordion Pops Orchestra. In addition to Al Terzo, the Westmont Philharmonia Accordion Orchestra, Dr. Lou Persic, Suzanne Beites and the Westmont Accordion Club performed at the gala celebration.

Founded in 1948 and home of the Westmont Philharmonia Accordion Orchestra, the Acme Accordion School is the place for everything accordion. Acme sells new and used button box and piano accordions, CDs, DVDs and sheet music. They give accordion lessons and handle accordion repair. Acme is also the home of the Musik Garten, a music and art program, where children from birth to 6 years old can come to develop their sense of rhythm, coordination and social skills.

Events began at 10:30 and culminated with the annual Accordion Day photo. For more information on events, please contact AAA Board of Director, Joanna Darrow at 856-854-6628. ■



Long Island Accordion Alliance featured Charlie Sauss

La Villini Restaurant of East Northport, NY sponsored the November 6th meeting of the Long Island Accordion Alliance (LIAA) which featured accordionist Charlie Sauss.

He did not disappoint the sellout crowd with probably one of the most demanding and extensive programs ever performed at an LIAA event. His performance was outstanding, featuring a very diverse repertoire, dazzling technique and a very sensitive / expressive musical touch.

His program included a vast range of literature from the classical, Italian, French and church repertoire. Among these were Champagne Polka (Myron Floren), Fugetta (John Gart), Fantasy Impromptu (Chopin), Blue Danube (Strauss), Granada (Lara),



Csardas (Monti), Amazing Grace, Happy Norwegian Polka (Myron Floren), an Italian medley and a French medley. His execution was flawless.

Charlie studied with Peter Viani (1980's), Harold Danko (1985), Nick Paone (1975-1979), Joe Biviano (1970-1972), Serge Matusевич (1967-1968), Peter Stio (1957-1967).

Listed below is just a part of his extensive and impressive resume:

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| 2015 | The Visit (Chita Rivera) Broadway |
| 1983-1984 | Zorba (Anthony Quinn) Broadway and National Companies |
| 1981 | Dick Cavett Show |
| 1981 | Tony Awards |
| 1981-1982 | Fiddler On The Roof (Herschel Bernardi) - National Company |
| 1981 | Piaf - Broadway |
| 1977 | Finnian's Rainbow - Jones Beach Marine Theatre |
| 1971-1973 | Fiddler On The Roof - Broadway |
| 1970 | Cry For Us All - Broadway |
| 1976-1978 | Toured extensively throughout the USA and Canada with the Guy Lombardo Orchestra |
| 1976-1978 | Guy Lombardo - New Year's Eve on TV |

Stas Venglevski and the Menomonee Falls Symphony

The Menomonee Falls Symphony Orchestra (MFSO) Winter Pops Concert will feature Stas Venglevski on December 14, 2019. The concert is titled "Christmas Fairy Tales and Fantasies."

Christmas is the season of many fairy tales and fantasies! The audience is invited to attend and hear some fantastic music including the "March of the Tin Soldiers", "The Snow Maiden", and "Babes in Toyland".

Special guest artist and internationally renowned accordionist, Stas Venglevski who will perform an accordion Concerto by Anthony Galla-Rini, along with music from "The Nutcracker" and other holiday favorites!

His artistry, dazzling technical command, and sensitivity have brought Stanislav, "Stas," Venglevski, a native of the Republic of Moldova, part of the former Soviet Union, increasing acclaim as a virtuoso of the Bayan. A two-time first prize winner of Bayan competition in the Republic of Moldova, Stas is a graduate of the Russian Academy of Music in Moscow where he received his Masters Degree in Music under the tutelage of the famed teacher, Friedrich Lips. In 1992 he immigrated to the United States.

Stas is an Accordionist, a Musician, an Arranger, an Entertainer and a Teacher. Stas' repertoire includes his original compositions, a broad range of classical, contemporary and ethnic music. He has toured extensively as a soloist throughout the former Soviet Union, Canada, Europe, and the United States, including numerous performances with Doc Severinsen, Steve Allen and with Garrison Keillor on the Prairie Home Companion Show.

Additionally, he has performed with symphony orchestras throughout the United States. He performed the world premiere of "Concerto No. 2" by Anthony Galla-Rini and also the world premiere of "Bayan and Beyond", composed for Stas by Dan Lawitts. He is also former president of the Accordionists and Teachers Guild, International (ATG). Stas has many wonderful CD's and musical compositions including solos, duets, and ensembles available for purchase. A great holiday gift for accordion aficionados. Stas will also be performing the Galla-Rini Concerto with the Nuremberg Symphony on April 25, 2020.

For further information please contact:
meghada33@gmail.com ■

Finnish Accordionist, Matti Pulkki NYC Scandinavia House Concert

Finnish accordionist Matti Pulkki presented "Shapes & Icons: Finnish Music for Accordion", a concert of original accordion works at the Scandinavia House in New York City.

Combining iconic late 20th-century soundscapes with brand-new ones, Matti Pulkki presented a concert of Finnish music for solo accordion by Einojuhani Rautavaara, Cecilia Damström and Magnus Lindberg with a premiere performance of a piece by Reiko Fütting. Compositions included an adaptation of Rautavaara's "Icons," written in 1955 and based on his experiences in New York; an exciting, recent work by Cecilia Damström; and the widely celebrated, classical accordion piece "Jeux D'Anches" by Magnus Lindberg. Scandinavia House. Matti Pulkki is currently pursuing his doctorate at the University of Toronto, studying with Joseph Macerollo, and completed his Master's degree at the Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki as a student of Matti Rantanen in 2017. Matti Pulkki is currently pursuing his doctorate at the University of Toronto, studying with Joseph Macerollo, and completed his Master's degree at the Sibelius Academy of the University of the Arts Helsinki as a student of Matti Rantanen in 2017. ■



Stas Venglevski

A CANDLELIGHT CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Celebrating the Feast of **SANTA LUCIA**

Friday, December 13, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.
Church of the Assumption, 1st Street, Peekskill, NY



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**For more information, call Assumption Rectory at
 914-737-2071 or GIOIA Productions at 914-737-8872.**

Welcome New Members

TOM DUDDY - Associate Member

I began playing accordion around age 12 in Red Bank NJ. In high school played in the We Three Trio, then joined the Navy at age 18 and brought my accordion with me on my ships throughout the Pacific. After 11 years as a Navy Corpsman, left the service and with my wife and three children we decided to stay in Hawaii where we have been for the past 34 years.

After enjoying my Sano Zon Rio my Irish grandmother brought me when I was in 7th grade, a few months ago I purchased a new accordion for the first time and decided to join the AAA.

Aloha, Tom Duddy



CONNIE FREY - Associate Member

I played accordion as a teenager back in the 50s and 60s. I have picked it up off and on thru the years. I am presently trying to get back at it again. My original accordion got stolen when I had donated it to a university hospital music therapy dept. and the lady who had it had her car stolen. However I did manage to purchase a better used one several years before that. For a while I tried phone contact lessons with an accordionist who lived out of state, but he only wanted me to use his own written music and none of what I had on hand. He has since passed so now I feel I can use my own collected music once again to begin to use for practice. I did take some brush-up lessons a few years back with an elderly local accordionist and he felt I still had potential, but he has since passed on too. So I am hoping the AAA can give me incentive to begin practicing once again. Have to take it slow since I am much older now and have to get the left arm reactivated for the in-out squeezing.

We look forward to meeting you at a future AAA Event!

ELENA FAHNSTEIN Professional Member From Minsk to Las Vegas

Elena Fainshtein recently appeared as a guest artist at the Las Vegas International Accordion Festival, marking her debut appearance at this particular event. The story of Texas based Elena and her husband Gregory Fainshtein began over three decades in the city of Minsk (now of Belarus, then the Soviet Union). They were rivals in their music classes at a Music College completing for the best result in solo performances. It wasn't until Gregory suggested that they joined forces as a Duo playing together that they realized just how much chemistry they had when playing and beyond.



Elena and Gregory married after earning their Masters degrees in music and toured the world playing in Germany as well as various parts of the USSR (Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, Lithuania and others). Ultimately, life has brought them to Israel and subsequently to the USA where they've made it their mission to spread their music and love of the Bayan instrument through various events and performances.

Nowadays, Elena and Gregory can be found performing at various festivals, conventions and events sharing their passion for music. Elena teaches both piano and button Accordion students in person and via Skype all over the US, she conducts her studio's "Musical Expressions" accordion band and leads workshops at conventions and conferences sharing her unique style and unrelenting enthusiasm.

Next year, Elena and Gregory will celebrate 40 years as a musical Duo. For more information about their various projects and upcoming performances, please visit: www.ElenaFainshtein.com. ■



Time Travel

Come with us on a wonderful journey thru the world of the accordion. It's "Time Travel", the Past, Present, and Future even Back to the Future.

During the last 25 years, we followed this fantastic instrument in all its dimensions: historically, culturally, socially, and economically. We bore witness to its ebb and flow in popularity. We were even part of its reinvention in the world of the internet where information and contact with other countries is at our fingertips.

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Challenging workshops to stimulate and ultimately augment your perceptions on how to play on, listen to and create with and for the instrument

Each member of our team brings a different viewpoint.

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and Gain much valuable and usable information on your journey.

So take the ride with us and let the ride take you...

SEE YOU AT THE SEMINARS!
JULY 31, AUGUST 1 and 2 at TENRI

70th Anniversary of the International Music Council

The International Music Council (IMC), founded in 1949 by UNESCO, is the world's largest network of organizations and institutions working in the field of music. The International Music Council promotes access to music for all and the value of music in the lives of all peoples. Through its members and their networks, IMC has direct access to over 1000 organisations in some 150 countries and to 200 million persons eager to develop and share knowledge and experience on diverse aspects of musical life.

On 28 September 2019, members of the International Music Council gathered in Paris for the organization's 38th General Assembly, elected a new leadership and adopted an ambitious work plan for the next two years. Alfons Karabuda (Sweden), composer and President of ECSA (European Composer & Songwriter Alliance) and SKAP (Swedish Association of Composers, Songwriters and Lyricists), was elected President. Alfons is pictured with CIA President Mirco Patarini (Italy).

"It is a great honor to be confided with the task of leading the world's greatest network for music creators. IMC's members come from across the globe and consist of all the various parts of the musical eco system. UNESCO founded IMC in 1949 to in a tough post war time to build bridges and values through music and culture." Alfons Karabuda says.

Throughout the past six years, Mr. Karabuda has been a driving force within IMC's Executive Board, dedicating himself to promote access to music for all and recognize the value of music in the lives of all people, while exploring new frontiers of collaboration between IMC and other global actors within music and copyright. Mr. Karabuda succeeds in his position as President to Ms Emily Achieng' Akuno from Kenya who received a standing ovation for her commitment.

Alfons Karabuda adds: *"When I look at the work being done by the IMC, I am struck by the importance of it, by the necessity of it, and by the passion it manifests in all our activity. In a more and more siloed music business, it is through IMC we can work across genres and together create and show the true value of music"*.

The IMC General Assembly also elected a new Executive Board composed by Roula Abou Baker (Lebanon), Charles Binam Bikoi (Cameroon), Paul Du-jardin (Belgium), Martí Ferrer (Catalunia/Spain), Ardavan Jafarian (Iran), Jacques Moreau (France), Naomi Pohl (UK), Sheila Woodward (South Africa/USA) and Xiaogang Ye (China).



Sheila Woodward will serve as Executive Vice-President, joined by Charles Binam Bikoi and Xiaogang Ye as Vice-Presidents and Martí Ferrer as Treasurer.

The IMC work plan for the next two years foresees activities that will strengthen the IMC in its three pillars: as a value-driven advocacy body, as a network of networks and as a project organisation.

Over 100 participants representing 14 national music councils, 25 international and regional music organisations and 19 national and specialised organisations in the field of arts and culture took part in the debates.

The General Assembly was followed by the 6th IMC World Forum on Music, which gathered some 350 participants for a celebration of the organisation's core values, embedded in the Five Music Rights. This event also commemorated the 70th anniversary of the IMC, founded under the aegis of UNESCO in January 1949.

The Confédération Internationale des Accordéonistes (CIA) joined the IMC in 1975. For more information and an array of interesting news items pertaining to all aspects of the Music industry visit the News and World Music News sections of the IMC website at <http://www.imc-cim.org> ■

Celebrate the Season

WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN ACCORDION SOCIETY

Members of the Washington Metropolitan Accordion Society have been bringing joyful seasonal music to Frederick Maryland for the past ten years!! If you're in the area stop in on December 7th for some great food, hot drinks and delightful music.



See more WMAS news on page 15.

PEEKSKILL, NY

Accordionist Mario Tacca and Mary Mancini (vocals) will perform with the Hudson Valley Accordion Ensemble at the Taormina Restaurant in Peekskill, New York on December 5, 2019, at 6.30 PM. The popular ensemble plays a variety of music. For reservations, call 914-739.

More Coast to Coast information on page 15.

"Christmas is forever, not for just one day. For loving, sharing, giving, are not to put away."

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Holiday Music
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 under the direction of Mark Nejako

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Saturday, December 7, 2019, 1 - 3 PM
 Bring your family & friends to enjoy delicious hot drinks, baked goods, sandwiches, soups and more in a relaxed, spacious venue beautifully decorated for the holidays. Members of the Washington Metropolitan Accordion Society will play traditional holiday music, and there will be lots of opportunities to sing along.

For more information about the ensemble please contact:
 Mark Nejako
 mark.nejako@gmail.com

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 - Benjamin Ickies
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 - Dave Soldier
 - Mayumi Miyaoka
 - Dan Cooper
 - The Yorkvillians
 - Max Maples
 - Michiyo Suzuki
 - Rachel Swaner
 - The Main Squeeze Orchestra
 - Milica Paranosic
 - Peter Jarvis
 - David Stoler
 - Lauren Flanigan
 - David First
 - Mary Spencer Knapp
 - Dr. Hugo Goldenzweig
 - Lee Mc Clure
 - Ken Laufer
 - John Foti,
 - Kathleen Tipton
 - Bob Goldberg
 - The Famous Accordion Orchestra
 - Corn Mo
 - Rachid Eladlouni
 - Carl Riehl
 - Linda Reed
 - Rita Barnea
 - Dr Denise Koncelik
 - Alicia Svigals
 - Jeanne Velonis
 - Sydknee
 - Bachtopus
 - Robert Duncan
 - Peter Flint
 - Rocco Anthony Jerry
 - Miwa Gemini
 - Jenny Cho
 - Elliott Sharp
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 - Carita Patamikakam
 - Kathryn Andrews
 - Ted Nash
 - and many others
 - and a few surprise guests
 - and
 - Dr. Schimmel

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Michael Bridge and Kornel Wolak Concert Review

When so many popular musical events contain more cacophony than harmony, this one was the total opposite. Michael Bridge and Kornel Wolak give us performances that would please the most persnickety listeners. True, they are a unique duo in the world—beyond their combination of digital accordion with acoustic clarinet. More significantly, their extraordinary skills, technical control, intelligent interpretations, and perfect ensemble must be heard to be appreciated. Dr. Wolak teaches and performs in an international spectrum while Bridge is interrupting his DMA work in order to concertize.

The program showed inspired musicianship in excellently chosen repertory! Michael began with solo pieces on his EVO digital accordion. His astonishing performance of Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture persuaded many of the virtual accordion's true artistic potential in the hands of an artist of genius. Here's only one example: Michael demonstrated three levels of right-hand partial-depression that could be tracked through differently produced overtone construction in concurrent, individual contrapuntal lines. His control of left-hand depression levels sounded more obvious effect differences. Yes, the instrument clarifies the techniques that Michael has mastered. For many however, the program highlight came in the duo's final pieces, performed with an acoustic Gola borrowed from the museum. The audience jumped to its feet applauding and shouting "Bravo."

Kornel proved equal genius. On a standard clarinet model, his tone control over the instrument's full range was beyond compare. In a wide variety of musical epochs and styles, his intonation and fluency were impeccable. His beautifully constructed jazzy sounds again sent the audience to its feet.

In a grueling two-month sequence of 20 concerts through Wyoming, Minnesota, Nebraska, Indiana, Illinois, and North Dakota, these two accomplished artists took time to provide a benefit appearance for AWAM. The demo/workshop was short-notice, so in contrast to their normal 1,500-2,000 attendees, our group was very small. In our audience were university professors, expert musicians and students who became privy to another unusual experience—both men spoke freely and responded personally to numerous questions. It provided an engaging hour that allowed insights into each personality.

On a personal note: I had a particularly warm reunion with



Michael, having met him at the 2013 Coupe Mondiale in Victoria, British Columbia, enjoyed his participation in my 2017 repair seminar, followed by a performance of Bach's cello suite that remains exemplary. He never fails to mention his appreciation for what AWAM provides, which he elucidated during his (2017) web-posted walk through the museum while playing our beloved "cello" accordion. I was pleased to meet Kornel during our breakfast on November 5 after the two overnights in our Duluth "parsonage."

I consider Michael the Northern Hemisphere's answer to the great European accordion masters. Kudos to Michael and his teacher/mentor Joseph Macerollo (University of Toronto). Years ago, Macerollo visited our evolving Duluth museum and graciously played for the surprised students. ■

Hank Thunander Concert Review

Would you believe three-plus hours of non-stop music? Well, that's what our audience enjoyed when Hank Thunander took the stage on October 27. The audience remained enthralled throughout and one of my people commented: "I think I've died and gone to heaven."



The multi-Hall-of-Fame honoree arrived at HARTS about noon and was "warming up" shortly thereafter. When a few front-row seat folks settled in, that turned into real playing. By the time the program officially began, Hank was well into repertory medleys. One of his first was a tour of European and American favorites, especially Big Band pieces. Then Paul Vargason played a few duets with Hank, effectively using his Hohner Gola and Polverini button diatonic in perfect ensemble with Hank.

Hank knows his accordion well. It is an ornate 1933 Italo-American crème beauty with green "black-keys." It is a light-weight and easily handled instrument, which Hank proudly says has never required repair attention.*. He is clearly fond of his performance instrument, comparing it favorably to Paul's Gola. But then, Gola assets aren't needed in Hank's entertainment style, which involves stream-of-consciousness medley-type sequences that incorporate linkage segments with modulation sequences that are smooth, inventive and harmonically correct. He excels in fast finger passages, complex chords accomplished with ease, distanced jumps fluently grasped, clean touches in both hands and clearly expressed dynamics. Modestly, he rarely stopped for applause. Occasionally he told about his experiences or explained something about his enhancement techniques, and then the musical flow continued.

His musical skills are amazing, as is his extended concentration. Everything was played without music; only a list of titles was on the music stand nearby. His repertory expanse is astonishing and marvelous—8,000 titles by his own estimate. Students would be well advised to discuss elements of his technique in private lesson session. The program was financially sponsored by Barbara and Dennis Vargason, long standing friends of AWAM and admirers of Hank. The Vargasons wanted to do something special for the museum and this was a most generous decision. Indeed, the concert brought us one of the highest receipts ever received through a single concert. We are honored to be able to add Hank Thunander's name to our list of artists.

*When touring the museum, visitors should see our several like-models that regularly are found on service/main-tenance tables. ■

Coast to Coast

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



LOS ANGELES, CA

The Accordionists and Teachers Guild, International (ATG) will celebrate their 80th Anniversary Festival in Los Angeles, CA from August 5-9, 2020. The event will feature a variety of performing artists and orchestras from around the world and will also include the magnificent staging of the CIA World Accordion Orchestra XII. For more information, please visit www.atgaccordions.com

BETHLEHEM, PA

Accordionist Alex Meixner was awarded "Performing Artist of the Year" during the Linny Awards ceremony which in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania is presented by Yuengling. This award recognizes a Lehigh Valley performing artist whose work symbolizes excellence in its field.

Meixner made his stage debut at age 6, and since then has made performing his life. He has worked with Jack Black on the Sundance-screened Netflix movie, "The Polka King," with Post Modern Jukebox and as an on-screen spokesperson for Hormel Pepperoni. He is also a 2007 GRAMMY Award nominee for "Polka Freak Out," his co-led album with Brave Combo's Bubba Hernandez.

VANCOUVER, CA

Accordionist Jelena Milojevic performed at "Tango del Cielo" (Tango of Heaven) held at the Grosvenor Theatre, Kay Meek Arts Centre in Vancouver, BC, on November 9th. The event, presented by BC Accordion and Tango Society took attendees on a journey into the world of tango. Jelena Milojevic joined the performance as a special guest along with Anna Maria Mendieta (harp), strings, percussion and exhilarating dance.

SUPERIOR, WI

Accordionist Michael Bridge gave a Demo Workshop at A World of Accordions Museum (AWAM) in Superior, Wisconsin on November 5th. Michael 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. At this workshop he demonstrated his Bugari Evo electronic accordion. For details on this and other activities please email: aworldofaccordions@gmail.com

SUPERIOR, WI

A World of Accordions Museum will once again host an array of accordion activities during the annual CIA initiative 'World Accordion Day'. The World Accordion Day Festival will be held over the weekend of May 2-3, 2020. For information on this and other Museum sponsored activities, please visit www.worldofaccordions.org.

NEW YORK, NY

Internationally renowned artists Daniel Binelli (bandoneon), Polly Ferman (piano) and Nick Danielson (violin) united their talents to present music by Argentinian composers Piazzolla, Troilo, Binelli, Salgan and Ginastera at a concert in New York City. The three musicians performed at the Consulate General of Argentina on November 12th, 2019 as part of the 14th Latin American Cultural Week in New York City.

WMAS

On December 15, WMAS will hold its always popular annual Holiday Concert in Falls Church, VA. Visit the website for more info: washingtonaccordions.org.

CONNECTICUT ACCORDION ASSOCIATION

And yet another great concert you don't want to miss and that's the Connecticut Accordion Orchestra Holiday Concert on December 7th, Peter Peluso, conductor. A great variety of favorites such as White Christmas, I Let the Dreidl Spin and the unforgettable Radetzky March. Plan on attending this December 7th concert at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church in Bristol CT. Remember that this is "The Most Wonderful Time of the Year." (see flyer on page 1)



May all that makes the season bright, be yours the whole year through.

Be kind to one another!

PORT CHARLOTTE (FL) ACCORDION CLUB

At last!! It took a little while to find a suitable venue but co-organizers, Chris Brettschneider and Linda Reed were able to connect with American Legion Post 110 in Port Charlotte on Harbor Blvd. and they will allow us to use their community room. Our first gathering is Sunday, December 1st at 1:00 p.m. All Port Charlotte accordion aficionados and those in the surrounding area are invited to join us - come and play if you like, or just sit back and enjoy the music -



December 3rd guest artist - Chris Brettschneider (pictured left)

January 5th featured artists Joan Grauman & Bill Morse,



and February 2 will feature Walt Kasprzyk. The American Legion has a full service restaurant and beverage service all at economical prices.

Great afternoon of music, reminiscing and camaraderie. Special thanks to the following for offering their mailing lists and recommendations: Peggy Owens in Brooksville, FL - Accordion Adventure Club, Corky Hall - Polk Chapter Accordion Club, and especially Karen Adam - Florida Accordion Association; organizer of the "Smash" weekends in Orlando.



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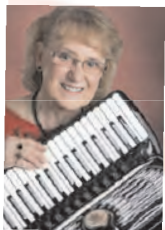
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