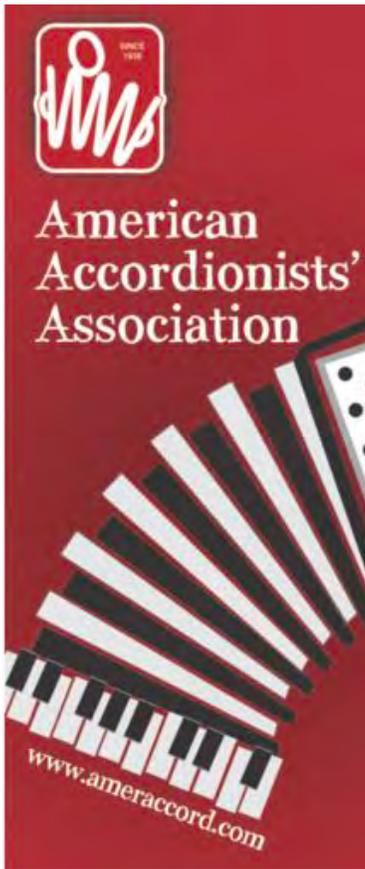




# Newsletter



AAA SqueezeFest  
July 12-16, 2017  
Westin Princeton  
at Forrestal Village  
New Jersey



Sponsored by the  
American Accordionists' Association

## From the Editor

Welcome to the March/April 2017 edition of the AAA Newsletter.

The excitement builds as we rapidly approach the AAA's annual Summer festival offering a variety of artists and events, an accordion extravaganza that is sure to please all musical tastes. You'll find plenty of information on the many guests and activities at [www.ameraccord.com](http://www.ameraccord.com) and stay tuned for updates in our upcoming Newsletter publications.

Once again my sincere thanks to former AAA President Linda Reed and Board of Director Rita Barnea for their kind assistance with the AAA Newsletter. Items for the May/June Newsletter can be sent to me at [goaccordion@yahoo.com](mailto:goaccordion@yahoo.com) or to the official AAA e-mail address at: [ameraccord1938@gmail.com](mailto: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.

I look forward to seeing you all at one of the many upcoming events!

Sincerely,

Kevin Friedrich - AAA Newsletter Editor



## Message from AAA President - Mary Tokarski

It's Spring!

That means Festival time for the AAA is on its way. If you have already made your reservations at the hotel and sent your registration forms – good for you – if not, don't delay. This will be an event you don't want to miss. Check out [www.ameraccord.com](http://www.ameraccord.com) for all the details and forms. Lots of concerts, workshops, Meet and Greet and After Hours Club performance possibilities, Exhibitors to check out, competitions if you so desire, and lots of great fun and great people to meet! July 12-16, 2017 is the date, and the Westin Princeton Hotel at Forrestal Village in Princeton, NJ is the place.

The Carrozza Memorial Scholarship Fund Raiser on April 30th at Villa Barone Hilltop Manor was a fantastic event. A big thank you to our young guests Gia Ciccone and Cody McSherry for their mesmerizing performances. Cory Pesaturo, Eddie Montiero, Frank Carozza, Frank Busso, Sr., Frank Toscano, the Connecticut Accordion Orchestra conducted by Peter Peluso, and Mario Tacca and Mary Mancini dazzled attendees with music for dancing, listening and just plain great entertainment!

### New AAA Members:

Mr. Chuck Anderson, Ms. Joyce Carey, Mr. Andrew Caruso, Mr. Will Comer, Mr. Paul S. Conti, Ms. Angela M. Conti, Ms. EvAnn Dahl Hawley, Mr. Vladimir Dyachuk, Mr. Phillip W. Fox, Ms. Kathleen Grambsch, Mr. John Hopkin, Mr. Fert Ihor, Mr. Stanley J. Jakubaszek, Ms. Karen Korkuc, Mrs. Nancy Leonard, Mr. Antonio Magno, Mr. Steven Mazurek, Ms. Laura Niland, Ms. Amy Pittillo, Mr. Victor Prieto, Mr. Jacob Prosek, Ms. Pyster Marianne, Mr. Jim Rice, Mr. William Ritzman, Mr. George Secor, Mr. Allen Somer, Sr., and Dr. Mitchell R. White. *Welcome!*

Be sure to join us in Princeton for the Carmen Carrozza Memorial Competition with \$8,000 in prizes, and featuring young musicians from around the U.S. and internationally. The competition will be held on Thursday, July 13th during the Festival in Princeton.

The Master Classes and Seminars moderated by Dr. William Schimmel are in their 23rd year! Space is limited at the Tenri Cultural Institute, so be sure to make your reservations early for "The Red Lantern Accordionists" themed event – a look into Accordion Culture - the "Champion" – and the person in last place!

Help us plan the future of the accordion by bringing your thoughts and ideas to the annual AAA Open Meeting and Farewell Breakfast on Sunday, July 16th at 9 a.m. for a great send off after the Festival.

See you there!



## Accordion Teachers' Association of Massachusetts Celebrates 55th Year

The Accordion Teachers' Association of Massachusetts (ATAM) celebrated their 55th New England Music Festival at the Boston Newton Marriott in Newton, MA from April 7-9, 2017.

The first competition, organized by the late Aldo DeRossi, was held at the Brockton Fair in Brockton, MA. After a few years at Boston Hotels the Festival moved to the western part of the state to the Schine Inn in Chicopee, MA for many years.

This year the Festival celebrated their 40th year at the Newton Marriott along with Peggy Falcetti celebrating her 40th year as chairperson. The three day event included music students from Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Rhode Island participating in accordion, bass guitar, drum, guitar, piano, violin and vocal categories.

Students competed in various solo, duet, ensemble, band, orchestra & battle of the band categories. Contestants who participated, did so regardless of their ability, experience, or level. Over \$5000.00 in cash awards and scholarships were given out.

The current President, Jay Latulippe from NH, was happy to announce that Barry and Judy DeRossi, the son & daughter-in-law of the 1st president, provided the entertainment for the Saturday evening Gala Awards Banquet.

The annual festival averaged more than 2500 entries and all events were free and open to the public. For further information refer to the ATAM web site: [www.atammusicfestival.com](http://www.atammusicfestival.com). ■



## Accordions Around the World in Bryant Park

Ariana Helleman, the organizer of the annual "Accordions Around the World" event in Bryant Park, New York City is searching for Accordionists, Concertinists, Bandoneonistas and Harmonium Players for this summer's outdoor performances.

"Accordions Around the World" is made up of accordionists of different musical genres that play in different pockets of Bryant Park. The event receives much press including the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal, ABC News, and NY1. While the series is called, Accordions Around the World, they are interested in all free-reed instruments and invite those who perform on concertinas, bandoneons, shengs, harmoniums, etc. to be included!

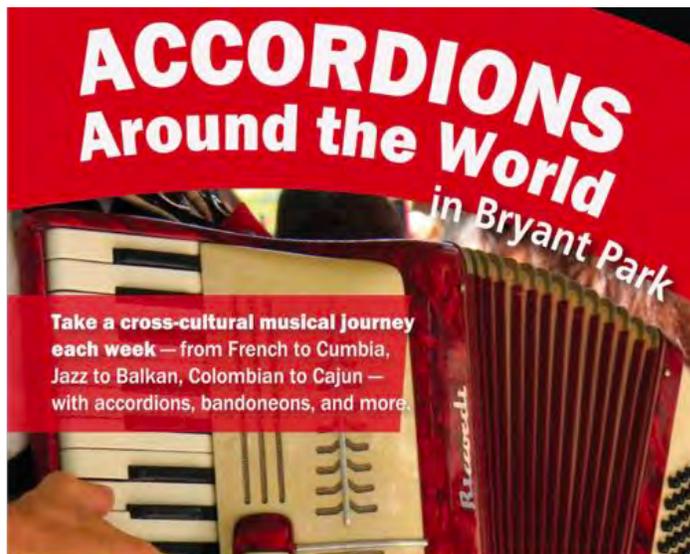
The weekly event will take place on the following four Wednesday early evenings in June and July 2017, with dates on June 28, July 5, July 12 and July 19, 2017.

Accordionists will play for a 15 minute set and rotate to a different station in the park and play another 15 minute set (two short sets total; you will be in the park for no more than two hours, if not less). The audience is invited to picnic and able to sample different accordion styles. There will be vendors selling food in the park.

Compensation is involved, but accordionists must be able to get to the park on their own. If you are interested, please email Ariana at [ariana@arianaslist.com](mailto:ariana@arianaslist.com).

Also save July 21st! The series culminates in an Accordion Band Festival which will take place then, featuring 5 bands (each with an accordion of course!).

To contact: e-mail: [arianaslist@gmail.com](mailto:arianaslist@gmail.com), [www.arianaslist.com](http://www.arianaslist.com), Twitter: @Arianaslist, FB: Ariana's List; Instagram: [arianaslist](https://www.instagram.com/arianaslist). ■



**Confédération Internationale des Accordéonistes (CIA)**  
 Member of the International Music Council, an NGO official partner of UNESCO

Welcome to the 70th Coupe Mondiale in Osimo, Italy  
 hosted by the Italian Accordion Culture (IAC)



## The Accordionaires "Pops" Orchestra in Concert

On Sunday afternoon, April 23, 2017, The Accordionaires "Pops" Orchestra were the guests of AIMS (Accordion International Music Society), the Santa Barbara Accordion Club, in a special concert "In Dedication to Dan Desiderio."

The accordion orchestra, under the baton of Janet Hane, performed a wide variety of music, over half of which was arranged for accordion orchestra by Mr. Desiderio. Included among those pieces were "Moulin Rouge Medley," with several familiar tunes; "And All that Jazz," from the movie Chicago; "Manha de Carnaval," a Latin beat number; and Ployhar's patriotic medley, "Americana."

Additionally, the orchestra was delighted to announce that noted conductor Bill Benson (Conejo Valley Youth Orchestra) appeared as guest conductor of the operatic overture "Dichter und Bauer" (Poet and Peasant) by Franz von Suppe.

The Accordionaires "Pops" Orchestra is based in North Hollywood, CA. The orchestra has over twenty accordionists (including an electronic accordion and a bass accordion), a bass guitarist, a trombone player, and a drummer. This combination gives the group a unique sound that has been widely appreciated by audiences throughout the Southland, including at the Ronald Reagan Library, the annual Swiss Fair, as well as with the Conejo Valley Youth Orchestra. The Santa Barbara concert has become an annual event, with each performance being sold out. ■



Accordionaires Pops Orchestra  
with conductor, Janet Hane

## Primavera en Kansas City

Accordionist Juha Silfverberg performed with the Kansas City based Tango ensemble 'Cucharada' during their recent CD release promotions.

After studying abroad and winning a grant, Tango music ensemble Cucharada released its album 'Primavera en Kansas City' in two markets this April. This quintet performed selections from the recording at the Lied Center Pavilion in Lawrence on April 15, 2017 and at Madrigall in Kansas City on April 22, 2017.

The band includes Johnny Hamil (bass), Juha Silfverberg (accordion), Sean Mawhirter (guitar), Tina Bilberry (violin), and Guy Montes (flute). These shows followed a month-long, Argentine research trip taken by Mawhirter and Bilberry to study this genre, birthed in Buenos Aires. Their mentors included some of the finest Tango musicians in the world including former Kansas Citian Christine Brebes. Brebes performed at the Madrigall show as it coincided with a three week American tour she is making this year.

The group began its efforts for this recording after winning an ArtsKC Inspiration Grant in 2016. It was engineered by Nate Espy at Roof Top Media Studios. An accompanying video for the lead track 'Re Fa Si' was produced by videographer Jefferson Donald of Light Bearers Entertainment.

Proudly aware that it's the only active Tango music group in the area, Cucharada deals with a musical history not unlike Jazz, a 19th century form that evolved from the dance halls to the concert halls. They have catered their repertoire to satisfy both listening and dancing audiences. From the "Paris of South America" to the "Paris of the Plains"!

For more information, please visit [www.cucharadamusic.com](http://www.cucharadamusic.com) or [www.facebook.com/cucharadamusic](https://www.facebook.com/cucharadamusic). ■



Pictured above:  
Sean Mawhirter,  
Tina Bilberry,  
Juha Silfverberg,  
Johnny Hamil,  
and Guy Montes

## Dee Langley Performances

Minneapolis based accordionist Dee Langley performed on May 6th, with the Duluth Superior Symphony Orchestra (DSSO) in their performance of Valentino Dances by Minnesota based composer Dominick Argento. Her appearance was part of a 'Then and Now' Concert series. Formed as the Duluth Civic Orchestra in 1931, the DSSO performed its inaugural concert on May 2, 1932. As on this day 85 years ago, the orchestra also performed Tchaikovsky's stirring Symphony No. 4, which was also included as part of the milestone anniversary concert.

Dee appeared with the DSSO under the direction of Dirk Meyer. Celebrating his third season with the DSSO, conductor Dirk Meyer has been described as "mesmerizing" and "out of this world." During the past few years, Meyer has held conducting positions with the Sarasota Orchestra in Florida, a group with which he still has a connection, having just been named their Principal Guest Conductor. In 2012, Meyer was awarded First Prize of The American Prize in orchestral conducting. He has guest conducted many orchestras throughout the United States, including the Springfield Symphony, Naples Philharmonic, and The Florida Orchestra and also has strong connections to the Orlando Philharmonic. In 2014, Meyer gave his debut with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra in Canada.

In addition to his passion for Opera, Dirk possesses a special interest in contemporary music. He established a new music series with the Sarasota Orchestra, leading world premiers by composers such as Miguel del Aguila and Eve Baglarian as well as the American premiers of works by Arvo Pärt, Einojuhani Rautavaara, Joby Talbot and Elliott Sharp. Audiences and critics have been equally enthusiastic about these concerts, praising Meyer's "precise and expert direction" and stating that this series might have changed Sarasota's musical scene forever.

In addition to her Duluth concert, Dee recently performed "Twisted Apples" by Composer Robert Elhai. A composer that loves to use the accordion in his music, "Twisted Apples: Stories From Winesburg, Ohio" is a new music-theater piece based on Sherwood Anderson's classic American novel Winesburg, Ohio.

Created by writer Jim Payne and composer Robert Elhai, it tells the story of selected individuals who struggle to overcome the loneliness and isolation that seems to permeate a small town in the late 1800s, the show takes its title from the malformed fruit that pickers leave on trees.

With librettist Jim Payne's deft lyrics floating on gossamer compositions by Robert Elhai, it conveys the secret aches and agitated longings of characters aiming to bust out of their strictures. With a cast of five singers and four instrumentalists (accordion, violin, bass, piano), Twisted Apples is a production that is thought provoking, beautiful and emotional.

Composer Robert Elhai is the recipient of Tony and Drama Desk nominee for his work on the Broadway production of The Lion King and has also contributed orchestrations to over 150 film scores including the Oscar-winning score for Frida, The Avengers: Age of Ultron, Iron Man 3, Thor 2, four Fast and Furious movies, three Alien movies, two Batman movies, and the first Pirates of the Caribbean. Other arranging work includes the arrangement for Metallica's Grammy Award-winning "The Call of Ktulu".

Accordionist Dee Langley specializes in both solo and ensemble works for the accordion having appeared with the Minnesota Orchestra, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Ethnic Dance Theatre, Flying Foot Forum as well as Nautilus Music-Theater.

Ms. Langley is winner of the 2012 American Composers Forum's Minnesota Emerging Composer Award (World Music, Orkestar Bez Ime), the 2011-2012 McKnight Fellowship for Performing Musicians administered by MacPhail Canter. Dee is currently teaching accordion at Minneapolis Community and Technical College as well as at her home in Northeast Minneapolis, Minnesota.

For further information: [squeezermn@yahoo.com](mailto:squeezermn@yahoo.com) ■

## Dominic Karcic Introduces Accordion to Schools

On Thursday, March 9, 2017 accordionist Dominic Karcic (Commack, NY) made a repeat visit to H. Frank Carey High School In Franklin Square, NY. His one hour and fifteen minute presentation titled "An Introduction to the Accordion" was given to 150 students who were part of the Italian language program at the school. The assembly program coordinator for the event was Ms. JoAnn Radoslovich Molino.

In the weeks prior to the presentation, Mr. Karcic submitted a program guide to the classroom teachers which was to be disseminated to the students. This guide consisted of materials and information on the accordion, Youtube videos of repertoire to be performed and also Italian song lyrics. All materials would prepare the students for the upcoming program.

His assembly presentation was a two part program of first introducing the students to the origins, history and the structural features of the accordion which was then followed by a performance by Mr. Karcic of almost an all Italian repertoire.

Also performing in the program was vocalist Cheryl Spielman whose talents were included for the benefit of that additional dimension of having the students hear a beautiful voice, used professionally, singing in Italian and accompanied by the accordion.

Selections performed included Funiculi - Funicula, La Spagnola, Ciribiribin, Volare, That's Amore, Ah! Marie, Que Sera, Sicilian Tarantella, Tarantella Napoletana, Reginella Campagnola, La Bella Piccinina, Accordion Boogie and Summertime.

Also in attendance at the event was author and Italian educator Joseph Tursi (Professor Emeritus, Stony Brook University). Professor Tursi is co-author of the well-known Italian text book series "Oggi in Italia." ■



Dee Langley  
pictured with  
DSSO Conductor,  
Dirk Meyer



Left to right: Prof. Joseph Tursi, Cheryl Spielman,  
Dominic Karcic and JoAnn Radoslovich

## Bachtopus in New York, NY

New York City based accordionists 'Bachtopus' performed at St. Peter's Episcopal Church on April 23, 2017 as part of the Music in Chelsea series.

Bachtopus is a contemporary accordion ensemble from New York City that also performs music by Johann Sebastian Bach. The ensemble was born out of a fruitful musical duet between Robert Duncan and Mayumi Miyaoka, who partnered during the Winter of 2011. Denise Koncelik and Peter Flint, who were members of the Brooklyn Accordion Club, joined the duet to play Bach's organ music, which is well suited to the accordion. The group soon shifted focus to become one of the few accordion ensembles in the United States that plays new music.

Having established a large repertoire in just a few years, Bachtopus seeks to play more original compositions, commissioned works, and contemporary music that is interesting, accessible, and grounded in traditional folk music.

The ensemble has performed for diverse audiences, and previous performance highlights include: Make Music New York, Bach in the Subways, The New Museum, Accordions Around the World, Meetup.com, the American Accordion Association Seminars, and the United Nations. Bachtopus performs music by and is inspired by Accordion Tribe, Motion Trio, the Kronos Quartet, Arvo Pärt, Philip Glass, Stas Venglevski, the Bang On a Can All-Stars, and Jacques Cousteau. The group features original

## Nathan Chapeton

Accordionist Nathan Chapeton has earned the privilege of representing the AAA at the upcoming 70th Coupe Mondiale to be held in Osimo, Italy from September 5-10, 2017.

Nathan Chapeton is a young musician who became interested in playing the accordion at the age of eight when he heard his teacher, Mary Tokarski perform in concert. He has attended multiple music festivals sponsored by the American Accordionists' Association and the Mid-Atlantic Music Teachers Guild (where he captured the Virtuoso Category prize twice so far!)

Mr. Chapeton has appeared as a guest artist in many local musical organizations including the Long Island Accordion Alliance, the Brooklyn Accordion Club, and as a frequent performer at Connecticut Accordion Association events.

At the Coupe Mondiale in Austria (2014) and Russia (2016) he was among the best accordionists and musicians from around the world. His plan now includes learning baroque and classical music and to compete in more rigorous categories at the competition.

compositions by Peter Flint and Sy Kushner, and arrangements by Robert Duncan and Denise Koncelik. For further information: robertoduncan@gmail.com

Photo: L-R are Peter Flint, Robert Duncan, Denise Koncelik, Jeanne Velonis, and Mayumi Miyaoka. ■



Nathan additionally plays with the Jazz Ensemble at Middletown High playing his accordion, piano, and other miscellaneous keyboard instruments. His interest in jazz was sparked when he was part of the Youth Involvement Program jazz ensemble at an American Accordionists' Association festival, with other young accordionists and instrumentalists.

This year Nathan auditioned for the honor to perform with the New Haven Symphony when his school, Middletown High School (Connecticut) Goes to the Symphony on May 22, 2017 and the Hamden Symphony Orchestra (Connecticut) on April 30, 2017. He was selected by both to be a guest performer for their concerto concerts featuring soloists on violin, cello, piano and the accordion!

Nathan's ultimate goal is to reincorporate the accordion in modern jazz and classical music in a way that no one has ever seen before. ■



Pictured above, Nathan Chapeton performs with the New Haven (CT) Symphony Orchestra



## Victoria International Accordion Festival

The Victoria International Accordion Festival is celebrating Canada's 150th birthday with their summer festival from July 13-17th, 2017. The best Canadian and International artists are coming for this spectacular event where Victoria will be echoing with accordion music for four full days. Guests are invited to listen to world class concerts or going in on workshops, free accordion sessions, the accordion museum, accordion history lectures, dinner dance accordion competitions trade show and free open air performances.

July 13th is the Gala Opening night concert featuring Canadian digital accordion champion Michael Bridge, jazz duo Jesse Mea and Roland Bougeos, Kings of Fiddle Daniel Lapp trio with accordionist Adrian Dolan and Pierre Shryer trio JUNO winner joined with Irish accordionist Dermot Byrne. This fun performance full of passion and explosive energy will bring the audience to their feet.

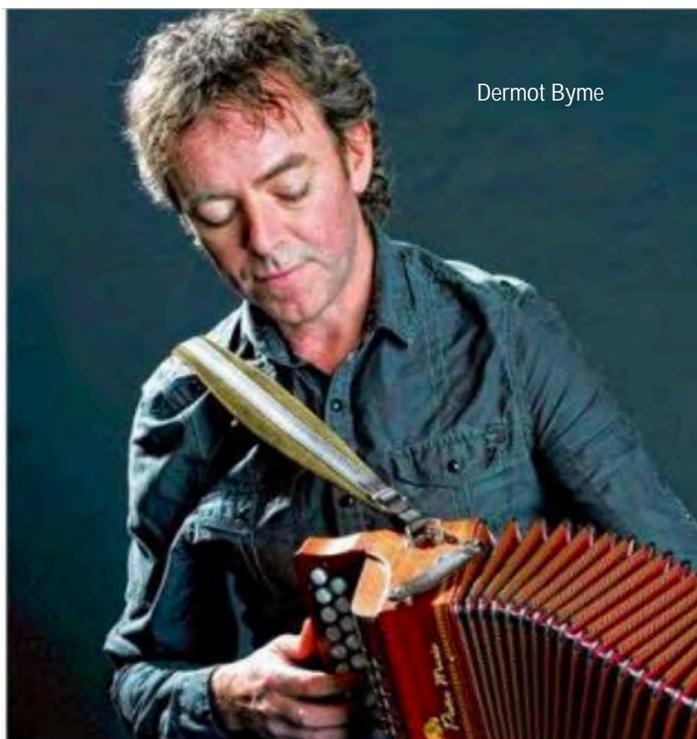
Expect the unexpected at the dinner and dance night on July 14. Satisfy all of your senses with exquisite Serbuab cuisine prepared by a professional chef from Vancouver. You will be dancing your feet off while entertained by Michael Bridge and energetic accordion groups Bijou de Bayou and Ensemble Transatlantico de Folk Chilean.

If you would like to be knocked off your feet by world class artists and entertainers, to cry from laughter, do not miss the concert on July 15. Double-Double duo will amaze you with comedy, virtuosity, and musical sensitivity with their all original arrangements of classical showpieces, sensitive jazz ballades and fiery folk music from around the globe

Get ready for the competition! This year, Victoria International Accordion Competition will have solo and one ensemble category. The prize budget is over \$5000 CAD!

With featured festival performances, dance and dinner night workshops, competitions and free open air concerts, organizers have provided something for everyone and look forward to welcoming everyone to beautiful Victoria, Canada!

For all the details, please visit: [www.bcaccordion.ca](http://www.bcaccordion.ca) ■



## World Accordion Day in Superior, WI

A World of Accordions Museum was the venue for a magnificent World Accordion Day celebration held in honor of the late Dr. Willard A. Palmer. An initiative of the Confédération Internationale des Accordéonistes (CIA), the event was organized by Museum curator Helmi Harrington, Ph.D. and recognized by the Mayor of Superior, Jim Paine, as World Accordion Day in his official proclamation. The official opening remarks were presented by CIA Ambassador Kevin Friedrich, and included greetings from the CIA President Raymond Bodell. The event featured a weekend of Concerts, Workshops, Lectures, two Festival Orchestras and visits to the Museum housing more than 3,000 accordions and over a million pieces of accordion sheet music.



Pictured above, Kevin Friedrich and Helmi Harrington celebrating World Accordion Day at "A World of Accordions Museum."

One hundred years after the birth of Dr. Willard A. Palmer (January 31, 1917), he is still recognized as a leader in pedagogy and performance practice through nearly 800 published books for keyboard instruments. His methodology and meticulous scholarship have been lauded by teachers, artists and students worldwide. 2017 celebrates the fifth anniversary of the receipt of Palmer's estate into A World of Accordions Museum. His massive output fills our third-floor library and is in use every day.

The name of "Bill" Palmer is certainly the USA's most influential in music pedagogy, critical editions, and performance.

The American musician, composer, scholar and music educator, Willard (Bill) A. Palmer was a child prodigy. At 13, he played the piano on the radio. He studied both piano and accordion which were to form the basis of his musical endeavors.

After the war, Willard A. Palmer and his former student, Bill Hughes joined forces. They can be credited with the high point in accordion performance in the USA. Palmer collaborated with Hughes in producing a series of accordion method books which have had world wide impact. Sales ran into the millions making it the cornerstone of the Alfred Publishing Co. empire.

As an educator, Willard A. Palmer was ahead of his time - instrumental in carving an indisputable niche for the accordion at the university level. He and Hughes took the accordion beyond mere college acceptance, into the realm of establishing an actual accordion department within the University of Houston, where they were faculty members enabling young accordionists to earn both Bachelor's and Master's degrees with their instrument.

*continued on page 7*

## World Accordion Day in Superior, WI cont'd. from page 6

Palmer also founded the "Palmer-Hughes Accordion Symphony", a superb orchestra which appeared at Carnegie Hall in New York.

During his period as a professional accordionist, Willard A. Palmer sought to perfect his yet-evolving instrument and contributed significantly to the development of the stradella-free bass "converter" accordion. He designed the "Palmer Emperor Converter", and collaborated with Titano Accordions to achieve the realization of his creative ideas.

Willard W. Palmer eventually became one of the most important editors of keyboard music in the United States. His editions of works of the masters are highly acclaimed and respected in the most elite music circles. Palmer is noted especially for his painstaking detail and care in the scholarly researching of original editions. He became Alfred Publishing Company's Senior Editor in 1964, researching the original manuscripts of the great masters of keyboard literature, with special emphasis on the study of performance practices in the Baroque, Classic and Romantic eras. He achieved recognition as the leading authority on Baroque ornamentation and lectured on the subject at various colleges, universities and music festivals throughout the country.

While achieving accolades for his educational works for other instruments, Willard W. Palmer remained a steadfast supporter of his beloved accordion. Willard A. Palmer's revolutionary teaching principles were reflected in 789 of his published works, which included an accordion method, several piano methods, a method for Hammond Chord Organ, a guitar method, hundreds of solo pieces and many choral works.

In 2013 his son, Willard Palmer, III, donated his father's musical estate that includes one of the finest accordions of the museum (Titano Super Emperor V, 1996) and the decorous two-manual, eleven-pedal harpsichord (A. Cecil Taylor, 1979) that graces the Hanni Strahl Concert Hall.

The event featured guests including Kevin Friedrich (New York, NY) CIA Ambassador who made an official presentation of the CIA Honored Friend of the Accordion Award to Helmi Harrington as well as perform in the Festival Orchestras, Stas Venglevski (Milwaukee, WI), who presented a concert of accordion masterworks by composer Zolotariew in addition to his own original compositions among others. Canadian artist Michael Bridge (Toronto, Canada), gave an informative workshop on Interpretation while demonstrating the rare Cello accordion from the Museum display and also presented a concert of classical and entertainment repertoire.

John Scaffeo (Thunder Bay, Canada) presented a seminar and performance utilizing the Digital accordion while Dee Langley (Minneapolis, MN) shared her expertise in Balkan related music and rhythms in her performance and instruction sessions, including leading a workshop with more than a dozen accordionists participating. Dr. Michael Middleton (Belton, TX) shared his experiences growing up with the Palmer and Hughes Accordion method, tracking the progression of the popular pedagogy methods, and then performing some of his entertainment music both as soloist and jamming with Michael Bridge.

The festival featured two orchestras, one conducted by Stas Venglevski and the other by retired member of Duluth and Superior Symphony Orchestra (DSSO), Tracey Gibbens (Duluth, MN). Tracey is a respected performer, teacher, musician and conductor and he currently conducts The Northshore Philharmonic Orchestra, The Duluth Symphonic Winds, and The Proctor Community Band.

In addition to Maestro Gibbens, a recently retired violinist from the DSSO, Carolyn Carver (Duluth, MN) performed in the various ensembles.

A sample video of the weekend's activities is available on A World of Accordions Museum website found at [www.worldofaccordions.org](http://www.worldofaccordions.org). ■



Michael Bridge

## Stas Venglevski at WMAS

Virtuoso bayanist, Stas Venglevski, was the Guest Artist at the Washington Metropolitan Accordion Society meeting on Sunday, May 21, 2017. The concert took place at Sleepy Hollow United Methodist Church, 3435 Sleepy Hollow Road, Falls Church, Virginia 22044. His varied program consisted of classical, modern and traditional folk music as well as original compositions by Stas. With the addition of Stas' wonderful humor, it was a stellar program and tremendously enjoyed by all!

Stas' additional performances include: Leavenworth International Accordion Celebration on June 15, 2017, Milwaukee Accordion Club on June 26, 2017, Akkordemotio 2017 International Accordion Camp on August 6, 2017 in Switzerland, 18th Annual Las Vegas International Accordion Convention on October 23, 2017.

Stas is a regular participant in the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra's Arts in Community Education Program (ACE); has performed with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and the Tacoma Symphony Orchestra; has done television commercials and performed in theater productions; produced numerous recordings including a transcription of Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker Suite for Bayan as well as several CDs of his original compositions. He has published many books of original compositions for solo and duet accordions and accordion ensembles.

Stas founded Accordion XXI Century Series in 2010 so that the Midwest audiences can experience the amazing range of the Accordion and Bayan by bringing gifted artists from all over the world. In a concert setting, these gifted musicians share their skills and cultures to provide the audience with a unique musical experience. The performances feature the Accordion or Bayan in solo presentation and, when possible, in concert with other instruments. ■



Above (left to right): Stas performing at WMAS; Receiving a standing ovation from WMAS members. Below: Stas is pictured with WMAS members Ron and Lee Paulson.

## UMKC Ensemble in Concepcion, MO

The University of Missouri - Kansas City (UMKC) Community Accordion Ensemble performed a well received concert at the Conception Abbey Basilica at The Conception Abbey: A Benedictine Monastery, in Concepcion, MO on May 6, 2017, as part of World Accordion Day.

This acclaimed ensemble, all former students at UMKC, performed a program including: Arrival of the Queen of Sheba by George Frideric Handel (arr. Sommers), Concerto Barocco for Soloist and Accordion Orchestra (I. and II) by Gerhard Mohr, Morning Mood from "Peer Gynt Suite, No. 1" by Edward Grieg, (arr. Galla-Rini), Menuet from "Don Giovanni" by W. A. Mozart (arr. Galla-Rini), Autumn Song by Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy (arr. Šviackevicius), Blue Swan and Fuga by Stas Venglevski, Waltz from 'Sleeping Beauty Ballet' by Peter I. Tchaikovsky (arr. Herold), Rhapsody in Blue by George Gershwin (arr. Sommers) and A Mighty Fortress is Our God by J. S. Bach (arr. Galla-Rini).

The UMKC Community Accordion Ensemble musicians are both 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.

The UMKC Community Accordion Ensemble under the direction of Joan C. Sommers, has recently performed in Chicago, San Francisco and Kansas City. Members of the group for the Concert were Betty Jo Simon, Ron Barrow, Samantha Wagner, Cathy Sue Weiss, Joyce Davis and Joan Cochran Sommers.

The ensemble will next appear on Thursday, July 20th, 2017 at the upcoming ATG Festival in Lisle (Chicago), IL as part of their summer competition and festival. ■



UMKC Community Accordion Ensemble  
Betty Jo Simon, Ron Barrows, Samantha Waqner, Joyce Davis, Kathy Sue Weiss and Joan Cochran Sommers

## Bellows Open! The Great Squeeze Project It's Official! We're Cool!

The Connecticut Accordion Association wrapped up its first venture into the public school system in Wolcott, Connecticut. Last September, a \$3,800.00 grant was secured by CAA President Marilyn O'Neil. It was funded in part by the Arts and Culture Collaborative, Waterbury Region, in partnership with the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development, Office of the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts. The grant program brought the accordion directly into the classroom, introducing it to Wolcott High School band students. This program was the result of consistent encouragement by CAA member Saverio Romanelli, whose grandchildren attend Wolcott Public Schools. The students were asking for a demonstration of the instrument, and we answered their request.

Three classes, an hour and a half each, were led by CAA Orchestra Conductor Peter Peluso with assistance by Marilyn O'Neil and an array of special guest artists. Some twenty accordions were collected for the program. A number of these instruments were donated directly to the CAA. Others were loaned to the program by the New England Accordion Connection and Museum.

For most of these young musicians, this was the first time they'd ever set eyes on an accordion, no less have a chance to actually hold and play one. The students were already skilled on typical band instruments, such as trumpet, trombone, saxophone, clarinet, violin, guitar and drum set. Some of them had prior training on piano. The goal was to teach them about the instrument, its scope, and potential not only in solo performance but also for incorporation into ensemble and band format.

Guest artists included AAA Board member Don Gerundo, who introduced the Roland to the students. At another classroom presentation, young soloist Nathan Chapeton performed classical pieces. The third class featured the Connecticut Accordion Association ensemble known as "Vitality," followed by members of the band class who joined "Vitality" on a separate piece that was conducted by their own band teacher, Justin Clemens. Clemens was blown away by the sound of his students in combination with the ensemble!

This last classroom presentation served as a preview for the end product of this grant: 2 opportunities for band students to join the CAA orchestra in 2 performances, one for the general public, the other at an end of the year musical extravaganza at the high school.

The CAA's Spring concert was held last Sunday, May 21, at the Mattatuck Museum in downtown Waterbury. 3 students from the

band class joined the CAA on 4 pieces performed by the orchestra: "Can't take My Eyes Off You," arranged by Peter Peluso, featuring vocalist Jim Lawrence, "Fly Me To The Moon," arranged by Ray De Brown, "Parade Of The Charioteers" arranged by Peluso, and "Satin Doll," arranged by Frank Marocco. It included solos by young accordionists Anton and Joseph Klettner, Will Comer and Nathan Chapeton. The concert, open to the general public, had over 150 attendees and received a standing ovation by an appreciative audience.

The following Wednesday evening's performance brought 7 members of the CAA orchestra to "their turf" at Wolcott High. Peter Peluso, Marilyn O'Neil, Sandy Zera, Will Comer, Ginger Grider, Mary Mascolo and Steve Balog joined the Wolcott High Jazz Band led by Justin Clemens in playing "Satin Doll," again to an audience of several hundred Wolcott High School students, their families and friends.

This was an intensely personal experience for me and Mary Mascolo. Some 40 plus years ago, both of us performed on this very stage under Bob Vitale's baton. We were both students at Vitale Music School in Waterbury, CT and our yearly concerts were held at Wolcott High School. Mary was a graduate of Wolcott High as well. As I sat in the audience and watched the other performances by vocal classes and the Instrumental Band, I recalled watching my older sister performing accordion solos on that very same stage, our senior band playing accordion and other classical pieces, our ensemble playing, our parents watching, our beloved Bob smiling with intense fatherly pride.

But the best part of THIS experience for me, the final crowning glory, was a simple piece of paper: the program! On it was listed the song that our little ensemble played along with the jazz band..."Satin Doll," arranged by accordionist Frank Marocco! When was the last time anyone saw that happen?

I'd like to extend a special thank you to Peter Peluso, the CAA Family and especially its orchestra members for making this dream come true for all of us. A very special thank you to the American Accordionists' Association for acting as an informal partner in this effort, and for the work that Don Gerundo did in helping me execute the grant proposal. Squeezes to Nathan Chapeton for a stellar performance given to his peers and to Paul Ramunni for loaning us the instruments we needed. Thank you to Vitale Realty for administrative support.

I'm proud of putting Connecticut back on the map in initiating this program. This was one more of many efforts to bring the accordion back. Let's keep the ball rolling and the "bellows open!" ■

Wolcott High School - Justin Clemens, Conductor  
CT Accordion Orchestra - Peter Peluso, Conductor



## Ksenija Sidorova in New York Debut

Ksenija Sidorova will make her New York City Mostly Mozart Festival debut on Saturday, August 5 at 10:00 PM at the Stanley H. Kaplan Penthouse. A Deutsche Grammophon artist, Sidorova combines blazing technique with “flair and fun” (Gramophone). Watch from a cabaret table in the Kaplan Penthouse as she deftly unleashes the full expressive range of the instrument—from manic wit to sultry incantations.



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

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

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

Ksenija regularly collaborates with Miloš Karadaglić, Juan Diego Flórez, Nicola Benedetti, Thomas Gould and Joseph Calleja. She works extensively with Avi Avital who, along with Itamar Doari, comprise the trio for the “Between Worlds” project which this year sees performances at Shakespeare's Globe, throughout Germany and on a substantial US tour (including dates in Boston, Washington and New York) in spring 2016. She has also appeared on Arte's “Stars von Morgen” with Rolando Villazón.

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

For ticketing information and general questions, please call 212-721-6500. ■

## LIAA Concerts

AAA president and accordion virtuoso Mary Tokarski and Nathan Chapeton were the featured guest artists at the May 3, 2017 meeting of the Long Island Accordion Alliance (LIAA) at La Villini Restaurant in East Northport, NY. The two artists presented a very interesting and diversified program of accordion solos to a room filled with “accordion music lovers.”

Ms. Tokarski's selections included: Scherzo (John Gart), Sunrise, Sunset from Fiddler On The Roof, Funeral March of a Marionette (Gounod) - also known as the Alfred Hitchcock Theme), Spanish Holiday (Ettore) and Magic Fingers (Neupauer). Mr. Chapeton's selections included the Bach Prelude and Fugue in C minor, Waltz Allegro (Magnante), Impasse (1st movement by Angelis), Omaggio a Astor Piazzolla (Zubitzky).



Pictured above, Mary Tokarski, AAA President, Santo Endrizzzi (LIAA member) and Nathan Chapeton

The superb concert ended with the two artists collaborating in the performance of Parisian Musette (Carrozza). The next meeting of the Long Island Accordion Alliance (LIAA) will be on Wednesday, June 7 and feature Ms. Beverly Roberts Curnow.

In keeping up with its history of promoting successful accordion events on the first Wednesday of each month is now adding an additional evening of accordion music on the third Wednesday of the month. Wednesday, May 17 saw the “Trio Musette” make the additional Wednesday debut, featuring accordionists Manny Corallo, Dominic Karcic and Frank Toscano.

For future bookings and information, please call La Villini Restaurant, 288 Larkfield Road, East Northport, NY 11731, Phone: 631-261-6344. Musical festivities start at 6 p.m. Reservations are highly recommended. ■



CAA Orchestra at Mattatuck Museum  
Part of “Bellows Open! The Great Squeeze Project”  
Peter Peluso, Conductor

## Calling All Accordionists:

### Dearest Accordion Playing Friends

I hope this finds you all well. If you find yourself in New York this 6/21, I would love to see you!

As a thank you to the NYC accordion community and in celebration of Make Music New York, Bryant Park presents a special event on Wednesday, June 21st from 7 - 9pm on Bryant Park's Fountain Terrace:

The Great Accordion Rendezvous:

*A Make Music New York Mass Appeal and Celebration of the NYC Accordion Community*

Presented by Bryant Park in partnership with the Brooklyn Accordion Club, American Accordionists' Association, Ariana's List, and Make Music New York **You're invited!**

The two-part evening features an accordion "open mic", led by the Brooklyn Accordion Club and an informal gathering of accordionists to play a 30 minute piece together.

PART I - 7 pm

The Brooklyn Accordion Club holds their monthly Accordion Open Mic in the park for the first time. Accordionists sign up in advance to play 1 - 2 short songs. Spots are limited so sign up early! Sign up here by June 14. If space permits, a limited number of slots may become available on the day of the event.

PART II - 8 pm (approximately)

Accordionist Melissa Elledge leads all accordionists in a simple, easy-to-learn, 30 minute piece, Terry Riley's "In C". Please bring a music stand and sheet music. The music is available here.

([http://aleatoric.backporchrevolution.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/01/inc\\_score.gif](http://aleatoric.backporchrevolution.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/01/inc_score.gif))

**All accordionists, of all levels, are welcome!**  
**Please remember to RSVP.**

This event serves as a preview to Bryant Park's weekly Wednesday Accordions Around the World series, which officially begins on Wednesday, June 28th, 6 - 8pm. For four consecutive Wednesdays (6/28, 7/5, 7/12, 7/19), experience 24 accordionists each night, playing music from all parts of the globe. The series culminates on Friday, July 21st with the Accordion Festival, showcasing music of the world via five bands, each with an accordion, of course!

**Who:** Accordionists of all levels + Fans of Accordion Music

**What:** A celebration of the NYC Accordion community; all are welcome!

**When:** June 21st, 7 - 9pm

**Where:** Bryant Park, Fountain Terrace

**What to Bring:** Music stands + In C Sheet Music

RSVP for the 7pm Open Mic + 8pm In C

RSVP on Facebook (Ariana's List)

I hope you'll participate and I'm looking forward to seeing you around Bryant Park this summer.

All good things,

**Ariana Hellerman**

**Web:** [www.arianaslist.com](http://www.arianaslist.com)

**Twitter:** @Arianaslist

**FB:** Ariana's List

**Instagram:** arianaslist

## Remembering Dick Contino

Dick Contino, born January 17th 1930 in Fresno, California, studied accordion primarily with Angelo Cognazzo, and also with Guido Deiro, demonstrating great promise on the instrument.

He graduated from Fresno High School in 1947 and enrolled at Fresno State College, but was unable to concentrate on his studies, explaining, "I enjoyed college, but while attending classes I kept thinking that if I was going to be a success, it would be my music that would "take me there."

Contino got his big break on December 7th 1947, when he played "Lady of Spain" (his signature piece) and won first place in a talent contest in Fresno, which was broadcast on national radio. Contino song "Yours" was his first hit single, number 27 in the American pop charts in 1954.

Contino toured with the Horace Heidt Orchestra and was billed as the greatest accordion player. Also an actor and a singer, he became a well-known accordion soloist and appeared on the Ed Sullivan Show on national TV a record 48 times, and also appeared in several cinema movies. In his early career he was often referred to as "the Rudolf Valentino of the accordion".

Contino's career in music was interrupted when he was drafted during the Korean War, which involved some personal controversy and unfavorable publicity that for a while threatened his career and reputation. He recovered from this period, and went on to re-establish himself as a popular entertainer.

Contino married the actress Leigh Snowden in 1956, and they had 5 children, and they remained together until she died from cancer in 1982. Son Pete Contino has enjoyed a successful career in his own right as an accordionist and singer.

Dick Contino made many excellent recordings, and was a frequent headline guest at accordion festivals around the USA, becoming a highly respected 'elder statesman' of the current accordion scene.

He passed away on April 19th at the age of 87, and is widely mourned. Dick Contino was the recipient of the American Accordionists' Association "Lifetime Achievement Award" in 2005.





American Accordionists' Association

CARMEN CARROZZA Scholarship Fund



For the advancement of promising young accordionists



# Thank You...



To all the wonderful musicians who performed at the 2017 Carrozza Scholarship Dinner April 30th at Villa Barone Hilltop Manor

Frank Busso • Frank Carozza & son Anthony  
Frank Toscano • Eddie Monteiro  
Mary Mancini and Mario Tacca  
The Connecticut Accordion Orchestra  
Peter Peluso, Conductor  
Gia Ciccone • Cody McSherry • Cory Pesaturo



Far left: Frank Busso strolling during the cocktail hour with Italian favorites. Center: M.C. Ray Oreggia discusses Cody McSherry's selections. Far right: Cory Pesaturo, Eddie Monteiro and Don Gerundo. Left: The group "jam" included Frank Toscano, Frank Carozza, Cory Pesaturo, Mario Tacca and Cody McSherry who dazzled the audience with the ever popular Jolly Caballero.

Thanks also to the many volunteers who made this event possible including

- Karen Buccitti
- Marilyn O'Neil
- Linda Soley Reed
- Sandy Zera

And to AAA Board Member, Rita Barnea, winner of the 50/50 Raffle, who donated her winnings to the Carrozza Scholarship Fund

And to the many individuals who were unable to attend but donated to the Carrozza Scholarship Fund as well as those that contributed raffle prizes to make this event a huge success.



Far left above - Peter Peluso conducts the CAA Orchestra  
Center - Lenny Feldmann pictured with Mario Tacca  
Far right - AAA President Mary Tokarski is pictured with Cory Pesaturo.



Above - Frank Carozza was joined by his son, Anthony on drums and Frank Toscano.  
Center - Always a special treat: Mario Tacca and Mary Mancini;  
Far right: Proud Papa and Chairman of event, Dr. Joe Ciccone congratulates daughter Gia Ciccone after her superb performance.