



# AMERICAN ACCORDIONISTS' ASSOCIATION

# Newsletter

The official membership publication of the American Accordionists' Association

March/April 2025

## From the Editor

### Welcome to the March/April 2025 Edition of the AAA Newsletter!

Plans are well underway for our 87th anniversary of the American Accordionists' Association at the Marriott Philadelphia West in Conshohocken, PA, July 10-13, 2025. Guests include Mary Ann Covone, Dallas Vietty, Filipe Hostins, Peter Stan, Joanna Arnold Darrow, Dee Langley, and Kevin Friedrich, who will present concerts, workshops, the Festival Orchestras, and other exciting activities. You can stay up to date on all the festival plans and find registration and competition forms in this Newsletter and at our website at [www.ameraccord.com](http://www.ameraccord.com).

My sincere thanks to our Newsletter Publisher, AAA's immediate past president Frank Busso Jr. As always, I would also like to thank our Secretary Rita Barnea for her outstanding work in helping source accordion events and news items to include in our Newsletter publications.

Items for the May-June '25 Newsletter can be sent to me at [ameraccordnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:ameraccordnewsletter@gmail.com). Please include 'AAA Newsletter' in the subject box, so we don't miss any items you submit.

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 (or similar) 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. Please send your items as soon as possible, in order to ensure they are included in the upcoming issue.

Thanking you in advance for sending us your news items, and wish you all a wonderful Spring full of accordion activities,

Kevin Friedrich, AAA Newsletter Editor - [ameraccordnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:ameraccordnewsletter@gmail.com)



**Register now!**

**2025 AAA Festival: July 10-13**

[www.ameraccord.com/festival.php](http://www.ameraccord.com/festival.php)

**West Conshohocken, PA (Philadelphia area)**

Guest Artists      Concerts      Workshops  
Competitions      Museum Display  
Orchestras      Exhibits      Food Functions  
...and More!



**Discounted Hotel Rate: [www.ameraccord.com/hotel](http://www.ameraccord.com/hotel)**  
**Watch [ameraccord.com](http://ameraccord.com) for other festival updates!**

## The Passing of Guy Klugevsek

The AAA is sad to report the passing of Guy Klugevsek, February 26, 1947 - May 22, 2025. Guy was considered to be one of the world's most versatile and highly-respected accordionists. This outstanding composer, accordion virtuoso, and improviser was a major contributor to the accordion renaissance of the last 25 years. His music reverberated with sounds of the ballroom, the beer garden, and the concert hall, fusing elements of regional accordion styles with jazz and avant-garde music.

Klugevsek was born in New York City, and raised outside of Pittsburgh, PA. Guy studied the accordion with Walter Grabowski, New Kensington, PA from 1955 to 1965. He obtained his Bachelor of Arts degree in Music Theory/Composition from the Indiana University of Pennsylvania in 1969 and his Master of Arts degree in Music Theory/Composition from the University of Pittsburgh in 1971.

His Post Graduate Independent Study was at California Institute of the Arts in 1971-1972. Among his composition teachers were Morton Subotnick, Gerald Shapiro, and Robert Bernat. He then attended the California Institute of the Arts where he was a pupil of Robert Bernat, Harold Budd, Gerald Shapiro, Morton Subotnick, and James Tenney.

In 1972, Klugevsek joined the faculty of Glassboro State College now (Rowan University), where he taught through 1976. He was a member of Relâche, a chamber ensemble based in Philadelphia, from 1980 through 1990. He moved to Manhattan where he was involved in the free improvisation music scene.

Guy Klugevsek released over 20 albums as a solo or co-leader and has recorded or performed with Dave Douglas, John Zorn, Bill Frisell, Laurie Anderson, and others. He was also a founding member of the international group Accordion Tribe. In 2010, Klugevsek won a United States Artists Fellow award.

Guy Klugevsek created a unique repertoire for accordion through his own composing and by commissioning over 50 works from composers including John Zorn, Aaron Jay Kernis, Lois V Vierk, Fred Frith, Alvin Lucier, Mary Ellen Childs, William Duckworth, Jerome Kitzke, Stephen Montague, and Somei Satoh. His music/theatre pieces included Squeezeplay - collaborations with Mary Ellen Childs, David Dorfman and Dan Froot, Dan Hurlin, Victoria Marks, and Claire Porter - which The Village Voice called "delicious;" Hard Coal, with The Bloomsburg Theatre Ensemble, Chinoiserie, with Ping Chong and Company, which was featured on the 1995 Next Wave Festival at BAM, and Cirque Lili (2000), with French circus artist Jerome Thomas, a piece which has been performed over 250 times world-wide, always with live music. Excerpts from "All About Jazz" website.

Guy Klugevsek's awards included: New York Dance & Performance Award (BESSIE) for "Altered Landscapes," a solo accordion score for David Dorfman Dances, "Hey" (1995); Publishers Weekly Listen Up Audiobook Awards: Best Original Score, "Accordion Crimes," novel by E. Annie Proulx, music by Guy Klugevsek (1996). New York Dance & Performance Award (BESSIONE), jointly with Dan Hurlin, for the puppet/theatre piece Everyday Uses for Sight #7: The Heart of the Andes (2002). In 2010 he won the prestigious United States Artists Fellow award.

In 1996, Klugevsek formed The Accordion Tribe, an international lineup of composer/accordionists Maria Kalaniemi (Finland), Lars Hollmer (Sweden), Bratko Bibic (Slovenia), Otto Lechner (Austria), and Klugevsek (USA). They released two recordings on the Intuition label, and are the subjects of the Stefan Schwietert documentary film, Accordion Tribe: Music Travels, which was released in theaters across Europe in 2004-2005, and featured at film festivals in North America.

You can also hear him on John Williams' scores for the Steven Spielberg films The Terminal and Munich. He has performed on Broadway in Fiddler on the Roof, Victor/Victoria, and Piaf.

Guy leaves his devoted wife, Jan, and many relatives and friends. Guy Klugevsek was a uniquely gifted, gracious, and kind person who will be greatly missed by all.

We invite you to visit [www.accordionusa.com](http://www.accordionusa.com) for updated funeral arrangements and further information.

## 2025 AAA Festival in Conshohocken, PA

The AAA Board has been busy making many exciting plans for this year's 87th Annual Competition and Festival which will take place from July 10-13, 2025 in Conshohocken, Pennsylvania.

This consolidated schedule will be packed with events, performers, workshops, and food functions beginning with Thursday evening performances featuring the Accordion Pops Orchestra and the Busso Festival Orchestra, followed by an "After Hours Party" featuring our attendees.

The full registration package includes luncheons and dinners on Friday and Saturday with live music at each event. Other included food functions feature a reception after the Friday evening concert and a breakfast meeting on Sunday morning.

We are delighted to announce our incredible celebrated guest artists: the Dallas Vietty Trio (jazz, gypsy jazz, French musette), Peter Stan (Balkan, Klezmer), and Filipe Hostins (Brazilian, jazz, classical). We will also feature a few of our very talented Board members: Mario Tacca, Don Gerundo, Ray Oreggia, Frank Busso Jr, and Frank Busso Sr. Exciting workshops will include "Playing for Oktoberfests," presented by Dominic Karcic, assisted by Ray Oreggia and Beverly Roberts Curnow.

We are delighted to feature a special workshop/presentation called "Meet the Family" where Board Member Kevin Friedrich will demonstrate many different accordions/free reed instruments from the collection of "A World of Accordions Museum" in Superior, Wisconsin. Kevin will showcase both historical elements as well as some of the oddities of accordion development over the years.

The festival will feature orchestras from intermediate to advanced players under the batons of our very personable and talented guest conductors Mary Ann Covone (advanced), Joanna Darrow (beginner adults), and Dee Langley (youth).

Save the date and join us for this special event! Along with performances, orchestras, and workshops, there will be competitions for students of all ages and proficiency levels. There will be performance opportunities for all

attendees, plus vendors, exhibits, and more!

The hotel in Conshohocken, PA has been well received during our previous festivals held there and suits our needs well! For those that would like to enjoy the area, it is a short drive or train ride into the heart of Philadelphia where there are beautiful parks, museums, historic areas, waterfronts, and small quaint towns nearby.

The discounted room block deadline is June 29, 2025. The rate and room type can sell out prior to the deadline, so book your room early to secure the lowest rate.

The importance of reserving a hotel room at the AAA's official conference hotel, the Marriott Philadelphia West: The AAA makes every effort to keep your expenses at the conference as low as possible. We work hard to negotiate



**Register now!**

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**Guest Artists Concerts Workshops Competitions**  
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the best hotel rates and to keep conference registration fees as low as possible, even as expenses rise annually. The AAA is able to offer high-quality conferences in desirable locations because we reserve a significant number of hotel rooms. If you choose to stay at another property, the official hotel room block is smaller, making it more difficult for the AAA to gain favorable hotel space at reasonable prices for future meetings.

To download the Registration Form to register for the festival and to purchase tickets, make payments, get the link for the discounted hotel rate, access and download competition rules and the required composition list, and find the competition entry forms, please visit the AAA website at [www.ameraccord.com](http://www.ameraccord.com).

## Meet your 2025 AAA Festival Guest Artists - page 1 of 2

### MARY ANN COVONE

Mary Ann Covone holds a Bachelor's Degree in Accordion Performance from the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory of Music where she studied with Professor Joan Cochran Sommers. After graduating from the university, Mary Ann spent several years performing and teaching in the Chicago area before entering law school. After a 30+ year career as an attorney, four years ago, Mary Ann returned to the accordion and embarked on a new journey in music performing, teaching, and conducting.

In 2020, she founded the Chicagoland Accordion Academy in Western Springs, Illinois, where students of all ages learn the foundation of good accordion technique applicable to any style of music they choose to play. Mary Ann conducts her Academy Accordion Orchestra, and they perform quite regularly in the Chicago area. She also travels to Kansas City, Missouri on a regular basis to play in the UMKC Community Accordion Ensemble under the direction of Joan Cochran Sommers. Mary Ann is the immediate past president of the Accordionists & Teachers Guild, International and an active member of Sigma Alpha Iota, a professional sorority for women in the field of music.



### DALLAS VIETTY

Dallas Vietty's unique style comes from his background in the American jazz tradition, as well as study and immersion in the European swing tradition of Django Reinhardt (Gypsy Jazz) and with French accordionists including Frédéric Déschamps, Jacques Mornet and Natalie Bouchiex.

Dallas remains very active teaching, giving workshops and performing on the East Coast and in California. He has performed at festivals including Musikfest, TEDx Philly, the Djangoary Festival, on Broadway as the accordionist in Fiddler on the Roof in Yiddish, for Djangofest Northwest, Dizzy's Club at NY's Lincoln Center, in New Orleans, in France, and two tours of Switzerland with Grammy winning clarinetist Linus Wyrsch. His pleasant style and excellent skills delight audiences everywhere!



### FELIPE HOSTINS

Felipe Hostins, Brazilian composer, accordionist, multi-instrumentalist, fuses jazz, Brazilian folk, and classical music to create a distinctive sound. He discovered his passion for music at age three, influenced by his grandfather, and later moved to NYC to launch an international career.

Felipe's versatility has led to collaborations with many renowned artists. His musical output includes featured composer and performer on the album CHAMA by Cyro Baptista, performer and co-composer of the album IMIGRA in partnership with Ian Ruas, among others. Felipe was a finalist in the 2nd Premio da Musica Instrumental competition in Brazil in 2024.

Felipe is co-creator of the musical duo Forropéra with Chrystal E. Williams. Blending Brazilian folk and classical music, the duo aims to promote unity, peace and understanding through music. Forropéra's Carnegie Hall debut in March 2024 featured a world premiere composed for the duo by John Glover and Kelley Rourke.



*...continued on next page...*

## Meet your 2025 AAA Festival Guest Artists - page 2 of 2



### PETER STAN

Well known as the accordionist in the celebrated bands “Slavic Soul Party,” “Yale Strom and Hot Pstromi,” and the “Eva Salina and Peter Stan Duo,” Peter Stan is truly delighted to be performing for and mingling with a group of accordionists at our AAA Festival!

Peter was born in Banat on the border of Serbia and Romania into a family of Balkan musicians. He studied accordion with his father and at the Queensboro Institute of Music. He continued his studies in the USA with Jacob Neupauer and Stanley & Joanna Darrow.

Peter has performed with Harold Seletsky and Valerie Capers in a Jewish and Jazz Concert in Carnegie Hall, on Garrison Keillor's radio show, the Montreal Jazz Festival, and in festivals in Europe. With his accordion, he has toured the USA, Africa, Serbia, Germany, France, Hong Kong, Portugal, and other countries. He has appeared in several movies playing his accordion, including “On the QT,” starring James Earl Jones and Sam Ball.

### JOANNA ARNOLD DARROW

Joanna Arnold Darrow began studying the accordion at age 8 with Stanley Darrow. During her studies at Acme Accordion School, she covered a broad spectrum of musical training, specializing in music of the baroque period and chamber music. While Joanna is the personal protégé of Stanley Darrow, she also studied with Guy Klucevsek, Dr. Edwin Avril, and Betty Jo Simon.

She has concertized throughout Europe as soloist and duo partner of Stanley Darrow. Performing in conjunction with bassoon, harp, harpsichord, strings, and more, she has brought capabilities of the accordion to the attention of professional musicians. She performed with the Philadelphia Orchestra in performances of the David Argento Tango and “The Godfather” series.

Joanna is on the Board of Directors of the American Accordionists' Association (AAA), the Accordionists and Teachers Guild (ATG), and the American World of Accordions Museum (AWAM). She is Director of The American Accordion Musicological Society (AAMS), Acme Accordion School, and the Westmont Philharmonia Accordion Orchestra. Joanna is an adjunct accordion instructor for Rowan University, and is dedicated to the advancement of accordion education and original accordion literature.



### DEE LANGLEY

Dee Langley specializes in both solo and ensemble works for the accordion, having appeared with the Minnesota Orchestra, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Houston Symphony Orchestra, Guthrie Theater, Duluth Symphony Orchestra, Minnesota Sinfonia, Minnesota Philharmonic Orchestra, Nautilus Music Theater, Ethnic Dance Theatre, Dolina Polish Folk Dancers, and Theater Latte Da.

Ms. Langley is the winner of the 2012 Minnesota Emerging Composer Award (Orkestar Bez Ime - World Music) and the 2011-2012 McKnight Fellowship for Performing Musicians. In 2019, Dee was honored by the American Accordion Musicological Society for her lifelong dedication and service to the accordion as a performer, educator, director, and composer.



## CIA Winter Congress in Plovdiv, Bulgaria

The Confédération Internationale des Accordéonistes (CIA) held its annual Winter Congress General Assembly of Delegates February 28 - March 2, 2025 in Plovdiv, Bulgaria. Hosted by CIA member The Academy of Music, Dance and Fine Arts (Plovdiv) organized by Angel Marinov, the three-day event included meetings, informal gatherings, and cultural and social events.

CIA Executive Committee members Mirco Patarini (President – Italy), Jörgen Sundeqvist (Vice President - Sweden), Zorica Karakutovska (Vice President – North Macedonia), Kimmo Mattila (Secretary General - Finland), Kevin Friedrich (Ambassador - USA), Alexander Selivanov (Chairperson of the Music Committee – Russia), and Music Committee members Chairperson Alexander Selivanov (Russia), Danijela Gazdic (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Ruedi Marty (Switzerland). Grayson Masefield (Vice Chairperson - New Zealand via Zoom) were joined by Delegates representing CIA member organizations from the USA (AAA & ATG), Sweden, Germany, Norway, Austria, North Macedonia, New Zealand, Hungary, Finland, Switzerland, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Lithuania, Estonia, and Turkey.

During the meetings, the CIA welcomed two new member organizations: from Romania, The National University of Music, Bucharest; and from Turkey, Beylikdüzü Belediyesi Kültür İşleri Müdürlüğü – Istanbul.

Reports from the CIA Executive Committee were given by Mirco Patarini (President), Kimmo Mattila (General Secretary), Harley Jones (Public Relations Manager – presented by New Zealand delegate Alison Worthington), Alexander Selivanov (Music Committee), and Kevin Friedrich (Ambassador). These reports outlined the activities of the Executive officers as they represented the CIA at numerous events around the world as well as the financial updates, budget planning, and official business affairs of the CIA.

Danijela Gazdic gave an update on the upcoming 78th Coupe Mondiale to be held in East Sarajevo, Republic of Srpska, Bosnia & Herzegovina, hosted by the East Sarajevo Academy of Music Ues, September 23-28, 2025. Details are available at [www.coupemondiale.org](http://www.coupemondiale.org).

One of the main activities for the General Assembly was the adopting of the Internal Rules (formerly known as Statutes). To conform to European Union guidelines, the CIA filed their official Statutes (adopted at the General Assembly in Castelfidardo, 2024) in Finland last year. The CIA day-to-day modus operandi and rules previously known as Statutes, were then renamed as Internal Rules, updated and adopted at the Plovdiv hosted Winter Congress.

During the General Assembly, the Norske Trekkspilleres Landsforbund - NTL (Norwegian Accordion Association) withdrew its CIA membership. In addition, after the passing of Yan Tabachnik (Ukraine), his International Art Centre has closed and as a result the CIA membership has now concluded.

Two CIA Merit Awards nominations were received, recommended by the CIA Executive Committee and then unanimously approved by the General Assembly to be awarded to Stefan Hippe (Germany) and Nathalie Bouchéix (France) in recognition for their contributions to the International Accordion movement.



The CIA future events have been updated with the 2026 Winter Congress being hosted in Finland, while the 79th Coupe Mondiale is now open again. Details about the alternate 2026 Coupe Mondiale hosting are now being organized and information will be available soon. The 2027 events will be held in Paks, Hungary (Winter Congress) and Disentis, Switzerland (80th Coupe Mondiale).

CIA Vice President Jörgen Sundeqvist (Vice President - Sweden) announced his retirement from the CIA Executive Committee at the conclusion of the Winter Congress General Assembly. With General Elections due to be held next year (2026), it is not anticipated that the position will be backfilled leading up to those elections.

The CIA is pleased to welcome its 2025 Honorary Vice President, Maja Žuža from East Sarajevo Academy of Music Ues, Rep. of Srpska, Bosnia & Herzegovina. Each year, a representative from the Coupe Mondiale host organization is nominated to join as an honorary member of the CIA team to help facilitate the organization of the event.

In October 2020, Maja Žuža was appointed Dean of the Music Academy of the University of East Sarajevo, a position she continues to hold for a second term.

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## ***CIA Winter Congress - continued from previous page***

During the 'Member's Voices' section of the General Assembly, presentations were given by Anica Karakutovska from the Republic of North Macedonia, showcasing the numerous and varied activities of the Ljubitelji na Klasicnata Muzika in Skopje as well as the team headed by Olga Papp, Hungary who gave news of "Az Ifjú Harmonikásokért" Alapítvány - "For the Young Accordionists" Foundation activities.

The Bulgarian hosts provided detailed guided tours of their ancient city, one of the oldest historical sites in Europe. Plovdiv is a living archaeological city where on every street corner, you are met with incredible several thousand-year-old ruins that will take you back to the Greek and Roman Empires.

From its Ottoman mosques to its ancient mosaics, Plovdiv sits upon the relics of its ancient history, but over recent decades, many have been unearthed, providing a look into their ancient history.

Walking through these ancient ruins and the old town to the Music Academy was a fascinating experience. Everywhere you turned, remnants of centuries-old infrastructure could be seen, including the ancient forum which could seat upwards of 30,000 people!

Our Bulgarian team hosted numerous events at the Academy, including meetings such as the CIA Executive and Music Committee meetings and the two sessions of the CIA General Assembly Congress sessions and musical events.

A highlight was the closing Gala concert featuring a lineup of renowned Bulgarian musicians performing a variety of Folk music, many on traditional instruments found in the Bulgarian culture. The concert was followed by a traditional Bulgarian culinary experience.

2025 marks the incredible 90th Anniversary of the Confédération Internationale des Accordéonistes (CIA). Information about the anniversary celebration will be forthcoming, with plans to publish a yearbook showcasing highlights of the CIA history to coincide with the 78th Coupe Mondiale in East Sarajevo.

The competition categories and rules for the 78th Coupe Mondiale are now available on the [www.coupemondiale.org](http://www.coupemondiale.org) website.

The 154th CIA International General Assembly of Delegates Congress will be held in East Sarajevo, Republic of Srpska, Bosnia & Herzegovina on September 24, 2025.



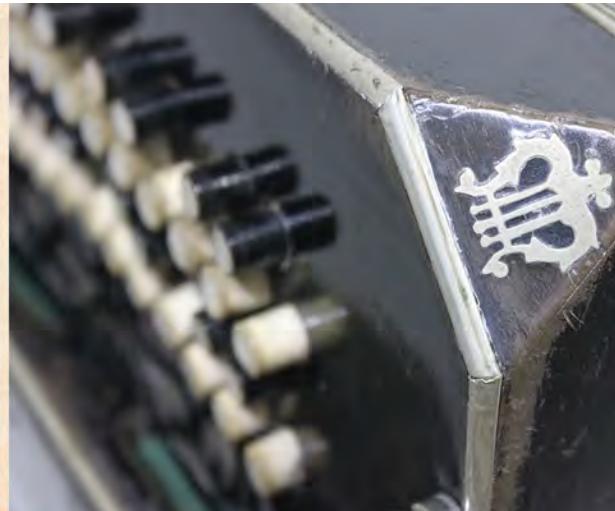
Host Angel Marinov (Bulgaria), Alexander Selivanov (Chairperson of the Music Committee – Russia), Jörgen Sundeqvist (Vice President – Sweden), Mirco Patarini (President – Italy), Zorica Karakutovska (Vice President – North Macedonia), Kevin Friedrich (Ambassador – USA) and Kimmo Mattila (Secretary General - Finland)

## Kevin Friedrich Presents Accordion Lecture in Shanghai, China

AAA Board of Director and Ambassador for the Confédération Internationale des Accordéonistes (CIA) Kevin Friedrich was invited to give a presentation in Shanghai as part of their 7th International Culture and Arts Week and Shanghai Spring Accordion Festival, April 1-7, 2025.

Kevin, who serves as Director of the CIA initiative, the World Accordion Museum Alliance (WAMA), began by introducing the Alliance, before his feature presentation called Variations on a Theme by C. Demian.

The presentation followed some of the interesting developments in the evolution of the accordion which has seen uncountable variations in shape, size, and keyboard configurations over almost 200 years. Many of the innovations were short-lived, making the accordion history quite fascinating and unique.



Included in the presentation were instruments such as the bandoneon shown above, using buttons arranged in a piano keyboard configuration. Created by famed artisan Alfred Arnold (Germany) it was designed to cater to and attract pianists. Some of the instruments showcased in Shanghai will be featured as part of Kevin's presentation at the upcoming AAA Festival this July.

The audience included invited guests and city officials, but was predominantly made up of accordion teachers throughout the Shanghai area and from other cities.

A regular guest at the Shanghai Spring Accordion Festival since their inaugural event in 2006, Kevin was joined by other members of the CIA Executive Team and guest artists from around the world including Italy, Russia, Sweden,

Estonia, New Zealand, Finland, and throughout China. The annual festival is held in various locations throughout Shanghai and includes concerts, lectures, masterclasses, competitions, and pop-up Open Mic stages.

2025“上海之春”第七届国际手风琴文化艺术周  
2025 'Shanghai Spring' The 7<sup>th</sup> International Accordion Culture and Arts Week

主讲人:  
凯文·弗里德里希 (美国)  
Kevin Friedrich  
国际手风琴联盟大使

主讲人:  
基莫·马蒂拉 (芬兰)  
Kimmo Mattila  
国际手风琴联盟秘书长

主讲人:  
哈利·琼斯 (新西兰)  
Harley Jones  
国际手风琴联盟公共关系部主管

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International Perspectives •  
Co-creating the Future of Accordion Art

20 | 4/3 9:30  
25  
长宁区少年宫 (愚园路1182号)

承办单位:  
国际手风琴联盟  
中国音乐家协会手风琴学会  
上海市科技艺术教育中心  
上海市音乐家协会手风琴专业委员会

主办单位:  
上海音乐学院  
上海市学生艺术团管理中心

协办单位:  
上海市科技艺术教育中心  
上海市音乐家协会手风琴专业委员会

## UMKC Community Accordion Ensemble in Concert



The University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC) Community Accordion Ensemble directed by Joan Cochran Sommers will perform two concerts in June 2025 as part of the lead-up to their appearance at the ATG Festival in Lisle, IL (Chicago) in July. Their concerts will be Saturday, June 28 at the Lakeview Village Senior Living – Heritage Activity Center in Lenexa, KS, and on Sunday, June 29 at the Kansas City United Church of Christ in Kansas City, MO.

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

Over the past few years, they have performed in San Francisco, Kansas City, the 80th Anniversary of the American Accordionists' Association (AAA) in Alexandria, VA, Superior, WI at A World of Accordions Museum, and at recent ATG Festivals such as the 2024 event celebrating the 90th birthday of ensemble director Joan Cochran Sommers. In addition, they have participated in the USA contributions to World Accordion Day events, when videos of their performances were broadcast during the live presentations.

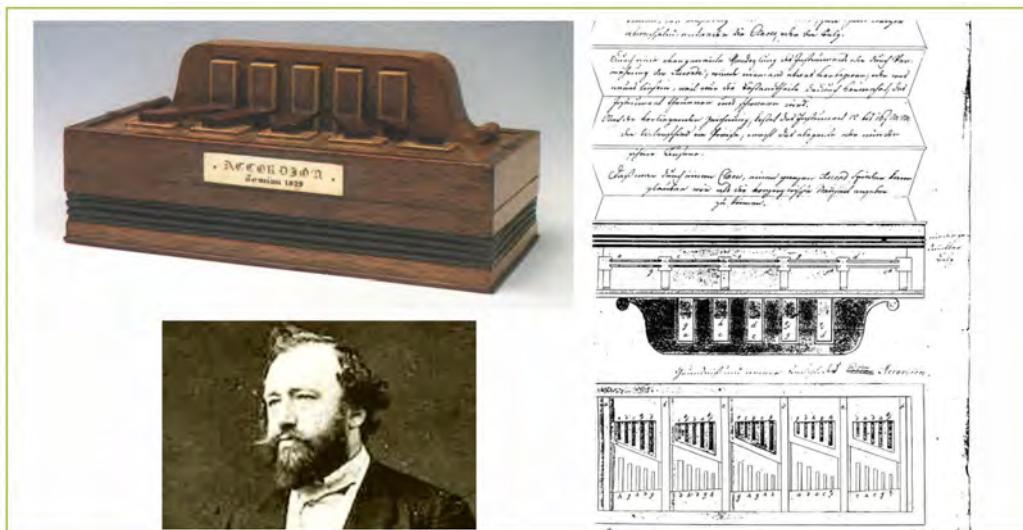
Director Joan C. Sommers has held numerous positions in several music organizations, including the Accordionists and Teachers Guild International (ATG) and the Confédération Internationale des Accordéonistes (CIA – IMC-UNESCO), where she was awarded lifetime Honorary Membership upon her retirement from office. Joan C. Sommers was awarded the title of Professor Emerita upon her retirement from the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory of Music (USA), where she established and taught the accordion degree program for 40 years. She has arranged innumerable works for both Accordion Orchestra and Chamber Ensemble over many years, works that have been performed around the globe.

Today, she enjoys performing with fellow accordionists in duo, with other instrumentalists, with the UMKC Community Accordion Ensemble, and as guest Conductor with various orchestras around the world, including founding and leading the magnificent World Accordion Orchestra in many countries around the world, such as the USA, Scotland, New Zealand, Croatia, Canada, Austria, and Lithuania and twice in both China and Italy.

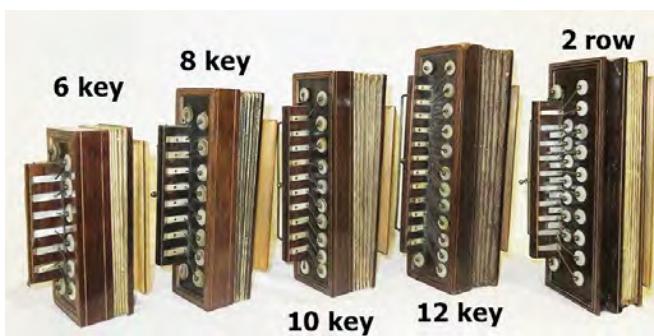
The 2025 University of Missouri - Kansas City (UMKC) Community Accordion Ensemble players under the musical direction of Joan C. Sommers are Mary Ann Covone, Ron Dake, Ron Barrow, Kevin Friedrich, Madalynn Neu, Samantha Wagner, Jane Christison, and Sherry Carroll.

## Variations on a Theme by C. Demian, Part 1

With the 200th Anniversary of the accordion just around the corner, we will take a little look back at the development of the instrument. Some of this information will be showcased at the AAA Festival in Conshohocken, PA, and we are delighted to share a glimpse into the story of the accordion in our upcoming Newsletters.



Our beloved accordion traces elements of its origin back centuries. We thank Helmi Harrington, Ph.D. for her research and documentation of the accordion and aspects of its history. Curator of A World of Accordions Museum in Superior, WI, she has created a one-of-a-kind exhibition of accordions, comprising some 2,500 accordion family instruments.



Scholars have documented the history of the accordion in detail, and our series will provide just an abbreviated overview of both the history and interesting developments during the accordion's evolution. This first glimpse into the history of the accordion will look at the first couple of decades where the original patent transitioned into the early instruments we know as flutinas.

19th-century Europeans began experimenting with combining various concepts available at that time. Inventors were interested in the new sounds available through the free reed, combining elements of existing instruments such as the harmonica, Chinese Sheng (mouth blown) and organs, and harmoniums (bellows-driven). Such innovators from this time included Friedrich Buschmann in Germany, Charles Wheatstone in England and Cyril Demian in Austria.

In 1821, Buschmann made his mouth-blown 'Aura,' effectively an early harmonica, designed primarily as a tuning tool. The 15 reeds were cut from a single piece of metal and fastened onto a piece of wood with chambers and blowholes for use by the mouth. The next year, he applied leather bellows, as well as closure pallets with a rudimentary keying device over the individual reed-chambers, and patented the 'Handaeoline.'

These ideas were also developed further by Austrian Cyril Demian, whose patent of 1829 under the name of 'Accordion' added the concept of chords. In the complete accordion, built by Demian and his sons Guido and Karl in 1834, a second treble row of chromatic 'helper' notes was added, and the left-hand section included tones.



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## Accordion History - continued from previous page

As has been documented, Demian was the first to file a patent describing his instrument which he named the accordion. On May 6, 1829, Cyrill Demian (1772-1849), an organ and piano maker of Armenian origin, accompanied by his two sons Karl and Guido, filed the accordion patent in Vienna, Austria.

*Consign: No. 1433 listed a new type of instrument consisting of a small box with "feathers of metal plates and bellows fixed to it" making it easy to carry and play.*

*The new instrument was seven to nine inches long, three-and-a-half wide, and two inches high. The bellows were fixed above the box with five claves fixed below.*

*The makers claimed it was possible to perform marches, arias, melodies, even by an amateur of music with little practice, and to play the loveliest and most pleasant chords of three, four and five voices with little practice.*

*The patent was approved a short time later on May 23, 1829.*



Demian's instrument bears little resemblance to our modern instruments. It only had a single button board, with the other hand simply operating the bellows.

One key feature for which Demian sought the patent was the playing of an entire chord by depressing only one key. His instrument also could sound two different chords with the same key, one for each bellows direction, a bi-sonic action.

Evolving from those keyed harmonicas, the earliest Demian examples had only five levers for five chordal structures. Although not well documented, subsequent instruments quickly isolated the harmonies to single tones.

These early Flutinas, as they were known, often incorporated two bass-style 'drones,' which were activated by levers on the right-hand keyboard. They were not spring-loaded actions as found on normal bass mechanisms; the drone had to be activated and deactivated manually.

In the 1830s, Paris became a major center of accordion production. Soon, Demian-style instruments were copied, and the most successful early Romantic manufacturers of these instruments were Charles Buffet in Belgium and Jean-Baptiste-Napoléon Fourneaux and Constant Busson in France. They produced instruments of lasting visual beauty and quiet, mellow tone, with costly ivory and mother-of-pearl inlays in rosewood, brass reeds, and 10-12 treble keys balanced by two bass buttons.

Another Austrian, Matthaeus Bauer, is credited with the 1838 invention of a reed block with individual reed-chambers, open at one end but closed off by pallets at the key-rod end.

The Flutina-style accordion rose in popularity and grew in size rapidly. From the earliest of them having a single treble row with 6 keys, subsequent models soon had 8, 10 and 12 keys and soon after that, a second row, with keyboards growing in size.

In Italy, the accordion appeared for the first time in 1863. A pilgrim passing through the territory of Castelfidardo on his pilgrimage to the Sanctuary of the "Black Madonna" of Loreto, stopped by chance at Antonio Soprani's farmhouse.

What followed was a path of innovation, development, and experimentation. Throughout this evolution, one has seen uncountable variations in shape, size, and keyboard configurations, examples of each being found at A World of Accordions Museum and other museums worldwide.

In future editions of the AAA Newsletter, we look forward to exploring some of those variations over the accordion's almost 200-year history.



## Future Possibilities of AI Technology and the Accordion - Introduction

*Introduction: As AI becomes a household word in our daily lives, it is interesting to see how it is already being embraced in the music world. In China, degree programs are already available through academic institutions in Beijing and Shanghai such as with China's Central Conservatory of Music's Department of Music Artificial Intelligence.*

*Recently, the 7th Annual China Now Music Festival entitled "Composing The Future" featured concerts from October 12-19, 2024 in Carnegie Hall. In keeping with the future-focused theme, China Now asked China's Central Conservatory of Music's Department of Music Artificial Intelligence to contribute an 'AI Suite' to the concert program, composed completely by AI, to open an innovative dialogue between the composer, the orchestra, the human, and the machine. Additionally, China Now asked for works that experimentally incorporate AI technology in live performances.*

*Audiences were introduced to the Artificial Intelligence Composition System through the Central Conservatory of Music's piece AI Suite, which used a "Cloud Chorus" of 1,000 voices gathered from around the world, and a piece by Sun Yuming, where a traditional guzheng zither was played on stage without the performer touching the instrument.*



Presenters described the process of AI composition. "Three key elements are essential in AI composition: data, algorithms, and computing power. Let's start with data. Imagine we have a large warehouse filled with various types of music - classical, pop, rock, and many different styles. This 'warehouse' is essentially the 'big data' we use to train AI. The AI first listens to this music, learning its melodies, rhythms, and styles.

Next, the AI translates this music into a special language we call "symbolic language." Through this process, the vast amount of audio data in our warehouse turns into a

"symbolic database" specifically designed for AI models to learn from. By learning from this large symbolic database, AI can understand the internal logic and structure of music.

As for algorithms, our AI uses a complex music model. The model's learning process involves predicting what the next "symbol" will be. It's similar to how, when writing an article, we predict what the next word might be based on the previous content. In the case of music AI, it's predicting the next note or melody.

In essence, the automatic composition model allows the machine to learn and create music similarly to humans. Although the process sounds complex, its core is about learning and predicting. AI can efficiently discover deep patterns in notes, melodies, and harmonies through self-supervised learning and can even create entirely new artistic works, akin to human creativity. So, AI composition is essentially a process of learning from data and generating new music."

For *Starry Night*, a composition by Sun Yuming, six members of the audience were invited to join the concert by wearing brainwave-reading headsets. The headsets detect signals from the brains of the performer and composer, transforming them into music to allow real-time improvisation.

"AI is everywhere and is radically changing our daily lives. In music, AI is fundamentally changing not just how we listen to it, but how music is created and even how the music industry operates," said Li Xiaobing, executive director of the concert and head of the music AI and information technology department at the music school.

The music AI and information technology department was founded at the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing in 2019. The department comprises an AI music center, an electronic music composition center, and music therapy center.

The following paper was presented in Shanghai by Harley Jones as part of the 7th International Culture and Arts Week and Shanghai Spring Accordion Festival, April 1-7, 2025.

**...continued on next page...**

## Future Possibilities of AI Technology and the Accordion, by Harley Jones

When people hear about AI-powered teaching, many may react with skepticism - even alarm. Could artificial intelligence actually have a positive role in accordion education?

As musicians, we often celebrate the rich history of our instrument, but we must also embrace the future, where technology offers incredible opportunities for education, composition, performance, and preservation.

AI is already deeply integrated into daily life across various fields. Smart assistants help with tasks, AI-powered writing tools refine communication, streaming platforms use AI, smart home devices automate lighting, security, and climate control.

In healthcare, AI aids in diagnostics, wearable fitness trackers monitor health, and chatbots offer mental health support. Transportation benefits from AI-driven navigation, self-driving technology, and optimized ride-sharing services. AI enhances shopping through personalized recommendations, chatbots, and automated checkouts. In finance, AI detects fraud, assists in stock trading, and manages personal budgets. Education platforms use AI for adaptive learning, businesses rely on AI chatbots, while agriculture benefits from AI-driven crop monitoring and automated farming equipment.

While AI integration in music education and specific instruments is still evolving, it is already composing music and being used in university music programs.

Instead of resisting these advancements, it's time for today's accordion leaders to explore how AI technology could contribute to the growth and development of our instrument and enhance student learning.

I believe that best results will be Teacher and AI working together with AI being an enhancement, not a teacher replacement.

Note how people generally dislike answerphone systems and online help bots and in frustration, want to talk with "a real person".

Already, with the rise of online learning platforms, video tutorials, and virtual masterclasses, students from all corners of the globe now have access to high-quality instruction. No longer are we limited by geography; an aspiring accordionist in a remote town can study with a world-class teacher via video conferencing.

Here are some possibilities to consider:

**AI-Powered Music Assistance:** An AI-driven teaching platform could be an excellent resource for music enthusiasts, particularly older players looking to restart their accordion journey. It could provide personalized guidance (directed by a teacher), helping them gain confidence to join an ensemble and enjoy the musical and social benefits of group playing.

**Free Beginner Lessons:** AI has a longer-term potential to teach learners, particularly in areas where qualified teachers are scarce. Video tuition has already enjoyed some success. Interactive, AI-driven lessons could be a powerful tool to promote the instrument and spark interest among new generations.

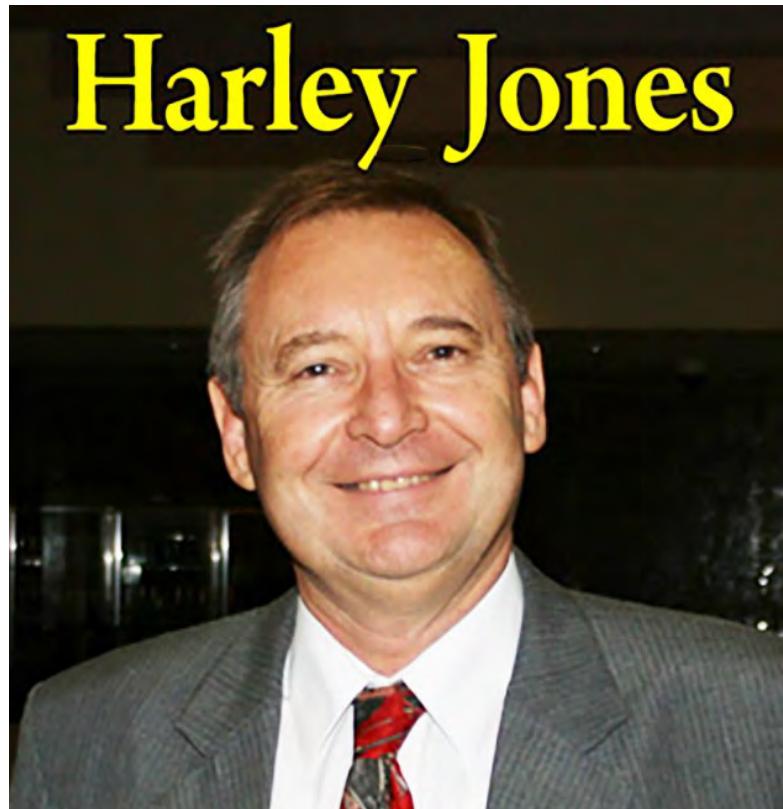
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## ***Harley Jones' AI Article - continued from previous page***

**Performance & Interpretation:** Technology is also transforming how we perform and interpret music. Video and internet are already important tools. AI-driven accompaniment software can allow soloists to rehearse with a virtual ensemble that adapts in real-time to their playing. This can be a game-changer for practice sessions and even live performances, particularly where finding live collaborators is challenging.

Additionally, AI can assist in analyzing historical recordings, identifying nuances in legendary performances, and helping musicians refine their interpretations. Imagine having an AI system that studies the phrasing of Piazzolla's bandoneón performances and offers insights into how to bring more authenticity into a tango performance.

**Supervised Practice:** An AI teacher could monitor students' practice, providing feedback on notes, fingering, timing, rhythm, and bellows technique. AI's ability to offer structured guidance and reinforce good practice habits - without ever losing patience - could significantly accelerate student progress between lessons with their teacher.



**Play-Along Tracks:** AI-generated backing tracks could help beginners develop rhythm and timing, making simple melodies sound richer and more engaging.

**Music Theory and Ear Training:** AI-powered tools and apps could enhance musicianship skills by teaching music theory, interval recognition, and ear training through interactive exercises, allowing teachers to focus more on hands-on accordion instruction.

**Composition, Improvisation, Creativity:** AI could assist students in composing their own music by suggesting chord progressions, generating melodies, or arranging harmonies - helping both students and teachers who may not have a strong background in composition. This could be especially valuable for young musicians seeking fresh material, or even professional performers looking for innovative compositions or improvisation. Moreover, AI-assisted orchestration can help composers experiment with different textures and styles, enabling them to create new works that push the boundaries of the instrument. This fusion of human creativity and artificial intelligence could lead to a new golden age of accordion music.

**Collaborative Learning:** AI-driven platforms could connect accordionists worldwide for virtual jam sessions, fostering a sense of community and shared learning.

### **Final Thoughts: The Balance of Tradition and Technology**

While AI and internet technology present tremendous opportunities, it is crucial that we use them as tools to enhance – rather than replace – the human artistry that makes music so powerful. The accordion, with its expressive capabilities and rich history, must continue to be played, studied, and cherished by real musicians.

By harnessing AI technology, we can make accordion education more accessible, affordable, and engaging, breaking down barriers related to cost and location. Instead of fearing the rise of AI in music education, let's explore how it can be a valuable tool for the future of the accordion using these technologies to supplement and enhance traditional teaching methods and make learning more engaging and effective.

By embracing the potentials, we can ensure that the accordion remains relevant in the digital AI age, reaching new audiences, inspiring new compositions or improvisation, preserving the unique legacy of the accordion for generations to come.

Harley Jones, ATDNZ, LTCL, FIRMT

## ATAM New England Music Festival

The Accordion Teachers Association of Massachusetts (ATAM) New England Music Festival took place April 11-13, 2025 at the Westin Waltham-Boston Hotel, Waltham, MA. The ATAM was delighted to celebrate their 63rd Annual Festival, a testament to decades of inspiring young talent and fostering a vibrant community of musicians and vocalists.

This milestone reflects their enduring commitment to supporting youth artistry, offering unparalleled opportunities for growth, recognition, and success. Join them as they honor this legacy and continue to create meaningful experiences for the next generation of performers. Let the celebration begin!

The ATAM New England Music Festival is a premier celebration of musical talent, creativity and community. Each year, we bring together young musicians, passionate educators, and enthusiastic audiences for an unforgettable experience that highlights the rich musical diversity of New England.

From classical ensembles to contemporary bands, the festival showcases a broad spectrum of performances designed to inspire and entertain. Competitions categories include: Accordion, Piano, Voice, Battle of the Bands, Drum, Guitar, Ukulele, Voice, and Violin/Viola.

Participants ages 22 & under and of all skill levels are invited to share their artistry, compete for top honors, and connect with like-minded peers and industry professionals. More than just a competition, the ATAM New England Music Festival fosters growth, learning, and collaboration. It's a place where emerging talent is nurtured, lifelong friendships are formed, and music is celebrated in all its forms.

The ATAM New England Music Festival, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, stands as a beacon of opportunity and achievement in the youth arts community with a dedicated 63-year history of fostering musical and vocal excellence. As a major youth talent event in New England for instruments and voice, it has become a key motivator for growth and a celebrated platform for young artists to network, collaborate, and showcase their skills.

In 2024, the event welcomed over 850 participants who contributed to more than 3,000 event entries across 125 competition categories. With a legacy of engaging over

15,000 participants, the organization continues to inspire the next generation of performers, offering unparalleled opportunities for growth and recognition in the arts.

With 25 member organizations dedicated to long-term collaboration, it spans five New England states, creating a robust network for aspiring musicians and vocalists. Participants have earned prestigious college scholarships, as well as regional and national industry awards, showcasing the impact of this platform on their careers.

Over the years, the ATAM has awarded more than 50 scholarships and distributed over \$100,000 in festival prizes, underscoring its dedication to empowering young artists. These efforts have made a significant difference in countless lives, cultivating a legacy of achievement and innovation in the arts.

Whether you're a performer, educator, or music enthusiast, you are invited to support the next generation of musical excellence. Explore the site to learn more about event details, registration, sponsorship opportunities, and how you can be part of this fun celebration of music.

For information on this or next years event, please contact: [atannemusicfestival@gmail.com](mailto:atannemusicfestival@gmail.com).

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Accordion Teachers Association of Massachusetts

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## NAMM Show 2025: A Grand Showcase of Innovation and Sound

From January 21-25, 2025, the Anaheim Convention Center in California became the epicenter of the music industry as the National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) Show 2025 unfolded. Among the many exhibitors, Korg proudly presented their new Fisa Suprema series, captivating musicians and industry professionals alike.

The new Fisa Suprema was presented alongside the smaller Fisa Suprema Compact. To achieve the smaller model, the built-in speakers were downsized and the number of physical register switches was reduced from 14 to 12. The keyboard was refined from 41 keys to a more compact 37-key layout.

As part of their exhibition, Korg unveiled four concept color variations:

- Amalfi: A breathtaking shade of blue reminiscent of the Amalfi Coast's azure waters
- Cooallo: A passionate and sophisticated coral red exuding elegance
- Dolomite: A snowy white inspired by the Dolomite Mountains, a UNESCO World Heritage Site
- Luna: A mysterious and tranquil moonlit gray



A highlight of the NAMM presentation were the performances by well known accordionist Cory Pesaturo and Fisa Suprema's project leader, Fati Fehmiju. Cory's command over the instrument, seamlessly shifting through a vast palette of tones, drew in waves of attendees curious to see the Korg in action. The booth buzzed with spontaneous performances, featuring impromptu collaborations between visiting accordionists and Cory, creating a dynamic, ever-evolving musical experience. It was a space where tradition met innovation, and the audience could truly feel the magic of the instrument in action.

project leader Fati Fehmiju shared his thoughts on the overwhelming reception of the Fisa Suprema lineup, hinting at exciting possibilities for the future of the instrument.

Fati writes: "This year, the NAMM Show was a fantastic experience for Accordionists and the Korg family. From the beginning of the event to the last minute, the Fisa booth was crowded with fantastic expeditors, happy musicians, and curious guests. We showcased Fisa's bellows technology and sound quality, and we heard direct feedback about our colorful models.

"On the last day of the event, my colleague and the developer of the orchestral/cinematic part of the Fisa Suprema, Luigi Bruti visited the booth together with accordionist Hubert Gall. Also, phenomenal sound developers and companies visited the booth, I had a chance to demonstrate the Fisa to them, and we had meetings for possible future collaboration. Their reaction to our physical modeling technology, the expression on the bellows to simulate the reeds, and the possibilities on the orchestral side of the instrument were considered fantastic.

"I am eager to bring new possibilities, features, and sounds to the Fisa and continue to improve the instrument. As a composer and musician, I know that every instrument is special. But the accordion has a unique effect. The accordion makes people happy and we had a chance to experience this beauty with all the fantastic guests together at the NAMM Show 2025."



## Hanzhi Wang Performs at Baruch Performing Arts Center (NYC)

The Baruch Performing Arts Center ended their 2024-25 season on May 19th with concert accordionist Hanzhi Wang. Hanzhi Wang returned to Baruch Performing Arts Center's stage after her popular performance last season. Her program, which closed out the 2024-25 concert series, brought summer to the stage with two works by Vivaldi and Piazzolla inspired by that season. She also performed music by Bach and two of her original compositions.

Hanzhi was the first accordionist to win the Young Concert Artists International Auditions, the first to be named Musical America's "New Artist of the Month," and the first solo accordionist on WQXR Radio's Young Artists Showcase.

She has performed in the USA from coast to coast, including UC Santa Barbara's Lively Arts and The Morgan Library & Museum in New York City. Composers Martin Lohse, James Black, and Sofia Gubaidulina have written and dedicated works to her. Her awards include the Ruth Laredo Prize, a career

development award from YCA, and first prize in the 40th Castelfiadardo International Accordion Competition in Italy.

Hanzhi Wang shares what makes the concert accordion unique: "The main difference between the concert accordion and the regular accordion is the left hand part. While the regular accordion produces an "Oom-pa-pa" sound, the concert accordion also has single tones in the bass side which allows us to perform polyphonic music such as Bach or any great classical composers with bass notes exactly as composed. The right-hand side has 107 buttons while the left-hand side has 120 buttons."

Hanzhi's program included: J. S. Bach: Chorale Prelude BWV 639, Sheep May Safely Graze BWV 208 and Chorale from the Cantata BWV 147, Hanzhi Wang: Sunrise Chanting and Mountain's Song, Saad Haddad: Shifting Sands, Martin Lohse: Menuetto and Autumn Rain, Astor Piazzolla: Verano Porteno/Summer and Antonio Vivaldi: Summer (Mvt. 1).



## A Glimpse into the Past – The Young Astor Piazzolla – June 1936

*A young musician from South America who has made many new friends for the bandoneon. How interesting to visit this June 1936 article (The Accordion World Magazine) knowing how the story played out in regards to the last paragraph!*

The bandoneon is an instrument which has achieved a great popularity in South America. This is partly due, no doubt, to the fact that it is so suited to the haunting rhythm of tango music.

It is not so well-known in the United States, but there are a few bandoneon artists in this country. Among them, despite his youth, is Astor Piazzolla.

Fifteen years ago this musician was born in Mar-del-Plata, Buenos Aires. When he was about nine years of age he came with his parents to New York City, where he has made his home ever since.

The Piazzolla family, being musically inclined, did not forget the instrument they had heard so frequently in their native land, and as a result, Astor, for the past five years has been studying and playing the bandoneon.

There are very few teachers of the bandoneon in New York City. It is much harder to learn than the piano-accordion. It is also rather difficult to secure music for this instrument, as it is printed only in South America. Astor uses piano music, somewhat revised.

The instrument was invented in 1830 in Germany by a man named Uhlig. It is square in shape, has single notes with three octaves on the right hand as well as on the bass side. It has 72 keys altogether, 36 on each side. In playing the instrument one uses four fingers on each hand.

Bandoneons are all made in Germany. They cost 300 pesos in South America, or about \$100.

The most famous artist of the bandoneon is Laurenz, who is a native of Argentina.

Young Astor Piazzolla has a repertoire which includes such classic numbers as 'William Tell' and "Poet and Peasant" Overtures. He plays solos in tango orchestras and from time to time broadcasts over short wave station W2XAF, Schenectady to South America.

With this career behind him at the age of fifteen, we predict a brilliant future for this gifted young musician.

## March 2025 Northern California Performance: Félicien Brut



Four international award-winning musicians recently convened just a few days ahead of their performances to participate in three "Corey Cerovsek & Friends" outstanding concerts (in San Francisco, Walnut Creek, and Palo Alto) sponsored by Chamber Music San Francisco. The audiences were treated to a variety of quartet, duet and solo pieces performed by a combo with Corey Cerovsek (violin - Canada), Lucienne Renaudin Vary (trumpet - France), Félicien Brut (accordion - France), and Steven Vanhauwaert (piano - Belgium).

The program consisted of a variety of French-themed music and composers such as Milhaud, Poulenc, Saint-Saens, Piaf, and Debussy. The quartet's finale was Gershwin's lively 'An American in Paris.'

Félicien performed accordion tango standards such as Oblivion by Piazzolla and Tango Pour Claude by Richard Galliano with grace and passion. Félicien and Lucien played an elegant jazz arrangement of L'Hymne en Rose, a combination of Hymne a L'Amour and La Vie en Rose.

Félicien Brut's first US trip was as a 2007 Coupe Mondiale competitor in Alexandria, VA. That year, France dominated the category for International Competition for Virtuoso Entertainment Music and Félicien placed in the top three.

During the televised 2024 Olympics Opening Ceremony, Brut was the winged accordionist perched on a bridge across the Seine River playing Piaf's "La Foule" right before the billowing plumes of red, white, and blue smoke dramatically shot across the bridge. He now performs both as a soloist with major orchestras and as a central element of many chamber music ensembles.



## Mary Mancini and Mario Tacca World Accordion Day House Concert in NJ

Mary Mancini and Mario Tacca presented a World Accordion Day House Concert on Sunday, May 4, 2025 in West Orange, NJ. Guests were invited to meet the artists after the performance during a post-concert reception. This program was the first in a series of in-home concerts that will be held in the future.

AAA Board of Director Mario Tacca, born in Italy, moved with his family to the Alsace Lorraine region of France where he began his musical studies. This is where his love and intense desire to play the accordion began. He loved the sound! He would pick up the accordion and imitate some of the songs his mother used to sing. The desire and love never diminished, despite having to walk three miles weekly to his teacher with his instrument strapped to his back!

In France, he was the winner of many regional and national accordion competitions. He became a world champion, winning the World Cup of Italy, the Grand Prix of Paris, the US National Competition, and the International Accordion competition held at Carnegie Hall in New York City. Mario Tacca dazzles audiences across the US and around the world with his unmatched virtuosity on the accordion and his exciting interpretations of international music, the classics, and pop.



showed that she is a great artist."

Mary has headlined numerous concert halls and festivals in North America, Europe, and China. She has performed at the Garden State Arts Center, Resorts International Casino Hotel, Taj Mahal in Atlantic City, and Mohegan Sun Resort Casino in Connecticut. Mary, with Mario Tacca, completed two concert tours of China. As guests of the China Ministry of Culture, they toured five cities in three weeks and performed with three symphony orchestras. Joining them on their tour was highly acclaimed Chinese tenor, Douglas Song. In addition to performing with the symphony orchestras, some of the most memorable moments included a performance held at the 1,600-seat True Color Jazz Supper Club in the booming city of Shenzhen and in the 3,500-seat Golden Opera House.

In addition to a busy concert schedule, Mary also maintains an active recording career. On "Canzoni dal Cuore," her CD of Italian love songs and arias, Mary sings with passion many of the classic songs from the Italian repertoire. The album also includes her own composition, "Preghiera, Ninna-Nanna," set to the music of Pietro Mascagni. Together, Mary and Mario have just released their latest duet CD, "Ricordi," a collection of Italian melodies. The Red Cross selected Mary's original composition, "With Open Arms," to accompany its video tribute to September 11 victims. Mary was presented with the Lifetime Achievement Award by the Order of the Sons of Italy in America for her ongoing outstanding musical contribution to the arts.

Mary Mancini and Mario Tacca are available for: concert and show performances, church weddings, piano and accordion lessons, wedding receptions, special events, corporate events, and in-home/private performances.

For additional information: [ameraccord1938@gmail.com](mailto:ameraccord1938@gmail.com)

Mario has recently been seen on MTV in a commercial for a pilot Italian Food program. He was seen on the Food Network in a commercial for "Throwdown with Bobby Flay." His latest recording, "Journey Through the Classics," features great melodies from the classical repertoire.

Internationally acclaimed vocalist Mary Mancini has been featured in the New York Times, the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, and the Journal News and has performed in a variety of venues around the world. Able to sing in eight different languages, she is adept at pop, show tunes, operatic arias, and sacred music and has received worldwide acclaim. Le Republicain Lorrain, in Alsace-Lorraine, France, writes that the "purity of her voice, the ease with which she interpreted the most difficult pieces

## World Accordion Day in Superior, WI

A World of Accordions in Superior, Wisconsin hosted a very successful World Accordion Day and Dr. Willard A. Palmer Festival from May 2-4, 2025 in the magnificent Harrington Arts Center located at A World of Accordions Museum.

The festival included concert performances as well as lectures on a variety of topics by guests including: Steve Solkela, Brett Jones, Dee Langley, Abigail Lund, Dwight Deeth, Shelby Setnikar, Dan Turpening, William Popp, Stas Venglevski & Noriko Kijiya (marimba), Mike Middleton & the Middletones, a free Sunday morning non-denominational Polka Service, local author Anthony Bukoski, Kris Kopec, the ACM Band, The Masked Accordions, The Three Rivers Ensemble, and Festival Orchestra conducted by Dee Langley.



The Confédération Internationale des Accordéonistes (CIA) held their first World Accordion Day on May 6, 2009, marking the 180th birthday of the accordion. On May 6, 1829, Cyrill Demian (1772–1849) an organ and piano maker of Armenian origin, accompanied by his two sons Karl and Guido, filed a patent in Vienna, Austria for the accordion. The patent was approved a short time later on May 23, 1829.

World Accordion Day is a unique global opportunity to promote public awareness of the accordion, an instrument without boundaries, one that spans all cultures and musical genres.

Dr. Willard "Bill" Palmer (1917-1996) collaborated with Bill

Hughes in producing a series of accordion method books (Palmer & Hughes) which have had worldwide impact. Sales ran into the millions making it the cornerstone of the Alfred Publishing Co.

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 "convertor" accordion. He designed the "Palmer Emperor Convertor" 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. 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.

The next event hosted by A World of Accordions will feature Alejandro Brittes (accordion), André Ely (seven-stringed guitar), and Carlos de Césaro (contrabass). Argentine accordionist and composer Alejandro Brittes and his ensemble, based in Brazil, will showcase the South American musical genre, Chamamé. The lecture/demonstration will be held at 4:00 PM and the concert at 5:00 PM on Sunday, June 1, 2025. Tickets are \$25.00 and available at the door.

Please visit [www.worldofaccordions.org](http://www.worldofaccordions.org) for more information.

