



2004  
WORKSHOP  
DATES



MENDOCINO  
JUNE 26-JULY 3

MT. WASHINGTON  
AUGUST 22-29



## DELVING INTO THE HEART OF BRASS: ZLATNE USTE GOES TO SERBIA

by Rachel MacFarlane

IN AUGUST, THE NEW YORK CITY-BASED BALKAN brass band Zlatne Uste spent 11 days in Serbia—the band's first time back in the country together since 1990. In 1987 ZU was the first non-Yugoslav band to participate in the annual Sabor Trubača (Festival of Trumpeters), held in the small Western Serbian town of Guča [See "A History of Zlatne Uste," Kef Times, Vol. 7, No. 1]. Conflicts in Yugoslavia prevented the band from returning for 13 years. Two members of ZU attended Guča in 2002 and reported that the political situation had cooled down enough that it was safe for a large group of Americans to be there; thus the impetus for a return trip.

Months of planning and grant-writing ensued, spearheaded by ZU saxophonist Marian Eines. I was in on the planning, having been invited to come as a guest; I mainly helped with correspondence in Serbian and with injections of my enthusiasm: it had been 20 years since my last visit to this part of the world, and I was champing at the bit, to put it mildly, to go. As a rabid brass-band enthusiast and novice baritone horn player, I could hardly wait to experience the Guča festival, legendary for its concentration of the best players, competitions and thousands of enthusiasts.

\* \* \*

Upon arrival in Belgrade, we are whisked through the Surčin airport by officials of JAT (Yugoslav airlines), who have asked ZU to play at an open-air arts festival in the old town center. With only bits of fitful airplane sleep to propel them, the band members don their signature Hawaiian shirts and play several old Serbian favorites to an astonished crowd. Soon kids begin to dance, then several women start a small kolo line, Behind me I hear people ask, "Odakle su oni?"

(Where are they from?). "Iz Nju Jorka! (from New York)," I respond gleefully, "here to go to the Guča festival!" As the musicians play, Batja Bell recounts how a woman approaches her and in halting English says, "This is better. Better to bring Serbian songs than bombing." Later a young girl places a bouquet of roses in the curves of Belle Birchfield's horn.

The war and 1999 NATO bombing, already well out of most Americans' consciousness, are evident here, particularly in Belgrade, which gives off an aura of exhaustion and sadness; destruction of buildings is still in view here and elsewhere.

In Zabrežje, a small town near Obrenovac, not far from Belgrade, 18 of us are heroically hosted by the family of our interpreter Bojan Belić, whom Marian had met in Pittsburgh the previous year. Not only do they find places for all of us to sleep, they stuff us to the gills with good food—roasted pepper salad, roast lamb and pork, home-made sweets, abundant mineral water and brandy. We play for the Belić family and guests. At the table later I have the first good chance to hone my long-dormant Serbian with Bojan's parents and family friends. They tell me of the political mess



Cheek & jaw watching: Zlatni Prsti's Jemin Zečirović & ZU's Emerson Hawley

the country is in, widespread unemployment, infrastructure breakdown and crime, and the general, pervasive sense of hopelessness and no future. A sense that Serbia is now the "last country on the list" for the West. The next morning Bojan's mother and grandmother recount stories of the bombing, horrible images that they cannot purge from their heads. All any of us can do is listen and nod—there is nothing to defend here—the wounds are fresh and deep.

Sobered by the reality around us, but buoyed by the overall positive reception we are getting, we make our way down to Vranjska Banja, a small resort town in South Serbia, whose

ZLATNE USTE TO PAGE 8

# FROM THE EEFC BOARD



**Kef Times** is published twice a year by the East European Folklife Center, P.O. Box 12488, Berkeley, CA 94712-3488. ("Kef" is a word used in various forms throughout the Balkans to convey a spirit of pleasure and enjoyment, such as one experiences when partaking of good food, music, dancing and friendship.)

**For information** about the East European Folklife Center, the Balkan Music & Dance Workshops, or to be included on our mailing list, contact us at the address above, **call** 510/549-2124, send **e-mail** to [office@eefc.org](mailto:office@eefc.org), or visit our web site at [www.eefc.org](http://www.eefc.org).

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*The EEFC Board of Directors in the wilds of Santa Cruz. L-R: John Uhlemann, Randy Trigg, Michelle Benoit, Janet Pollock, Barbara Babin, Rachel MacFarlane, Matthew Fass, Emily Cohen*

whelmingly positive about the beauty of the new location, the lovely waterfront and the high level of teaching at this year's workshop. Transitions are difficult, but I think most would agree that the community went through this one with high spirits and enthusiasm intact.

Speaking of transitions, the organizers of next year's *balkanalia!* would like the workshop to continue next year and have asked the board for its support. You may remember that the board decided in the spring to turn the workshop over to local organizers. At our most recent meeting the board agreed to grant the organizers seed money and to lend logistical support so that the workshop may continue next year. We are looking into developing a model of the EEFC acting as an umbrella organization to camps and regional workshops that would like to be associated with us.

In other news, the CD is a rousing success and has been well received by the community, the Kef Scholarship will continue into the next year with blessings from the board, and the web site will be updated and revamped to better serve our community.

We wish you a happy year of dancing and music making and we'll see you next summer.

*Matthew Fass*  
EEFC Board Liaison  
[board@eefc.org](mailto:board@eefc.org)

MEETINGS TO THE EEFC community!

The Fall 2003 board meeting was held on October 24-26 and was graciously hosted by Janet Pollock and Mark Primack in their Santa Cruz home. This new board member was offered the use of the classic Airstream trailer that sits outside their home, and he gladly accepted. He couldn't help but think all weekend long that he was starring in his own independent movie as he woke up to the Santa Cruz sunrise in the Airstream trailer.

The first order of business was the election of officers. The board wishes to thank outgoing board members Belle Birchfield and Martie Ripson for their service and welcomes incoming board members Matthew Fass and Emily Cohen. Barbara Babin was elected President, Randy Trigg will continue as Secretary, John Uhlemann is Treasurer, and Matthew Fass is your new Board Liaison. Janet Pollock will chair the Programming Committee, and Michelle Benoit will head Development and co-chair Long-Range Planning with Janet Pollock. Rachel MacFarlane, the EEFC General Manager, joined us in our meeting as a non-voting member of the board.

After getting the preliminaries out of the way, the board began to address

the issues that concern the community. We read evaluations and site manager reports from each workshop and were happy to find that most campers had a great time last summer despite some hang-ups in the kitchen at Mendocino and the physical and logistical problems at Mt. Washington. And *balkanalia!* was a rousing success! The evaluations continue to be our main source of input from the community, so keep them coming in. Overall, each workshop remains a source of inspiration and outright fun for the great majority of the community.

Mendo: The board has created a committee to look into ways to make the Mendocino registration process less of a burden on our General Manager and to make the process clearer to the community. We are lucky to have such high interest in Mendocino after a six-year stretch of declining enrollment in the late '80s and early '90s.

Mt. Washington: A committee was formed to write up a job description for a liaison to Mt. Washington and to draft a list of must-have and would-like-to-have improvements to the camp before next summer. Our top concern is to make the camp safer and healthier for campers and then to work on cosmetic details that will make our East Coast workshop more enjoyable. With that said, the evaluations were over-

## THANKS FROM THE EEFC

THANK YOU \* THANK

The EEFC would like to recognize the following people and say, "Thank you for your tremendous work on our fabulous CD *Balkanalia!*."

*David Bilides, Margaret Loomis, Martie Ripson, Rachel MacFarlane, Jerry Kisslinger, Charlie Pilzer, Sonya Cohen Cramer, Joe Mandell, Karen Bell, Larry Lou Foster, Mark Forry, Jodi Hewat, Mark Levy, Lise Liepman, Ken McCormick, Yves Moreau, Eva Salina Primack, Chris Rietz, Jane Sugarman, John Uhlemann, Larry Weiner, Danilo Yanich, Judy Barlas, Phyllis Barney and Drew Miller and all the artists who donated their music.*

THANK YOU \* THANK

\* YOU THANK \* YOU THANK \* YOU THANK \* YOU

## EEFC MISSION STATEMENT

The East European Folklife Center (EEFC) is a non-profit organization whose mission is to educate the general public about the folk music, folk dance and folklore of the Balkans through promoting and sponsoring activities which honor and celebrate the richness of these cultures; and to foster understanding and respect of all peoples through shared experiences of Balkan cultures.

# ÉDESSA IN JAPAN

By Lise Liepman and Édessa

For the last three years it has been Édessa's good fortune to be invited to Japan during the spring cherry blossom season to play for some of the best dancers gathered from all over the country for the annual East European Music and Dance Workshop in Makino. The camp was founded in 2001 by Jane Wieman, a passionate Balkan dancer of long standing. For the 2003 camp, held April 4–6, Jane passed the camp on to the capable hands of Yoshimichi Tamura.

This camp is located at an enviable site—a very traditional Japanese youth hostel on the outskirts of the small village of Makino near the shores of Lake Biwa, the largest lake in Japan. The hostel is run by a single family, which also runs a shrine to learning and education adjacent to the hostel. For meals we sat on tatami mats and ate at low tables. At night we slept on futons on the tatami mats.

The development of Balkan dance in Japan closely resembles the movement that has developed in the U.S. [See "Balkan Folk Dancing in Kansai, Japan," Kef Times, Vol. 7, No. 2.] In recent years people started playing instruments and having an increased interest in singing. Jane wanted to start a long weekend camp modeled after the EEFC Balkan camps, where there would be instruction all day long in singing, instruments and dance with parties to live music late into the night.

Each community in Japan that has Balkan dance has a strong leader, and the people are loyal to that leader. They don't cross over and dance at other clubs. If the leader decides to go to a workshop, they all go. If the leader doesn't choose to go, no one from the club goes. As an American, Jane is in the interesting position of being able to participate in many groups.

During the first camp Jane provided us with a running commentary on the dynamics at play. This was extremely helpful because we did not understand what we were witnessing. She told us that it was the first time that many of these great dancers had been together. We saw so many good dancers improvising at the front of the line, or in the middle of the circle,

which seemed natural to us, until Jane said that she had never seen that before, and that they were responding to the music in ways she had rarely seen in more than 20 years in Japan.

We have been in the happy position of participating from the beginning in the first-ever camp of this kind in Japan, and since then have watched it grow rapidly, taking on its own character. This camp was filled with top-notch dancers, but until that time they had mostly danced to recordings. It was incredible to play long pieces and watch the dance evolve as the music evolves.

Local bands have grown in strength over the last few years as well, and at the 2003 camp, the Saturday night party included six

on tour in Japan, and Ahmet managed to swing by for a party and teaching session.

In 2003 we brought Eva Salina Primack to

sing with us. Yoshimichi also invited a wonderful musician from Kazakstan, who came with his whole family of musicians and dancers, an incredible treat for all of us.

Each year we have also taken some extra time to visit different parts of Japan. After an emotional trip to Nagasaki, we had a very interesting and inadvertent trip on local trains up the untouristed, extremely rural west coast. We were really an oddity, with all our bags and big foreign ways. In another city, it was raining and a total stranger approached us and gave us two umbrellas. Almost without fail, everyone was kind and helpful to us, making travel very easy.

If you ever want a different kind of vacation, we would recommend a trip to Japan at cherry blossom time that starts or ends up at East European Music and Dance Workshop in Makino. Contact Yoshimichi Tamura at: [ezj04040@nifty.ne.jp](mailto:ezj04040@nifty.ne.jp).

*The Bay Area's ÉDESSA: "still happily committed to playing passionate and high-energy music from the southern Balkans and beyond."*

*Members are Dan Auwil, Paul Brown, George Chittenden, Ari Langer and Lise Liepman; contact them at [lisegeorge@earthlink.net](mailto:lisegeorge@earthlink.net).*



*Ari Langer plays "Sakura" on the shamisen at a traditional music shop in Kyoto*



*Lise Liepman's Makino workshop accordion class*

Japanese Balkan bands, including a return performance by local favorites Rough Brunch. Édessa played for only 1½ hours; the other bands played the rest of the party. We went to bed after 3 a.m. and the bands and dancers were still going strong!

At the first camp in 2001 Édessa was the only hired band. We taught five classes a day and played the parties late into the night, an exhausting schedule. In 2002 we invited Brenna MacCrimmon to sing with us. As a lark, Merita Halili and Raif Hyseni also decided to come, and we had our first meeting in rural Japan, drinking and partying all night in the joy of first friendship. During that same weekend, both Joe Graziosi and Ahmet Lülecı were



*Home of the Armando Bugari*

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# FROM THE EDITOR

**A**S WE SURGE FORWARD through winter holidays and end-of-year busy-ness, last summer's Balkan camp memories may only be a dim glow amidst more pressing tasks and louder media.

But if you can find a little quiet time to sit down with the *KefTimes*, we can take you places. This issue is rich in travel stories. Dance teacher Bob Leibman recounts adventures in Yugoslavia going as far back as 1965, along with other tales that add to our continuing history of the EEFC workshops. And Zlatne Uste and Édessa, two bands that have grown out of the workshops, tell of their recent trips to Serbia and Japan, respectively.

Closer to home, there are photo spreads of last summer's workshops: first Mendocino, then the new Mt. Washington, Mass., East Coast site, and finally the very successful last EEFC-sponsored *balkanalia!* in Corbett, Ore. You can read some reflections written by our first two Kef Scholarship recipients, and start thinking about folks you know who might want to apply for scholarships in 2004. And you will find news of recordings, news from the EEFC Board and the results of EEFC's fundraising for this year.

May this excursion in armchair travel inspire more adventures and poignant experiences for all of us who seek them in the coming year!

Julie Lancaster

The new East Coast site lacked a dance floor & Peter Kowalski produced a beautiful new portable floor for us. Here he and friend Carolyn Wember inaugurate it. **THANK YOU, PETER AND CREW!**

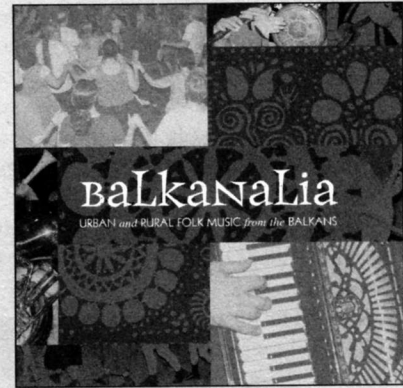


MARGARET LOOMIS

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5. **Lenorije Čhaje** Romani song TRIO SLAVEJ
6. **Staro Meraklijsko Oro** Republic of Macedonia DIMOVSKI FAMILY
7. **Grada Se Gradi** Bulgaria MEDNA USTA
8. **Tri Bilbila Poev** Republic of Macedonia NOVO SELO
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15. **Ta Merakia Tou Karakosta** Greece JIM STOYNOFF & JOHN ROUSSOS
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Order from EEFC, P.O. Box 12488, Berkeley, CA 94712-3488. Checks \$16 + \$2.50 s & h, total \$18.50 per disk OR order with your credit card directly off our web site using our secure PayPal account: [www.eefc.org](http://www.eefc.org).



# INTERVIEW WITH BOB LEIBMAN

**B**OB LEIBMAN TAUGHT DANCE AT many early Balkan camps and most recently, after a long hiatus, at Mendocino in 1999. He lives in Austin.

*Where did you grow up and how did you get involved with Balkan music and dancing?*

I grew up on the West Side of Chicago and discovered folk dancing in 1961 as a junior at the University of Chicago. I just happened upon it, got transfixed, came back the next week and never left.

*What was it about folk dancing that got to you?*

It was amazing, watching it, and I watched it the whole evening. Prior to that I wasn't a dancer. I was pretty shy in high school, didn't go to proms and stuff like that. Once I started [folk dancing] I discovered I could dance, and women liked that. During those first two years, folk dancing took over my life. My grades suffered, I dropped the golf team. By the second year I was going dancing four nights a week.

I met some people who would occasionally go to Serbian church events, or the nightclubs on the southwest and far south sides of Chicago, where you could go hear music. I was lucky enough very early on to see some of the music, and some great musicians, in context.

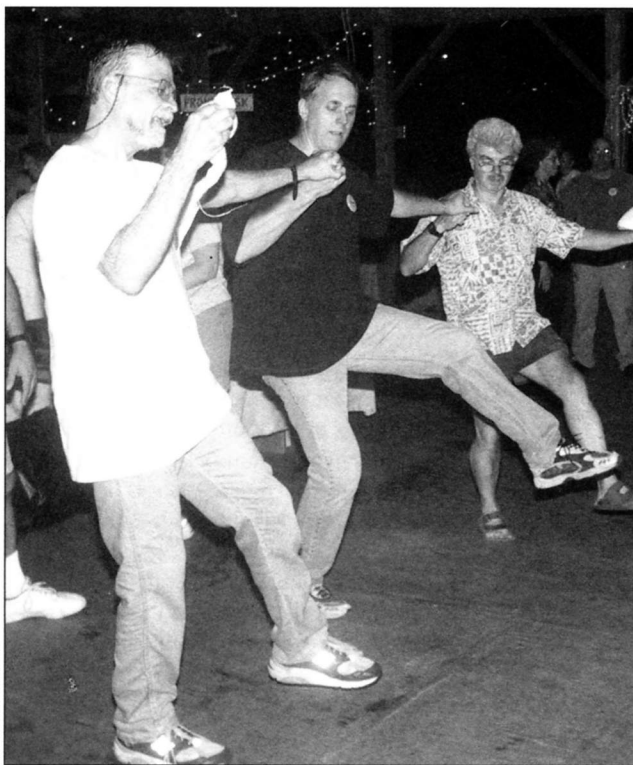
*What happened next?*

After I left Chicago I went to Washington University in St. Louis to get my master's in mathematics. While I was there I got to know some Serbs, and I went to events there and across the river in the quad cities. I was interested in seeing what the ethnic folks were actually doing as opposed to "folk dance." I also started a folk dance group at Washington University.

*And after you completed your master's...*

I thought I would take time out before getting a Ph.D., and I wanted to teach math. I lined up a job at Boston State College in Boston in 1965.

That summer—after I got the job but before I moved—I went off to Europe for the whole summer, on my savings from two years as a teaching assistant. I hitchhiked across the Alps, met Larry Weiner in Milan (I had met him in 1964 in D.C.), where he was stationed with the U.S. Army. And I traveled around Yugoslavia. I had already studied some Serbo-Croatian on my own, enough so that when I



Bob Leibman at Ramblewood 2001 with Steve Kotansky & Larry Weiner

got there I felt a lot more comfortable than I did in Italy. I basically traveled all over and started trying to learn dances.

In early August I arrived in Ohrid and stayed in a hotel where I met a man from Peštani. He invited me to come to his village a couple of weeks later for the 28th of August, when they have their weddings. So I went elsewhere for a while, then came back and went to the wedding and stayed at his family's house. It was just wonderful. The wedding starts the night before, on the 27th, and goes through the morning of the 29th. In the middle of the night you are hearing the drums beat. This was my initiation into Peštani, "my village."

*Did you go back and take the teaching job in Boston?*

Yes. During the years 1965–69, I was living in Cambridge and teaching in Boston. I helped run the MIT [recreational] dance group, and I also danced with the Taylors. Some of the people from that group created the Northeastern Folkdance Ensemble, which became Mandala, an international folk dance performing group. I was director for the first two years and then a dancer during my last year in Boston.

*And during those years did you continue traveling to Yugoslavia?*

Yes, I went back during the summers of '67 and '68 and did considerable filming and recording at festivals and weddings, including that of my village brother, and traveled elsewhere. I also bought a number of costumes.

By 1969 I had gotten married to Ronnie Alexander, who is now a professor of Slavic languages. She needed to move to L.A. to work with her dissertation advisor, and I went with her and enrolled at UCLA in folklore courses. After a year in L.A., Ronnie needed to do her fieldwork in Yugoslavia. I was very lucky; at the last minute I was able to get a Fulbright to study wedding festivals.

*So you went for a whole year?*

In the summer of 1970 we took language courses at

Ohio State University and then went to Yugoslavia and spent the next year there. Our primary residence was in Novi Sad, in Vojvodina, but we would visit Ronnie's advisor in Beograd. I also had an advisor, but basically I did an independent study. I read a lot, probably translated 100 articles on weddings—primarily Serbian and Macedonian—working in the library. You can't check out books there.

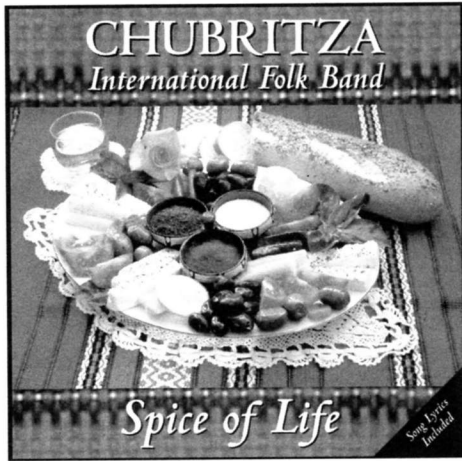
Ronnie's dissertation was focused on the border dialects of eastern and southeastern Serbia that are intermediate to standard Serbian, Macedonian and Bulgarian. She chose nine villages to visit and collect data from, and I joined her in visiting seven of them. She had her questionnaires and would tape conversational dialects; I would ask questions about weddings. Her advisor had strong connections, so when we came to a village, we were welcomed and put up at someone's house, sometimes for five or six days. I also got invited back to engagement parties and weddings, so I have films from those celebrations.

I attended and filmed several wedding in Peštani that year. I also recorded older women dancing to their own a cappella singing at Easter, and young girls doing their Lazar Day dances in neighboring villages; these traditions

BOB LEIBMAN TO PAGE 7

# NEW AND NOTABLE BALKAN RECORDINGS

New recordings by EEFC associates, including workshop campers, staff and teachers, and other EEFC supporters, all of whose names are noted in bold type in each entry. Please address further entries (including publications) to the Editor, Kef Times.



## Chubritza

### Spice of Life

A collection of international folk music from the Arcata, California-based band. This recording includes selections from Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, France, Macedonia, the Roma, Serbia, Spain, the U.S. and the Jewish/Klezmer tradition. These songs reflect universal themes: the passion of being in love, the sorrow of lost love, and the happiness music and dance bring to the heart. Chubritza is: **Randy Carrico, Deborah Dukes, Janet Finney-Krull, Joe Friedman, Craig Kurumada and Linnea Mandell.**

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## Kitka

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Order from: Kitka, 1201 Martin Luther King, Jr. Way, Oakland, CA 94612; [www.kitka.org](http://www.kitka.org). Price \$16 plus \$3 shipping; checks to KITKA.

## Stanley Greenthal

### Mélodie: Brittany to the Balkans

Madrona Ring Music MRD1005

Northwest songwriter and guitar and mandocello player **Stanley Greenthal** presents 18 instrumental tunes from Brittany, Scotland, Ireland, Bulgaria, Macedonia and Greece. He says, "Like old friends who have traveled many years together, and still have much to say to one another, these melodies...speak to me, and I reply in kind." Stanley is accompanied by Joel Bernstein, Roger Landes, Paddy League and **Christos Govetas.**

Order from Madrona Ring Music, 4245 East Lee St., Seattle, WA 98112; [www.stanleygreenthal.com](http://www.stanleygreenthal.com). Price \$15 plus \$2 shipping (WA residents add 8.8% sales tax); checks payable to Stanley Greenthal.

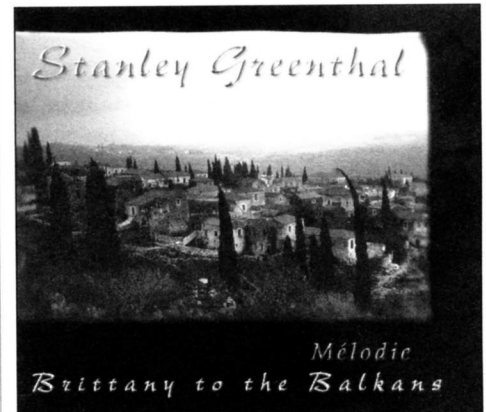
## Boris Karlov

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# BOB LEIBMAN

FROM PAGE 5

were fading out but still being done. I also attended and got good recordings from some festivals.

That year was also the first time I went to Pece [Atanasovski]'s camp. There were an awful lot of us [Americans] there. The camp was in Oteševo, on the western shores of Lake Prespa. I went back to Pece's camp in '72 and wrote up all the dance notes for Pece's first U.S. tour, which David Golber was arranging. While there, I also went with Steve Kotansky and David and Cathy Shochat across the lake to Krani, an Albanian village, where we filmed dancing and recorded at two different weddings. Later Steve and I went back and recorded more singing and music, and worked with some other Albanians near Struga.

*What happened after your year in Yugoslavia?*

Ronnie and I came back to L.A. in the fall of 1971 and got divorced. I worked on a master's in folklore, which I completed in 1974. During this time I started sharing an apartment with Dick Crum. We're very close, both being interested in dance in context, "real dances" as opposed to a lot of these made-up things.



*Boston, 1960s: Bob performs his Macedonian suite with Mandala*

Dick and Yves [Moreau] were the people who were most responsible for me being able to start teaching, first at Kolo Festival and then they wrote letters to people to get me some gigs.

I started a weekly [recreational] dance group in L.A. in maybe '72 or '74. I was one of the teachers, along with Dick, David Shochat, Mark Levy, and Carl Deul, who taught Greek. We'd charge a dollar or two a session but once a month we'd have Pitu Guli play, and we'd lower the price to zero and ask everybody to pay the band instead. That's something I've always pushed, because in the village, you pay the band for each piece they play.

Around this time, we started having long weekends at Sweet's Mill. Besides myself, Pitu Guli and David Golber, a major figure at these events was Nestor Georgievski, a wonderful, fun-loving Macedonian who was living in L.A. The weekends were the inception of what turned into Balkan camp [see *Kef Times*, Vol. 6,

No. 2]. Sometimes I was the teacher; it wasn't really formal. A couple of times I put on "weddings," which those who were there still remember as a high point. We'd play out the different parts of the wedding: getting the bride, gift-giving, etc. I think the processions we do at Balkan camp these days are an outgrowth of those weddings we put on.

While we were at Sweet's Mill, Mark [Levy] did the first accredited course as an extension course and I was the first dance teacher there, and then, with Dick, at Camp Mattole [in *Humboldt County*; see *Kef Times* Vol. 7 No. 1]. I was also the dance teacher for several of the first Mendocino camps, up through about 1980.

*What were the early Balkan camps like?*

I considered Balkan camp to be a music camp as opposed to a dance camp, so I felt I didn't have to be a dance teacher quite of the sort I'd be at, say, Kolo Festival. I considered it my job to help people learn the basic dances...pravos, lesnos, devetorka. Real simple dances so that everyone could dance at the evening parties.

I've always been appalled at how people learned all these fancy dances and basically didn't know the dances that people would do if you'd actually go there. All of us who had been to the Balkans wanted to share our experience of dance and music as we saw it there, in context. Dance was taught only one, maybe two sessions per day, all to live music. Since

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BOB LEIBMAN TO PAGE 16



# THE KEF SCHOLARSHIP AND ME

**T**HIS YEAR THE EEFC INAUGURATED the KEF Scholarship program, which was established to provide at least one participant in each of the two seven-day Balkan Music & Dance Workshops with a waiver of fees. Here are comments from the two 2003 recipients. (The deadline to apply for a 2004 scholarship is February 28, 2004. To download an application form for 2004, go to [www.eefc.org](http://www.eefc.org) and click on "Kef Scholarships.")



MARGARET LOOMIS

Ben Schenck (L) at Mt. Washington

## From Ben Schenck, New Orleans, La.

I'd heard about Balkan camp from a few different people and it sounded like fun. I've been trying to play various kinds of Balkan music with my band here in New Orleans ([www.panoramajazzband.com](http://www.panoramajazzband.com)) for several years without really achieving "That Sound." I'd had a clarinet lesson with George Chittenden when he was in town to play for the Crescent City International Dancers some years ago. I also had a couple lessons in Bulgarian music from Nikolai Kolev. When I heard that I had won the scholarship, I was eager for the possibility of spending a whole week digging into the ornamentation that gives Balkan music its distinct character.

I caught a flight to Albany, got a ride from a local friend down to the camp and he dropped me off. There were a few people there I'd met before, but mostly I felt like the "new kid."

Until Zlatne Uste struck up. Then everybody started dancing and I fell into line. There's a special psychology to dancing in a group like that. I dance with my wife, I do the

all-purpose buttshake on the dance floor in New Orleans, but this is different. So long as you do the most simple, basic step, you're in, you can hang. Then there's the shared experience—everybody's working hard, sweating, checking each other out around the circle. There's a feeling of being in it together. It was a new experience for me, a new vibe that felt kind of deep and eternal.

So, after that I found it really easy to talk to people, horse around, introduce myself to strangers and be with everybody.

I overbooked myself with lessons: one a day with Ivan Milev, two with Catherine Foster and one with Michael Ginsburg. They were all so great. I learned tons of music. I loved getting to pick these melodies apart in the minutest detail and then hustle to whip them up for the student concert. Somehow I managed to handle everything despite copious amounts of slivovitz and no sleep.

I had a blast, I learned a lot and I'm supremely grateful to the scholarship committee for making it possible for me to come. I'm practicing the new tunes I collected and will be working them into the band's repertoire as soon as I'm ready to perform them. Balkan music on Bourbon Street!

Hopefully before long I'll be able to play for the dancers at Balkan camp.

So, besides the windstorm, I can't think of anything that I would recommend be changed. Maybe we could arrange for a few more hours to be added to each day?

## From Molly Elder, Eugene, Ore.

Following is a brief outline of how I plan to use EEFC skills in my teaching. I have been commuting 90 (yes, ninety) miles to work in order to work full time and have very little time for anything other than my son. New job at three different schools...

EEFC's Mendocino camp gave me some basic skills in Balkan music and dance. Things for me this year have not turned out exactly as planned; my Balkan experience has moved to the back burner for the present. I am teaching music full time at three elementary schools 12 miles apart from each other. Currently we are working on holiday programs. My two-room schoolhouse in the mountains has some Russian students. All schools have a small minority of Spanish-speaking students and a smattering of Jehovah's Witnesses. Other than that my schools are mono-ethnic, and parents are eager to have traditional Christmas programs.

I have students for 90 minutes each week. I

have not spoken to any [other] music teachers in Oregon who have students for that much time each week. I am extremely lucky. Currently, all 3rd, 4th and 5th graders are beginning [to study] recorder. Weekly dance lessons will begin after the New Year. In conjunction with dancing (we will begin with line dancing, and move to some European, American, Balkan, Russian and dances from the Asian and the Pacific) we will accompany ourselves occasionally. African music will be played on mallet instruments, primarily. I look forward to doing some Greek and Balkan dances in conjunction with recorders and singing (recorders help to get the older students singing, as they sing melodies and play them alternately. I will be looking for simple songs with bourdon [Ed. note: the bass note on a bagpipe] or drone, and will probably use "Trugnal mi Jane Sandanski" and "Trugnala Rumjana" from Bulgaria. We will do some of the easier dances from Joe and Yves' classes last summer as well (the only ones I can perform or teach with any confidence—most dancers at camp seemed to be very experienced...) And I'm hoping to have a family folk dance at each school at the end of winter term.

My son, Epe, has been lucky enough to enroll in our neighborhood public school that offers violin lessons three mornings a week. We look forward to next year's Balkan camp! ♪

## ZLATNE USTE

FROM PAGE 1

claims to fame include natural sulphur baths and one of the finest regional Romani brass bands, Zlatni Prsti ("golden fingers"). Several ZU members had met members of that band on earlier trips, and I had been corresponding with the band's leader, Ekrem Sajdić, for months, making arrangements for us to work with his group. Upon arrival, we realize that absolutely nothing will proceed as so carefully planned, but we quickly enter into the local spirit of *nema problema* (no problem!), and in short, have experiences beyond our wildest expectations.

As we wend our way through the narrow main street of the *romska mahala* (Romani quarter) we observe unpaved streets, haphazard housing construction and lots of folks out and about; Ekrem's house is located through a narrow alleyway—his house has a long porch facing a small courtyard. It is a double house—two sides built for his two sons, who, it is hoped, will eventually come back, one from

ZLATNE USTE TO PAGE 9



BATIA BELL

ZU performs on Knez Mihailova St. in Belgrade

## ZLATNE USTE

FROM PAGE 8

Germany and the other from the Hungarian border, to settle with their families back in Vranjska Banja.

As Ekrem's wife Svetlana and his sister Mirjana serve us coffee, we figure out our schedule. Rather than giving us daily lessons during our stay as planned, because of obligations (two weddings), Zlatni Prsti instead has allocated an entire day to work with ZU. They take us the next day to a meadow above town, an idyllic patch of land between green hills, shaded by a stand of walnut trees.

At this point, we all believe we are preparing for a joint concert in Guča; for hours we work nearly one on one with the band members, all of us "concentrating furiously," as Michael Ginsburg recalls. With utmost graciousness and patience these men take us through the paces of six songs. Emerson Hawley, ZU's tuba player, states that the "highest high [of the trip] was playing face to face, 12" from Jemin's (ZP's tuba player) nose. Cheek and jaw watching..." While we rest our poor faces, we have the treat

of observing ZP run a few tunes out of their own repertoire. As Michael observes, "Their style of rehearsing is very much in your face. Anyone can go over to anyone else and bark out corrections, or play the correct lick right in his ear. The drummer is low man on the totem pole. When he is yelled at his reply is to smile and say, 'yes, boss'..." I later write in my journal, *dan k'o san* (day like a dream).

We are lucky to be able to attend the two weddings the band is playing for: one on our first night in town in the nearby village of Pavlovac, and the second, larger one in Vranjska Banja itself. Michael describes the scene taking place in a large courtyard: "The band begins to play Svekvrino Oro, the mother-in-law's dance. All of the women and girls in the wedding party (perhaps 150 people in all) emerge in a dance line from the courtyard, dressed in traditional Vranje costumes. Not

one person is out of step. It is a stately processional... Each dancer, while clearly fluent in the language of the local dance also moves in slightly individualistic ways. Perhaps the hips move slightly more provocatively, or the head is held at a slight angle. The mother-in-law holds a sieve. People place money in the sieve as she passes by them in the dance. This money will be given to the band, who are playing as a favor to their close friends... It is a magnificent scene."

ZLATNE USTE TO PAGE 13



Vranjska Banja, Serbia: Ekrem Sajdić (far left) and Zlatni Prsti lead ZU through the paces

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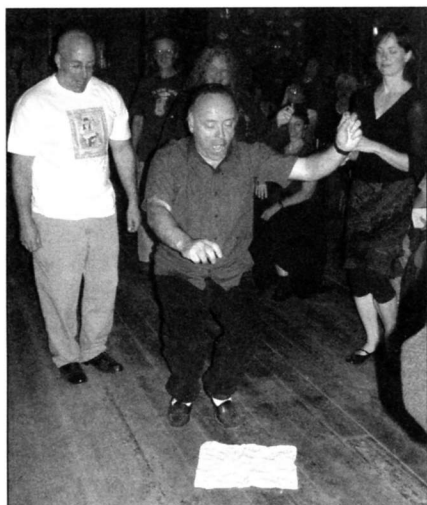
ALL PHOTOS KATHY FORS



*Christos Govetas entertains at the late-night Bulgarian grill*



*George Chittenden and students step up the scales at the Nature Center*



*Yves Moreau dives for the hanky while Joe Graziosi and others look on*



*Music beyond words: Tzvetanka Varimezova & Ivan Milev*



*Brass band glitters in the dance hall*



*Macedonian kaval trio: Ralph Iverson, Dennis Godfrey & Pat McSwiney*



*Georgi Petrov and Ivan Milev lead the parade*



# MT. WASHINGTON 2003

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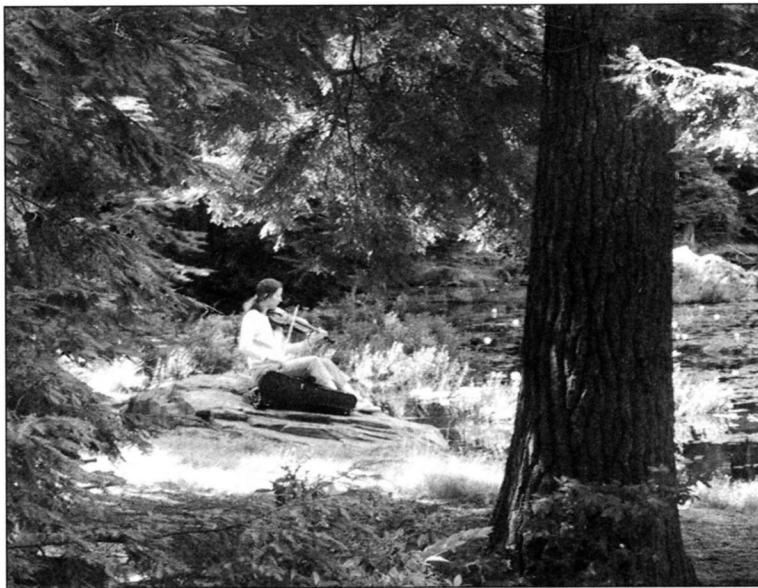
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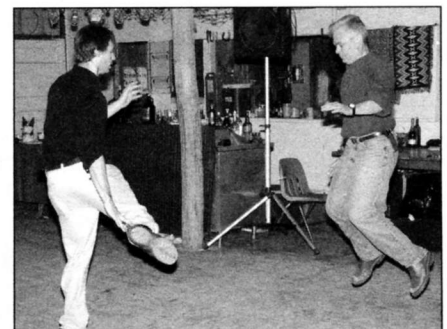


*Groovin' à la grècque: Beth Cohen & Alan Zemel lead the Greek ensemble*

***These photographs and more are available in full color on CD as an EEFC fundraiser. See p. 14 to order!***



*Laura Pannaman & dancers entranced by Demetri Tashie on zournas & Matt Moran on daouli*



*The "lads" dance: James Blachly & Laine Harris*

# BALKANALIA! 2003

ALL PHOTOS KATHY FORS



*Mark Levy & the "modern" ensemble checkin' out a new čoček*



*Old friends dancing: Mike Slama, Ann Norton & Stefanie Anderson*

*The 2004 b! workshop will be headed by a local Pacific Northwest committee headed by Susan Reagel with the support of the EEFC. To find out more, contact Susan at 503/234-9088, reagel@spiritone.com.*



*Always a favorite: Brenna MacCrimmon with Ruth Hunter, Christos Govetas & Kalin Kirilov*



*Dan Auvil & George Chittenden: seven years of balkanalia!: it's all a blur now*



*Posture practice pays off: Melissa Miller undulates atop juice glasses*



ESTER SCARINI

Wedding in Vranjska Banja: the bride bedecked in fancy pink shalvar and facial appliqués

## ZLATNE USTE

FROM PAGE 9

I am in awe of Zlatni Prsti throughout this blazingly hot afternoon. They play with virtually no break with the same strength and precision from beginning to end. I am convinced that their lips are made of a combination of leather and steel. I recall seeing the little kids carrying around trumpets in the mahala—blatting away seemingly randomly, but here we see the result of years of corralling this raw energy in the powerful, voluminous stream issuing from the musicians' horns.

Emerson observed later, "Man, playing one on one with those guys was, well, how could you learn better? The gestalt of it... Seeing them as just guys (*kolege*—colleagues) and then seeing them wade into those wedding scenes. Well, you know, they were clearly an integral part of that place. They needed it as much as it needed them..." I wonder what they think of us—Americans playing their tunes, and among them these women blowing horns. We must be an exotic curiosity, but no one ever acts as if we don't belong there.

On our last morning in Vranjska Banja, we meet for one last run-through of the concert pieces, and after the obligatory Turkish coffee, brandy and mineral water, the two bands

arrange themselves on Ekrem's long porch. Below us in the courtyard is what seems like the entire *mahala*. As we play, the neighbors dance, sing, and listen appreciatively. As Michael says, "It is a joy to play for people in Serbia. They are active and joyous listeners." This observation is borne out everywhere the band plays. The excitement in the air is palpable. Never in my wildest dreams did I ever imagine myself in the middle of such a scene, and I think to my-

self, if nothing else happens on this trip it is enough. This thought helps to sustain me during the difficulties we are to face in Guča.

We leave the mahala and reach Guča in the early evening. The festival itself is impeccably organized—days of concerts, competitions and exhibits that culminate on Sunday in a final competition of 18 bands vying for prizes. We are well taken care of, lodged, fed, and shuttled around cheerfully by our festival-appointed guide Bojana Bogičević, a willowy, ebullient young woman, who by the time of our parting, proclaims that she is "married" to us. There is hardly time to do any leisurely touring: the festival organizers feature ZU more prominently than any other foreign band there on the program, in two parades and several concerts. Michael is involved in press conferences every day, and his quotes (translated with varying accuracy) appear daily in the newspapers.

However, it is a demoralizing scene especially for those of us who have been to previous festivals. A "spring break" atmosphere pervades the air—hordes of teenagers and twenty-somethings in a serious party mood. The Serbian press remarks on this bacchanalian abandon, and it hits us that people are just as happy boogying to digital brass as to the real thing. We also find out that prices in the open-

air kafana-restaurants are 20% up from last year; no one but the elite can afford to eat and drink "under the tents"—therefore reg'l'r folk resort to the cheap beer and food stands lining the main drags. Batja Bell remarks: "The festival in the street seemed less about support and appreciation and per-

formance opportunities for artists—and more about audience self-indulgence. Not that there's anything wrong with self-indulgence—and for sure Serbian youth who have come through some really bad times need some time to just hang and forget troubles—but the amount of alcohol-induced rudeness was obnoxious at best, and scary at worst."

Some of ZU's fondest memories of festivals past are of playing under the tents for tips; band members eagerly look forward to repeating that thrill, and we venture out one night, instruments tucked under our arms. Evidence of a resurgence of ultranationalism reaches an ugly peak when a group of thuggish men hail us over to play—and as they ply us with \$100 bills, they amuse themselves by humiliating the female lead players, draping a black t-shirt over their shoulders, the shirt emblazoned with portraits of war criminals Radovan Karadžić and Ratko Mladić and the slogan SRPSKI HEROJI (Serbian heroes). We finally extricate ourselves, but are left deeply shaken by the experience.

ZU's shining moment comes at a spectacular "Moonlight" midnight concert (complete with fireworks and hot-air balloon) on Saturday in the soccer stadium. The joint set with Zlatni Prsti is supposed to be part of this program, but it does not materialize because of internal political maneuvering that leaves all of us discouraged and disappointed.

As it turns out, Zlatne Uste is given a 20-minute set by themselves in a choice spot in the concert. As they set up on stage there is an awkward and tense moment as catcalls and whistling (the Serbian form of booing) issue from the audience of thousands standing in the field below. Then, because of a shrewdly chosen playlist and excellent playing, by the second song the people's mood is transformed: singing at the top of their lungs to the popular song "Durdevdan," the crowd roars their approval. The band has rarely sounded better. Michael recalls, "For me, our performance was a turning point. All of the difficulties of being in Guča suddenly become trivial... Zlatne Uste did not utter a word on stage. With only music, we were able to positively affect the feelings of a great number of people towards America and Americans, at least temporarily. It was a significant lesson in diplomacy. I do not know if anyone in the State Department took notice of what we had done, but they should have." 🍷

Besides her EEFC General Managerial duties, Rachel MacFarlane plays baritone and sings in the Bay Area's Brass Menagerie Balkan Brass Band ([www.buzzam.com/brass](http://www.buzzam.com/brass)). For information on Zlatne Uste see [www.zlatneuste.org](http://www.zlatneuste.org).

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THANK YOU!

## BOB LEIBMAN

FROM PAGE 5

we were outdoors, we couldn't play a record player, so part of my job was cajoling musicians to come and play for me, often at 9:30 in the morning. I'd try not to impose on the same musicians all the time. Everything was clearly much less organized than now.

*What happened next with your academic pursuits?*

In 1975 I went to the University of Pennsylvania to get my Ph.D. in folklore, and I finished my exam in 1977. That's where I met Jane Young (now Dr. M. Jane Young), a folklore student who was focusing on Native American ethnolinguistics. We married in 1982, and she got a job at the University of Texas teaching folklore. I had been teaching mathematics off and on in Philly, so I got a job teaching math at Austin Community College, where I am to this day.

Between owning a house and working on it and teaching mathematics, I ended up not doing much folklore. Then my wife moved to Albuquerque and from '89 to '96, when we got divorced, I was commuting, so weekends were either here working or there visiting. Only within the last few years have I gotten back into folklore.

In 1992 I completed my dissertation, "Dancing Bears and Purple Transformations: The Structure of Dance in the Balkans," about the underlying structures of families of Balkan dances.

*What are some of your current and future projects?*

I'd like to rewrite my dissertation and get it published. I'd like to do a book on the weddings from Peštani; maybe even sell them in Peštani to the tourists. I'd like to distribute some of the other dance and music that I've recorded. The village music I'm interested in

appeals to a limited audience, and, with modern technology, it's feasible to make, say, just 30 copies of a given CD. As for the films I made, I'm still carrying my Super-8 projector to show them, and I'd like to put them on DVDs and add music.

I'm also slowly working on a CD of Jorgovan (George Caba's group) recorded live by me in the late '70s and early '80s in and around Philadelphia.

I want to continue to go back to the Balkans and did, most recently, year before last.

And finally, I want to be sure that everything I did in the past is accessible, in the most usable form I can leave it in for archives. I've already donated 20 boxes worth of women's costumes to UCLA's Fowler Museum, and I'm investigating other places.

I can't imagine I'll run out of projects.

— Interview by Julie Lancaster

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