

EAST EUROPEAN FOLKLIFE CENTER KEF TIMES

INTERVIEW WITH LAUREN BRODY



2006
WORKSHOP
DATES



MENDOCINO
JUNE 24-JULY 1

IROQUOIS SPRINGS
AUGUST 12-19



LAUREN BRODY HAS TAUGHT SINGING AND/or *gudulka* at many Balkan camps, starting with the 1978 Mendocino camp. She returns this year after an eight-year hiatus to teach basic Balkan singing at Iroquois Springs. In addition to performing music, she works as a piano tuner and lives in New York City.

Where did you grow up and how did you get involved with Eastern European music and dancing?

I grew up in New York City. My parents were folk dancers, and they took me with them to Mary Ann and Michael Herman's Folk Dance House. In the '60s, there was a teenage group there that included Steve Glaser, Ronnie Wixman and Michael Ginsburg—the original Bulgarian and South Slavic wing, and totally fanatic. Steve and Ronnie had already gone to Bulgaria in the mid-'60s and brought back stacks and stacks of Balkanton records. That's where I first heard Nadezhda Hvoineva sing, and I went, "oh, my God." (Later I got to meet her.) I put my ear to the speaker and listened over and over again, trying to imitate what I heard. Imitation really is the best teacher, I think.

When did you first go to Bulgaria?

I went to Bulgaria in 1969 for the first time during college (CCNY-Uptown; music major; I was a pianist and my second instrument was violin). I took a semester off and stayed alone in Bulgaria for a month. I didn't speak a word of Bulgarian and stuck to the cities, primarily Sofia and Smoljan. Sofia felt like Mars—hardly any cars or foreigners. I went to the Institute of Music, met Nikolai Kaufman, and he sent me by bus to Smoljan with a letter addressed to the Director of the Rhodopa ensemble, Atanas Kapitanov. I later bought a *gudulka* and learned a little about how to play it. I bought records, five huge boxes, everything I could find, thinking that's what Bulgarian music was all about.

When I got home I started listening like mad and tried to learn Bulgarian. At first I was just transcribing sounds. Then Steve Glaser, a total genius in every way, sat me down and gave me the basics of Bulgarian grammar. Also, some

friends and I started [the women's singing group] Zhenska Pesna in about 1970.

At some point you lived in Los Angeles, right?

After I graduated from college in June 1970, I decided to go west. While in Croatia in 1969 I had met Tony Shay [director of Aman], and I had a standing invitation to come out and join Aman. So I did, and that's when we formed [the

Bitov band] Pitu Guli—me, Mark [Levy], Stewart Mennin, Ed Leddel, David Shochat and Chris Yeseta. (Stu Brotman was in Europe at the time.) I was playing *gudulka*, but tinkering with accordion, too.

And then back to Bulgaria?

At the end of '71, Karin de Vries and I went to Bulgaria to attend the Koprivshitsa festival. We hung around with Yves Moreau, attended the Ohrid festival in Macedonia and met up with Bob Leibman and Steve Kotansky.

In September, Karin, Yves and I went to Bulgaria. In September, Yves took us to the Radio Orches-

tra's rehearsal. Kosta Kolev was director at that time; and I remember meeting Varimezov, Vulchev and Velichkov. Yves whispered something into Kolev's ear, and the next thing we knew, Karin and I were at Radio Sofia in Studio One, recording three two-voiced songs accompanied by "Trakiiskata Troika"!

In the interim, the Bulgarian government gave me a scholarship to study folk music at the conservatory under Professor Stoyan Dzhudzhev. I also wandered around, recording *gudulka* players from many different regions and trying to take a few lessons. I realized pretty quickly that I was getting a lot of male attention that I didn't want. I really couldn't take lessons, because being alone in a room with a musician was not going to lead to the kind of lessons I wanted. So the way I learned this music was basically from listening and watching. I'd been a pianist since I was a kid, played violin and had a good set of ears.

What did you do after returning to New York?



Lauren Brody

ALBERT J. WINN

LAUREN BRODY TO PAGE 3

FROM THE EEFC BOARD

A BIG HELLO FROM YOUR EEFC Board of Directors. 2005 was a busy year for the board. At our spring meeting held in March 2005 in Redwood City, Ca., we were faced with the possibility of not returning to Camp Hi-Rock in the Berkshire Mountains for the East Coast Balkan Music & Dance Workshop. The camp was facing legal action from the local town government and camp officials had to remove our dance floor, which we had installed in 2003. It was unclear whether or not the camp would receive the necessary operating permits to allow our workshop to go forward. We spent much of the meeting trying to understand the legal issues involved and making contingency plans for another workshop site.

By June, we still had no clear information from the Hi-Rock management as to whether or not our workshop could, or would be permitted to, take place. Fortunately, in the fall of 2004, board members Linnea Mandell and Denys Carrillo had started to assemble a list of camps on the East Coast that might be appropriate for our workshop. In June, Emily Cohen and I took a trip from Brooklyn to visit a camp that seemed a good candidate for us. Upon arriving at Iroquois Springs in the Catskills, we were immediately impressed with the excellent upkeep of the grounds, the cleanliness of the kitchen, the attractiveness of the cabins, the ample program space and the straightforward communication we got from the director of the camp.

In two very long phone conferences, we weighed all the pros and cons of moving the location of the camp. One major area of concern was the increase in rental cost for Iroquois Springs, which was significantly higher than Camp Hi-Rock. However, we realized that Iroquois Springs was charging the going rate comparable with other camps on the East Coast. Faced with the uncertainty over the situation at Camp Hi-

Rock and despite the increase in operating costs, we decided to make the move to Iroquois Springs.

I'm happy to report that the move to Iroquois Springs was heartily and enthusiastically applauded by our community. The reviews were terrific and first-year moving problems were minimal. We had a great camp and we would like to thank Brian Cohen and his staff at Iroquois Springs as well as all the people in our community that make camp happen, including Rachel MacFarlane, the EEFC General Manager, and Nancy Butowski, the East Coast Site Manager.

One of the important jobs the EEFC Board does is read every evaluation that we receive from workshop attendees. Your feedback is important to us, and we encourage you to keep us informed as to what you like and don't like about the workshops and suggestions for improvements. Overall, we received very positive reviews for both the Mendocino and Iroquois Springs workshops.

Attendance was a bit down at Mendocino last year, but at this writing, the workshop is full for 2006. Because of the move to Iroquois Springs and the lower-than-expected attendance at Mendocino as well as increased costs for food and materials, we ran a deficit in 2005 (about \$20K) for the first time in many years. Because of this, we needed to implement a tuition increase for this year's workshops to offset the deficit and to bring our income up to match our actual expenses. We are also very grateful for the extra donations our community has made toward the deficit, the increase in memberships we've received and the contribution Zlatne Uste made from their annual Golden Festival in New York City.

In other news, the EEFC Board welcomed EEFC member and attorney Michael Sensor of Hockessin, Del., to the board. His term began in fall 2005 and we have already put his legal and financial expertise to good use. We would like to thank outgoing board member Jerry Summers for his service to the board.



The Board in Brooklyn. L-R from top: Matthew Fass, Michael Sensor, Linnea Mandell, Gitry Heydebrand, Rachel MacFarlane, Denys Carrillo, Emily Cohen, Barbara Babin

In the fall, the board met in Brooklyn, N.Y. at Emily Cohen's house, and attended to board elections first. Barbara Babin, Linnea Mandell and Matthew Fass continue in their roles as president, secretary and board liaison, respectively. New board member Michael Sensor assumed the role of treasurer. The board spent much of the meeting discussing the longer-range goals of the organization as well as the vision of our organization. We decided that we do what we do very well, but we need to keep an eye on operating costs and the budget. We established long-term goals of hiring a paid development director/grant writer, establishing a stable East Coast location (which we hope we've found at Iroquois Springs), creating a fully realized web site, looking at new fundraising opportunities, and establishing a mechanism for planned giving, including creating an endowment for the East European Folklife Center.

We would like to thank you all for your continuing support of our efforts to make our Balkan Music & Dance Workshops satisfying, engaging, educational and great fun year after year.

See you at camp!

*Matthew Fass
EEFC Board Liaison*



Kef Times is published annually 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 510/547-1118, send e-mail to office@eeffc.org, or visit our web site at www.eefc.org.

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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.

ADVICE FOR STARTING A BAND

By Matt Smith

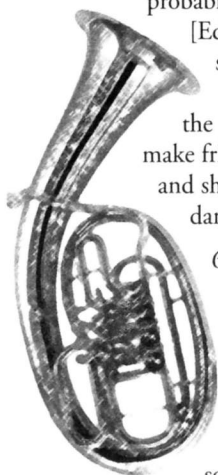
MATT SMITH, BARITONE PLAYER for New York's Zlatne Uste, posted the following to the EEFC discussion list-serv in March 2005. He was responding to a list member named Jane, who wanted to start a brass band in Montreal and had requested advice. With a couple of exceptions, these tips pertain to more kinds of ensembles than just brass bands.

1. Try to wean yourself from songbooks, sheet music, and transcriptions. This is difficult, but I find that when I learn a tune by ear I retain it easier and faster than when I try to memorize something that is written down. It also opens up 90% of the repertoire that has never been transcribed, even at its source.
2. Rehearse frequently, weekly if possible.
3. Perform as soon as you feel you are competent to appear in front of people. This keeps the energy going.
4. Come to Balkan Camp (excuse me, I mean the EEFC Balkan Music & Dance Work-

shops). What sheet music is available can best be obtained there. There is a brass ensemble there every year.

5. Make friends with Yves Moreau (you've probably already done this).

[Ed. note: This tip is specific to Montreal, where Yves lives...but the point applies anyway: make friends with any movers and shakers in your local folk dance scene.]



6. Aim to structure your group as similarly as possible to the instrumentation of the culture you are emulating. For example, if you are going for a Serbian sound, you eventually want three trumpets, three baritone horns, a tuba, a tupan drummer, a snare drummer, and perhaps a saxophone. This can be a long-term goal. Other cultures use smaller ensembles—trumpet, clarinet, accordion, and tuba or bass can work.

7. Some folks on the list may save their sheet music and may even know where it is. They may be willing to send you a copy. (I would be, too, but I think I've lost mine.)

8. When you feel ready to perform in public, try to get a slot at either the ZU Golden Festival in New York (almost always in mid-January, during the US's Martin Luther King, Jr., weekend) or Boston Balkan Night (generally in mid-March).

9. Organize your own music festival in Montreal and give yourself a prime billing slot. (Avoid winter, though.)

10. Don't fear playing by ear. Don't fear making unintentional alterations to the source material. This is part of the process.

11. Aim high. Perform in public. Get gigs. Record an album. Go to Serbia. Having goals keeps everyone excited.

12. Talk regularly about what your goals are and where you all think you are in relation to those goals.

13. Play well. If you can't play well, play loud. Good luck. ♫

LAUREN BRODY

FROM PAGE 1

I went to grad school in ethnomusicology for a year in Binghamton, but I realized the employment prospects were not terrific. Eventually, I decided to become a piano tuner. I went to a trade school for a year (1976–77) in Boston, then came back to New York and hung up a shingle (more like a nail) and went to work. I continued with Zhenska Pesna, and shortly afterward got involved with klezmer music. I had become close with Michael Alpert, who introduced me to Henry Sapoznik. We started the klezmer band Kapelye and started performing. That's really what started me on my accordion trajectory. [Ed. note: Lauren toured and recorded with this pioneering klezmer revival band for more than 10 years.]

In the late 1980s I moved to Mill Valley. I started playing accordion with Hector Bezanis on *gajda* and Dwight Rowe on *tambura*. I just kept studying on my own, ear to the speaker. Much later, Peter Ralchev came to Mendocino, and I had my first accordion lessons. I confess that I hated all the modern chords he used.

Tell us about your 1998 compilation CD of

Bulgarian traditional music, "Song of the Crooked Dance."

My first husband, Ljuben Tachev, had worked at Radio Sofia. He told me that the station had tons of 78s but had decided to purge them from the archives. They just piled them up in the lobby. People were walking on them, breaking them; getting rid of that part of the history because it wasn't politically correct. I learned a lot about censorship and what it meant in people's daily lives from incidents like this. My husband opened my eyes to what went on under the surface. He had a bunch of 78 recordings. I listened to them and was totally shocked; it was a completely different kind of music. Who knew? By that time I was aware of censorship and how restrictive things were, and what kind of image the government wanted to project. I went to *mehanas* [folk pubs] where ensembles were playing restricted repertoire. One week on the radio they would get rid of all the Turkish references. Then they would decide that it's not "Bulgarian" to have thirds [harmonies] in Macedonian songs. Anything that contradicted the homogenous, happy village image, with texts [like] "we're happy to work on the collective farm," was taboo.

As a result of all of this I started thinking,

"There's a popular vernacular music in Macedonia, in Greece, in Serbia and Croatia. Why isn't there one in Bulgaria?" The questions I set out to answer were: what [music] had there been, and how did the cycle get broken?

In the late '80s I received a Fulbright to study the Bulgarian commercial recording industry before 1950, and in 1990 I spent a year in Bulgaria doing research. I sought out private collections and also got a fair amount from various archives. I discovered that some of the musicians had never even heard their own recordings. The most heartwarming story was about Vulkana Stoyanova. We had met at the Koutev Ensemble in 1969–70, but in 1998 she was living alone and neglected in Sofia. When I visited and gave her copies I had made of her earliest recordings, from the time she was 17, she almost cried. That one moment made all my work worthwhile. It's too bad that most of the artists had died before I could do the same for them. I guess it's a very small token in consideration of something that has given my life such richness. [Ed. note: "Song of the Crooked Dance" was released by Shanachi's Yazoo Records and is readily available online.]

LAUREN BRODY TO PAGE 4

FROM THE EDITOR

Out of the 2500+ readers the *Kef Times* goes to, only about 500 people can attend camp in any given year. That means most of you missed camp last year, as I did. But through following the eefc.org discussion listserv and participating in musical and dance endeavors in our hometowns, a much larger community stays in touch. I've noticed that even friends whose last Balkan camp attendance was 10 or more years ago tend to retain a sweet spot in their hearts for camp. Amidst busy jobs and hopping family lives with young children, elderly parents and a host of other commitments, they whisper to themselves each spring that this may be the year they can get back to camp. Especially when they see the remarkable teaching lineups that the organization continues, year after year, to present.

As this issue goes to press, the West Coast camp is full with a waiting list,

and East Coast is filling up. But if you're like me, these contents will whet your appetite for camp, with photo spreads from the 2005 camps, including the beautiful new Iroquois Springs site, and "slice of experience" views from the 2005 Kef Scholars. There's a profile of Lauren Brody, who has taught at Balkan camps since the very first Mendocino camp in 1978 and returns this year as a teacher after an absence of eight years, and whose story sheds light on the larger Balkan-music-and-dance-in-the-U.S. scene. Also, in addition to news on EEFC board doings and memberships, and new recordings from members of our community, you'll find some tips we found helpful on how to "do" a band or musical group where you live. And, although words fall far short, here are some words about our recent losses of Dick Crum and other luminaries in the community.

Julie Lancaster

LAUREN BRODY

FROM PAGE 3

How did you come to work with Bulgarian Rom saxophonist Yuri Yunakov and Bulgarian accordionist Ivan Milev?

I was so entrenched in the bitov style that in '94 or '95 I still had no clue about wedding music. I'd heard of Ib-rjam [Papassov] and I'd been to Stambolovo, but I still didn't know who most of the people were. I remember Carol Silverman calling me excitedly in 1994 to tell me that "Yuri Yunakov" was coming to East Coast Camp. I said, "who's Yuri Yunakov?" Of course,

at camp, I met Yuri. Back in New York, at a rehearsal for a small performance at Hungarian House, Yuri discovered that I played keyboard. He said, "You play keyboard? I need you!" I had never played a bass line, so I went and bought every cassette I could find, and put my ears back to the speaker. I played with the ensemble from 1998 to 2003, including the Gypsy Caravan tour and an Australian tour.

Ivan Milev, who had been Yuri's mentor, joined Yuri's ensemble for a short while. One day, Milev decided to

LAUREN BRODY TO PAGE 12

WANT TO ADVERTISE YOUR BALKAN/

Eastern European folk-related product, service or event to the 2500 households that receive *Kef Times*? We will accept advertising (camera ready display ads only; no classifieds) for the annual edition (deadline: January 15, 2007). Please contact the EEFC office (office@eefc.org, or 510/547-1118) for ad sizes and rates.

OBITUARIES

DICK CRUM WAS PIVOTAL—NOT ONLY TO the folk dance movement worldwide, but also to the particular zest for and fascination with Balkan music and dance that expresses itself as the East European Folklife Center.

So on the morning of Dec. 13, 2005, when Ceil Worth of Minneapolis informed the EEFC discussion listserv that Dick had died at home (in Los Angeles) the day before, the listserv blazed into action. Over the following days, listserv members posted one testimony after another about how Dick had touched their lives.

Members wrote about how he'd changed the direction of their lives and careers. They recalled a treasured time with him or said they knew him only as a legend. They wrote about how Dick had introduced a staggering number of the folk dances in the recreational repertoire, and how his precise and humor-filled teaching style had transformed their relationships with dancing or teaching. About his cranial capacity, brilliant scholarship, prodigious memory and gusto for research. About his strong tastes, and that he was a great cook. About his demons and his wisdom. His kindness, openness and generosity. His outrageous humor and twinkling eyes.

There is an excellent biographical summary of Dick's life and evolution as a folk dancer and linguist, including lists of his publications, dances he taught and some of his Crumisms (e.g., "your other left foot") on Dick Oakes' International Folk Dance Resource site. Go to phantomranch.net, click on "folk dancing" and then "teacher biographies." To read the EEFC listserv posts, go to eefc.org, click on "news lists," then search the discussion list archive.

In 1999 the EEFC board presented Dick Crum a certificate recognizing his lifetime of service to Balkan Music and Dance and his contribution to understanding of cultures. He died at age 77.

Michael Alpert wrote, "There was no one like him, and there will never again be anyone who saw and experienced his particular slice of history and the human experience and had the awesome perspective on it he did. And was able to articulate it so well, so wittily, so inspiringly, and to so many different kinds of people in so many different contexts. There is just a huge empty space in the world, in all of us, that he leaves."

As Martha Forsyth summed it up, "He did much, much more than teach us specific dances—he showed us the way. Pointed our attention in the direction of Balkan dances and music, taught us not only specific dances, but a special way of looking at those dances. Taught us the words to the songs, taught us to pay attention to as much of the whole culture as we could get access to. In a very important way he taught us not

OBITUARIES TO PAGE 5

FROM THE 2005 KEF SCHOLARS

EAST COAST

Claire Heitlinger
Brooklyn, N.Y.

The Scene: Golden Fest 2005
The Temptress: Kristina [Vaskys, see *Kef Times* v. 10]
The Promise: “Balkan Camp? OK, OK. I’ll apply for the scholarship.”
The Result: I got it. And “it” was a whole lot more than I was expecting.

When I told people I was coming to Balkan Camp as a Kef Scholar, there was much rejoicing. But it was not so much rejoicing over my status as it was over the mention of camp itself. People’s eyes would light up and they would utter vague statements like “so fun” or simply say “Balkan Camp” dreamily, as if trying to conjure the entity through the incantation of its name. I began to wonder, what is this Balkan Camp that I’ve gotten myself into? And what kinds of things happen at this camp to make people go so gaga in its wake?

And now I understand. Now I can join the chorus of those who utter “Balkan Camp” and do not explain any further because simple adjectives can’t capture the absolute capacity for massiveness of this particular yearly phenomenon. However, as “Balkan Camp” is only two words and this article is supposed to be 300–500, I will attempt to elaborate.

Camp swept me off my feet and then dropped me back in New York with a bit of a bruise. In my memory, it resonates as one continual, very full day. The day began with coffee and ended with coffee. In between, along with more coffee, were lots of things I didn’t know I already loved. Among them, Croatian singing, the kaval, the doumbek and Bulgarian love songs. I was expecting to take dance classes. I ended up banging away on a doumbek in the middle of the Transcarp Orchestra. Even the exhaustion could not stop me. This day brought people whose names I could hardly keep straight in the blur at the time, but who are now firmly attached to fond memories.

In all this fun, however, there is one part of camp that stands above all else. It may not be the most Balkan element of camp, but it was certainly something I don’t get to do on a regular basis. The Golf Cart. Yes, in a wise decision to take the keys away from Matt Moran, I was given the pleasure of taking you all home after late nights at the Kafana. Riding swiftly down the hills to the cabins in the darkness, fun was had by all. And, as the sun

began to rise, I would stumble to bed for a nap before doing it all over again . . .

Until next year, Claire

WEST COAST

Debby Bowinsky
Denver, Colo.

I want to thank the EEFC Board and all of you who contribute to and support the Kef Scholarship program for giving me the opportunity to attend the Mendocino Balkan Camp last summer. I am incredibly grateful to have been able to participate in such a wonderful event.

For many years I had been told by both friends and acquaintances that I must find a way to get to camp—that it was like nothing else I would ever experience, and that I would LOVE it. Well, they were absolutely correct! I hope I will be able to return, if not this year then certainly in the near future. My week at camp is an experience I will never forget and was filled with memories I treasure.

As a folk dancer, performer, and teacher, I have attended dance camps previously. Many of those have been wonderful, but none of them prepared me for the incredible and complete immersion in Balkan music and dance that is Balkan camp. I wish I could have cloned myself in order to take advantage of all the opportunities and classes that appealed to me. As it was, I spent most of my time in the dance classes with Joe and Ahmet and Michael. I tried a beginning singing class that I really enjoyed and which was great fun, but I soon felt that my brain would explode with all the new information it was trying to assimilate. But what a glorious explosion it would have been!

As it worked out, I stuck with most of the dance classes (at least when I wasn’t too exhausted to move) during the day and soaked up the music in the dance hall in the evenings. I even made it to the Kafana a few times. Every time I recall that week last summer I break out in a grin and think about how special and important the experience was for me. Where else can one walk through the beautiful woods and hear strains of music coming from every direction being played on every sort of instrument?

Since camp, I have taught several of the dances I learned at folk dance groups here in Colorado—both in Denver and Boulder. I worked with the Boulder International Folk Dancers to host Ahmet, who taught at our an-

nual weekend dance workshop in late March, and we were excited to have Jesse Manno and James Hoskins (among others) playing live music for the workshop party. I’ve also been strongly advocating for live music nights at both Denver and Boulder folk dance groups. There’s nothing else like the energy and synergy that develops when great musicians and avid dancers begin to feed off one another during an evening of music and dance! 🍷

OBITUARIES

FROM PAGE 4

just the dances, but HOW TO LEARN the dances—by the way he broke them down, by those ‘little’ phrases like ‘mixed pickles’ and ‘get your papers here.’ Even people who never saw him teach are affected by his teaching, because it has percolated through the whole structure of Balkan dancing as we know it, and ‘set the tone.’ Thank you, Dick, thank you.”

* * *

EARLIER IN DECEMBER, DON SPARKS died unexpectedly in his home in Los Angeles, apparently by accident. He was 47 years old.

The following is from Mark Forry’s Dec. 5 post to the EEFC discussion listserv:

Don was a talented musician and dancer, well known to folk dance communities in southern California and beyond. A tireless performer, he worked for years with the Aman Folk Ensemble, where he was a director, dance soloist, and staff musician. He was particularly active with Hungarian traditional music and dance, and played frequently for *táncház* gatherings with his own band or accompanying others. He was also a frequent participant at EEFC camps, where (among other things) he handled instrument checkout and maintenance, and played music avidly with anyone who asked.

His close friend Miamon Miller said, “In our corner of the world, Don was a stand-out, a true example of the natively talented musician and dancer, unafraid to try new things and be successful in almost all of them. On top of that, for all those who were blessed to know him on a broader level, he was a truly nice person with a gentle spirit.”

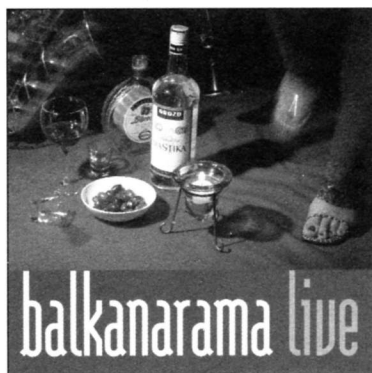
He is survived by his wife Beata and son Jason in Hungary, his father in Texas, and his sister in Los Angeles.

All of us who knew him and played with him and danced with him will miss him greatly.

OBITUARIES TO PAGE 12

NEW AND NOTABLE BALKAN RECORDINGS

New recordings and books by EEFC associates, including workshop campers, staff and teachers, and other EEFC supporters,



Balkanarama

Balkanarama Live

For its third CD, the popular Seattle band recorded a dozen of its favorite songs before a live studio audience in one take, with no overdubs. The result: more than an hour's worth of sizzling dance numbers and soulful ballads, mostly of Rom origin, from the southern Balkans. Performers: Amir Arslanagic, **Michael Gordon**, Eva Moon, **Suzana Niemann**, **Matty Noble**, Ferko "Freddy" Saxmanov and Kevin Stevens.

Order from <http://balkanarama.com>, <http://cdbaby.com> or Balkanarama, 18311 NE 99th Way, Redmond WA 98052.

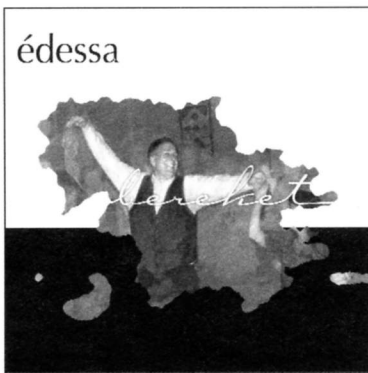
Édessa

Bereket

Happily committed to playing music from the southern Balkans and beyond, Édessa covers a lot of musical territory, ranging from the trance/ambient sounds of Épirus to the high-energy dance grooves of Bulgarian wedding music. Rooted in the interwoven traditions of the Balkans, Near East and of the Roma people, the music of Édessa is satisfyingly complex and allusive-full of soul and improvisation. This mostly California-based band has been busy working the ethnic underground dance scene, playing for enthusiastic revelers across the US, and as far away as Montreal, Hawaii and Japan. Édessa is: **George Chittenden**, **Ari Langer**, **Lise Liepman**, **Paul Brown** & **Dan Auvil**, with special guests **Christos Govetas**, **Brenna MacCrimmon**, **Eva Salina Primack**, **Tobias Roberson**, **Eric Oberthaler** & **Bryan Bowman**.

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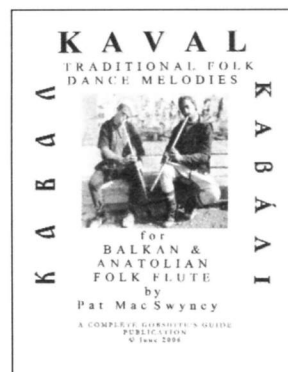
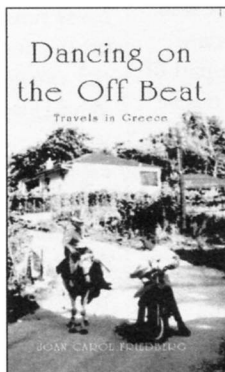
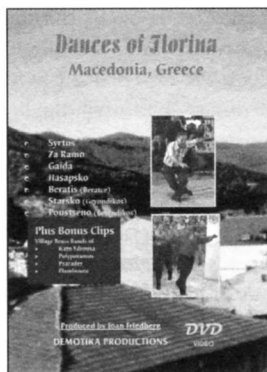
Shot on location in villages of Florina, Northwestern Greece. Includes dances: Syrtos, Zaramo, Gaida, Hasapsko, Beratis, Starsko Poustenio (Gerondikos), and Poustenio (Levendikos). Total time: 31:20. Bonus clips: Brass Bands of Florina, featuring bands from the villages of Polypotamos, Psarades, and Kato Ydrousa. Total time: 14:08.

To order, send a check for \$29.95, plus \$1.50 shipping and handling. Total: \$31.45 (International shipping will be additional) to: Demotika Productions, PO Box 983, Topanga CA 90290. For further information, e-mail Joan Friedberg at demotika@earthlink.net

Joan Carol Friedberg

Dancing on the Off Beat: Travels in Greece

The Greece of fun-loving waiters, sun-drenched beaches, the breaking of plates, and big fat weddings only scratches the surface of the real Greece. In this account of a woman traveling solo throughout the Greek mainland, **Joan Carol Friedberg** uncovers a glimpse into the tragic history of modern Greece as it is re-



flected in the music, and she provides a context for understanding that country's compelling and unique musical expressions. In 1982, the author spent three months traveling in the Balkans, through Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Greece, and Turkey. Drawn to Greece's traditional music and dances, she returned to Greece in 1993. During several subsequent trips, as a foreigner in search of Greece's village music and dance traditions, she shares her observations with humor, clarity, insight and wisdom.

This book is available online at xlibris.com/bookstore/bookdisplay.asp?bookid=27733, or see joancarolfriedberg.com or write demotika@earthlink.net

Pat MacSwyney

Kaval: Traditional Folk Dance Melodies for Balkan & Anatolian Folk Flute

A collection of 75 transcriptions of traditional dance melodies from Kosovo, Montenegro, Albania, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Romania, Greece, Pontos, Turkey, Armenia & Kurdistan as played by regional kaval, dzhamara, floyera & fyell players. Includes photos and comprehensive text on the various regions, history, styles, fingering charts and more. Transcribed for C & D kaval but transcriptions are suitable for other instruments as well.

Order from: Pat MacSwyney: 25554 Via Jardin, Valencia, CA 91355; macswyney@aol.com. Price \$25 includes shipping; checks payable to Pat MacSwyney.

Mediterranean

Mezze: Music from the Balkans and the Middle East

From its beginnings as a class at the College of Santa Fe to its eventual evolution into a performance ensemble, Mediterranean's collective enthusiasm for music from the Balkans and the

AND PUBLICATIONS

all of whose names are noted in bold type in each entry. Please address further entries to the Editor, Kef Times.



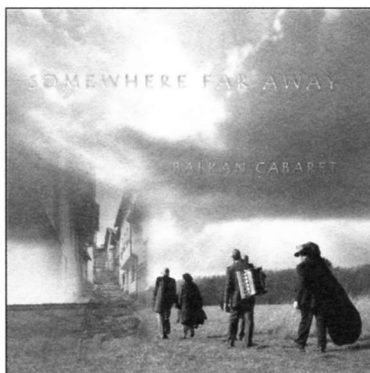
Middle East has had an infectious and joyful effect on its audiences. It is traditional music played with a contemporary sensibility. The band presents this diverse music in the spirit of respect for the cultures and the teachers we learned them from. Mediterranean is: **Polly Tapia Ferber**, Kelly Khun, Unnur Larusdottir, James Maldonado, Keith Prather, Nick Petree, **Willa Roberts**, Elisabeth Ryan, Kes Scudday and **Jerry Weimer**, with guest **Eva Salina Primack**.

To order, send a check for \$9 + \$1 shipping to: Polly Tapia Ferber, College of Santa Fe, 1600 St. Michael's Dr., Santa Fe, NM 87505

Balkan Cabaret

Somewhere Far Away

In its second CD, the members of Balkan Cabaret had a common desire to revisit and perform those wonderful Balkan standards heard in cafes, many from over 50 years ago. We continue our journey into the passing world of *starogradski* (old city songs of the Balkans). We have been inspired by many warmly received performance experiences and motivated by the irrepressible emotion this music releases in so many listeners. The unexpected generosity of our ethnic audiences brought us a wealth of



music sources—mostly old, but some new—with their hope that we would perform their beloved songs. Balkan Cabaret is: **Joe Finn**, **Michael Lawson**, **Steve Ramsey**, **Mary Sherhart** and **Rich Thomas**; with guest artists **Dragi Spasovski**, **John Morovich**, Marko Vukadinović and **Polly Tapia Ferber**.

To order, send \$15 plus \$2 shipping to Joe Finn, P.O. Box 2075, Port Townsend, WA 98368; for further info e-mail joeanddenys@cablespeed.com; or see www.balkancabaret.com

Rumen "Sali" Shopov

Soul of the Mahala

VOR CD2006

Rumen Shopov, faculty member at recent West Coast Balkan camps and balkanalia!, has recorded "Soul of the Mahala," at home with his friends and family in Gotse Delchev, Bulgaria. The CD includes Romani, Bulgarian, Macedonian, Turkish, and Greek music played on tambura, violin, accordion, tapan, doumbek, clarinet, saxophone, kaval, gaida, traps, bass, guitar, zurna, and synthesizer (not all at once!) and features Rumen's son Angel Shopov, a student at the Plovdiv Conservatory and a rising star in the Bulgarian music scene. Co-produced

by Voice of Roma (VOR), an organization working to improve conditions for Roma.

Order from: VOR: Voice of Roma, P.O. Box 514, Sebastopol, CA 95473; \$16 + \$3 shipping; voiceofroma@comcast.net; www.voiceofroma.com

Mary Sherhart & Omer Pobrić

Srce Puno Bosne: Amerika i Sevdah, Mary i Omer / Heart Full of Bosnia: America and Sevdah, Mary and Omer

Recorded during July, 2005, at the Sevdah Insitute outside of Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, this recording features the vocals of singer **Mary Sherhart** and the instrumental artistry of living legend **Omer Pobrić**. The title track was written by Mr. Pobrić especially for Mary to open the second Sevdalinka Festival of Bosnia and Herzegovina in July of 2005, part of the Bačarska Nights Festival in Sarajevo. The CD also features a selection of classic sevdalinke.

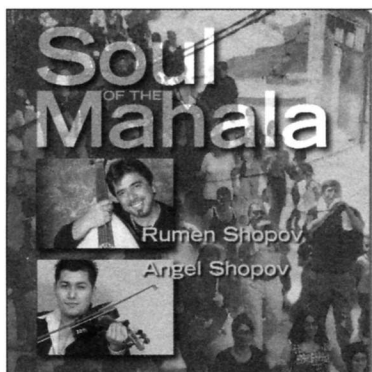
Order information: \$15 per CD plus \$2 postage for first CD; \$1 per additional CD, checks payable to: Mary Sherhart, 2716 4th Avenue W., Seattle, WA 98119, 206/285-7010

Together Again: Legends of Bulgarian Wedding Music

Traditional Crossroads 4330

This CD features a historic reunion of the Romani superstars of Bulgarian wedding music, Ivo Papasov, **Yuri Yunakov**, Neshko Neshev, and Salif Ali, showcasing their virtuosic technique and inventive improvisation. Also performing are **Kalin Kirilov**, **Carol Silverman**, and **Seido Salifoski**.

To order, send \$16 (postage included) to Carol Silverman, 3150 Portland St. Eugene OR 97405; or see www.traditionalcrossroads.com

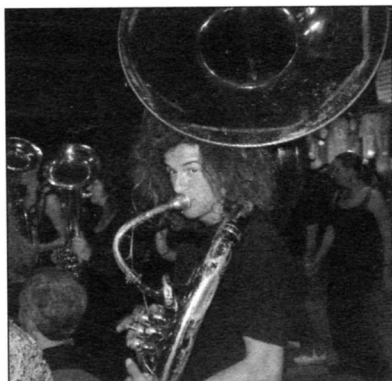


MENDOCINO 2005

PHOTOS BY KATHY FORS, BILL LANPHIER & ERROL STRELNIOFF



Jamie Webster & Amy Mills shake it in the Kafana



Tuba Dude Evan Stuart



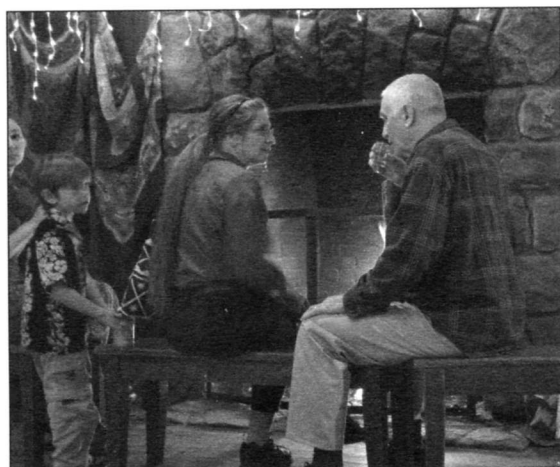
Brass band student ensemble: don't mess with this rhythm section



The Swimmin' Hole: best sun in the Woodlands



Our Mendo Kids



Ann Norton & Jerry Duke enjoy a quiet moment in the Kafana



Even when the music is sizzling in the dance hall, it's nice to take a break in the cool forest air

IROQUOIS SPRINGS 2005

ALL PHOTOS BY MARGARET LOOMIS



Melina Salifoska & Daniel Kisslinger



Golden voices of BG: Nina Kavardjikova & Donka Koleva



Nikolay Kolev's Bitov Vortex



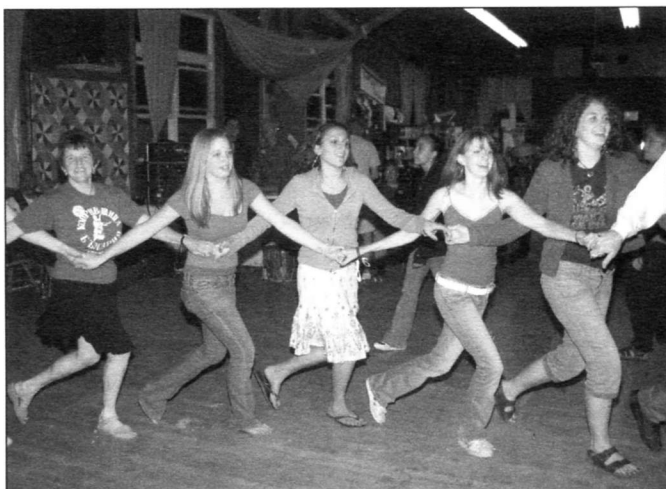
Auction Night: Czinka Panna's Dancing Dogs



Our Iroquois Springs Kids



Tamburica makes us happy!



Cut that rug, galz!



Mal Stein's scenic doumbek class

5th Annual PHOTO DVD OF BALKAN CAMP 2005 (IROQUOIS SPRINGS) NOW AVAILABLE!

What a gorgeous new site, what wonderful music, classes, parties, friends, weather, food... If your memory is a little hazy, or even if it isn't, this is an easy way to recapture some of those great camp moments—or if you've never been, to get an idea of what it was like!

This DVD contains 837 photos, including

- evening parties and kafanas
- music and dance classes in action
- group sing and culture corner
- circus-theme auction on Monday
- all classes performing at Friday's student concert
- Friday afternoon soccer game
- Friday afternoon lamb roast
- candid and semi-candid shots throughout the week
- scenic views of Iroquois Springs
- many spontaneous moments!

This photo DVD was produced as a fundraiser; all proceeds go to EEFC. It is available for \$25 plus \$2 shipping/handling in the U.S., from:

Margaret Loomis
10206 Day Ave.
Silver Spring, MD 20910
Phone: 301/565-0539
Email: mloom@mac.com

THANK YOU FOR

your generous support of the East European Folklife Center! Our 2005 drive brought in a total of \$29,703, with 416 of your households joining in support of EEFC's programs. As of this printing, our 2006 drive has already brought in over \$25,000. Help us exceed our current goal of \$30,000—join or rejoin EEFC today! Please also consider an additional donation to our Kef Scholarship or Dick Crum Memorial Scholarship programs, or to our general operating fund. Check out our website for a current list of members!

EEFC membership is based on the calendar year. If you're not sure when you renewed your membership, e-mail the office at office@eefc.org.

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address _____

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All contributions are fully tax deductible

*OR pay by credit card using our secure PayPal site via www.eefc.org!

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MENDOCINO (CALIFORNIA) JUNE 24-JULY 1

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LAUREN BRODY

FROM PAGE 4

form his own band, and invited me to play keyboard and sing with him, as well as with Yuri. There's a wise saying in Bulgarian that goes something like this: "if you try sitting on two chairs at once, you'll wind up on the ground." Even so, it was a thrilling experience playing with both of them.

Tell me about your recent klezmer work.

We have an all-female, "all-star" klezmer band named Mikveh (referring to the traditional Jewish women's ritual bath). The band formed

in 1998 for a gala production of "The Vagina Monologues" and we have continued to play, record and tour in the U.S. and Europe.

What's new?

I'm now in court reporting school. It's so hard that it's like trying to play accordion and trumpet at the same time while cooking and reciting the Constitution. I guess I've never been one to shrink from a challenge.

And, I'm really looking forward to being at Balkan camp again after being away for so many years.

Interview by Julie Lancaster

OBITUARIES

FROM PAGE 5

LONGTIME TAMBURASH JOSEPH VALENTICH of Monroeville, Pa. died on Jan. 7, 2006 at the age of 79.

He began playing tamburitza music with his brothers at the age of 10 and went on to join the Tamburitians, graduating from Duquesne University in 1951. He continued to perform for many years and also crafted strings for tamburitza instruments.

He had a long career as a mechanical engineer and wrote two engineering books. He is survived by his wife Rose, four children and four grandchildren.

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