



# the San Francisco Accordion Club

## August • 2010 NEWSLETTER



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### ATG International Highlights

The ATG (Accordionists & Teachers Guild Intl.) annual conference was held at the Santa Clara Hilton Hotel from July 21–25. There were competitions for very young accordionists as well as the Anthony Galla-Rini International Competition for Classical Accordion. Four contestants competed for 3 days in the later category. A panel of 5 judges determined the winners. Results, announced Saturday evening during the final concert were:

**First Place**—*Gao Yicheng (China)*,  
**Second Place**—*Martynas Levickis (Lithuania)*,  
**Third Place**—*Jelena Milojevic (Serbia/Canada)*  
**Fourth Place**—*Michael Bridge (Canada)*

Awards were also given out to the very young competitors in about 8 or 9 categories. **Liam & Quinn Collins**, students of **Gao Yicheng** (the First Place Winner in the Galla-Rini Competition) captured 1/2 of the awards. The rest of the awards went to **Alexandra Reekie**, daughter of **Lionel Reekie**, who performed Thursday evening.

Each evening before the dinner break there were performances in the lobby or some of the side rooms. On Thursday Evening *the Great Morgani*, aka Frank Lima played for an hour standing on a pedestal in one of his famous body suits, made of hibiscus patterned cloth. Frank is a good performer and an unusual visual treat.

Some of the workshops were: *V-Accordion Made Easy* with Cory Pesaturo and Steve Albini; *Understanding and Playing Balkan Rhythms* with Dee Langley; *50s and 60s Music* with Bruce Gassman; *The Life of Anthony Galla-Rini* with Esther Lanting; *The World of French Musette*

with Bernard Metais; *Technique & Performance* with Alexander Sevastian; and a special screening by Steve Mobia of his film Documentary *Behind the Bellows*. All of these workshops were fun and informative.

On exhibit each day were accordions by *Roland*, *Giuletti* and *Borsini*. You could try them out and purchase if you wanted. Rolands newest FR-7X V is a digital unit which can recreating the sounds of everything from typical accordion voices, Bayan, and many different musical instruments one might find in an orchestra, as well as a jazz voice option. This model comes with a USB port which allows the owner to upgrade all of the newest voices via

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*The Great Morgani as Hibiscus*

the Internet, as they are sampled and ready to access. These new age instruments aren't for everyone but **Cory Pesaturo** was able to demonstrate his amazing virtuosity on them both in the hallways each day and also during a concert on the last evening. **Alexander Sevastian** played a great duet with **Cory** during Saturday's Concert, and there was also a very nice surprise when Cory asked Michael Bridge (4th place winner in this years Galla-Rini Competition) to him improvise with him, wowing the crowd.

Music CDs by various accordion artists were available to purchase every day at the conference, and there were performances by many different well known accordionists during the concert each evening, featuring on one evening our club's local **ACE** (Accordion Chamber Ensemble), **Absolut Accord** and also the two festival orchestras, in which several of our members participated. Always one of my favorites—**Stas Venglevski** played several pieces on Thursday night. Also on Thursday **The Peter DiBono Trio** played a medley of My Fair Lady tunes and **Bruce Gassman** played some old Rock 'N Roll favorites.

I loved attending the conference and enjoyed hearing and seeing all of the fantastic accordion performers who attended.

*The Editor*

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### **July 25, Martynas Levickis**

The Lithuanians were out en masse to support their fellow countryman who just placed 2<sup>nd</sup> at the grueling ATG International Galla-Rini Classical Accordion Competition in Santa Clara.

The young accordionist had a fairly heavy Concert Tour throught the US leading up to his competition in the ATG festival and then culminating in the concert at the Oyster Point Yacht Club on Sunday, July 25th.

He played a collection of tunes, some very modern and expressive—Jurgen Ganzer's *Fantasy'84* and Aren Nordheim's *Flashing*, as well as Sergei Berinsky's *Partita Also sprach Zarathurstra*.

He also played pieces by J.S.Bach, Domenico Scarlatti and Astor Piazzolla. After much applause and a fabulous performance he played a French Musette tune and a few Lithuanian folk songs.

It was a pleasure to hear him perform such a variety of music and so superbly.



*Martynas Levickis*

### **Musical Meeting • August 15**

- **Paul Pasquali** of Accordions International in Salt Lake City, who also puts on the annual Las Vegas Accordion Convention. Paul is the man behind the Concerto Digital Accordion!
- Our SFAC Accordion Band will play
- OPEN MIKE—bring your accordion and sign up to play!

## July 18, Musical Afternoon

Attendees at the July meeting were treated to a diverse group of performers.

**Art Peterson** started us off with *Waltz Across Texas*, followed by *Carry me Back to the Lone Prarie*. He also played Don Gibson's *Blue, Blue Dog*, which was #1 on the Country charts in 1958, and a beautiful Finnish Polka procured from Clyde Forsman. He continued with several more songs and finished up with a Latin Number and *Ashokan Farewell*. For those who would like to see Art perform with his band, **The Polka Cowboys**—they play at the Champa Restaurant in El Sobrante (510-222-1819) on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of each month to the delight of local Western Swing dancers. [www.thepolkacowboys.com](http://www.thepolkacowboys.com)



*Art Peterson*

**Skyler Fell** brought members of the **Hobo Gobelins** to entertain us with an irresistible hybrid of old and new, familiar and strange songs. The Hobo Gobelins are a dark Carnival Gypsy Jug band, which consist of Skyler on Accordion, **Melody Guzman** on the gut bucket, **Stan Osborne** on the Tuba and **Sean See** on the Banjo. They started off with a couple of traditional pieces from the 20's, including *Brother Can you Spare a Dime* and *Sixteen Tons*. Gradually, we began a trip with the band down a road very seldom travelled at the SFAC, with high energy pieces that ranged from the original to the bizarre, as we heard *La Contessa*, composed for Burning Man and *The Pirate's Life for Me*, accompanied by truly frightening facial expressions, and a quirky piece called *I Want to Eat Your Brains*.

### **Please Remember!**

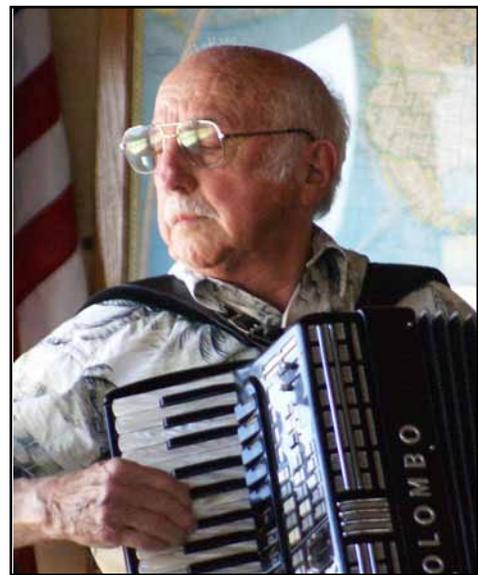
To leave our meeting hall at the Oyster Point Yacht Club clean!  
Please clean up food or drink spills and recycle all trash. *Thanks.*



*Melody Guzman, Skyler Fell and Sean See*

After a break, the program continued with our President, **Frank Montoro**, who played a blend of standards. Frank's philosophy about playing is that he doesn't make mistakes, he just occasionally plays "errant notes." Improv that doesn't go quite where he expects he calls "enhanced musicianship." Frank's style is unique, and he shared renditions of *Stardust*, *Charade*, and *Moon River* to name a few.

*cont. on pg. 5>*



*Frank Montoro*

### **Play at our Meeting!**

We are always grateful and accepting of anyone who wishes to play for us during the breaks or before the meeting starts. Share your talent and hone your performance skills! Contact Val Keiser to sign up.

## Performing Around the Bay

**Steve Balich** • North Bay  
(707) 874-3494

**Ron Borelli** • San Mateo  
(650) 574-5707  
[rborelli@aol.com](mailto:rborelli@aol.com)

**Renée de la Prade**  
Culann's Hounds, San Francisco  
[www.sfhounds.com](http://www.sfhounds.com)

**Richard Denier** • Carmel  
[rdenier@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rdenier@sbcglobal.net)

**Peter Di Bono** • San Francisco  
[www.peterdibono.com](http://www.peterdibono.com)

**Reno Di Bono** • South Bay  
[ourhike@aol.com](mailto:ourhike@aol.com)

**William De Michelis** • South Bay  
[wdd777@comcast.net](mailto:wdd777@comcast.net)

**Joe Domitrowich** • South Bay  
[www.capricious-accordion.com](http://www.capricious-accordion.com) or  
[www.alpinersusa.com](http://www.alpinersusa.com)

**Due Zighi Baci, (Sheri Mignano)**  
San Francisco  
[www.eurocafemusic.com](http://www.eurocafemusic.com) or  
[zighi@sonic.net](mailto:zighi@sonic.net)

**Skyler Fell, Hobo Gobbelins** •  
Oakland  
[www.myspace.com/hobogobbelins](http://www.myspace.com/hobogobbelins)

**Bruce Kirschner & The Klezmakers**  
[kirschner@aol.com](mailto:kirschner@aol.com)  
[www.klezmakers.com](http://www.klezmakers.com)

**Don Nurisso** • Pacifica  
[nurisso@mindspring.com](mailto:nurisso@mindspring.com)

**Mike Zampiceni** • South Bay  
[eclecticguy@comcast.net](mailto:eclecticguy@comcast.net)

## Accordion Band News

The band will play at our August meeting, and again at the annual Corte Madera **Piccolo Pavilion** music series on August 22. We will also play on our float this year at the Columbus Day parade (a.k.a. the Italian Heritage Day parade) in San Francisco, on Oct. 10. Band Practice is the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays, monthly @ 7 p.m. at Val Kieser's home in Oakland. Please CALL AHEAD in case there is a change. Everyone is welcome to join. For more information, contact Val (510) 531-4836 or [vtkacc@ifn.net](mailto:vtkacc@ifn.net)

## Member Profile (no. 2 in a series)

I was born in Moscow, Russia. I took private piano lessons since the age of 6 and then continued studying piano in the local music school, until I was about 12. Other interests took over and I quit piano, which I now regret. I picked up guitar when I was 13 and learned to play in different genres, mostly folk singing accompanied by the guitar along with other things here and there.

I went to math high school, then Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology. (This is a Russian equivalent of MIT) Then I came to the United States for graduate school in physics at the University of Minnesota. While I was in grad school, I gravitated towards Biophysics and then switched to Neuroscience after I earned my PhD. In 2001 I did research in Neuroscience for 4 years in Minneapolis and then 4 more years here in San Francisco at the UCSF. Since January 2010 I left Neuroscience and took a job with a software startup in San Mateo.

In spring of 2007 I got the urge to play an accordion. I bought an inexpensive instrument on Craigslist and played it on my own for about a month. Then my wife gave me a birthday present—a class with Peter Di Bono. After that I started taking Peter's classes every week for 2.5 years. I am very fortunate to have learned from Peter. He is an amazing teacher and musician.

In 2008 I became interested in tango and founded the tango band, "Tangonero." From the very beginning we were geared toward playing for dancers. We started by playing from lead sheets and then moved on to transcribe and arrange traditional songs for our quartet. At the moment, I'm learning the bandoneon. This is the standard instrument for Argentine tango. Astor Piazzolla played the Bandoneon as did generations of tango musicians before him.

The bandoneon was invented in Germany around the same time as the accordion. The Bandoneon is based on a concertina but has more buttons. My instrument has 38 buttons on the right hand side and 33 on the left hand side. There are no chord buttons so all chords need to be explicitly voiced. There are two main difficulties in learning bandoneon: (1) there is no logical order in how the buttons are arranged and (2) it is diatonic. Most buttons play different notes depending on whether you are pushing or pulling the bellows. Learning is slow but it is the right sound for the tango, and I am enjoying the challenge.

*Alex Roitman*



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*Michael Van Why*

Our final performance of the afternoon was *Euro Café Musique*, by two outstanding musicians who make up **Due Zighi Baci**, or “Two Gypsy Kisses.” Tenor **Michael Van**

**Why** was accompanied by accordionist **Sheri Mignano**, and they brought down the house. Michael introduced the pieces, and his whimsical remarks and additional percussion with castanets and kazoo added pizzazz to the performance. Michael’s wonderful voice and Sheri’s sensitive arrangements and virtuoso playing make for a fabulous act! Their repertoire included a wide variety of European pieces, including Rhumbas, Tangos, Paso Dobles, French Musette, several Piaf songs, and some Italian pieces. Sheri’s arrangement of *Lady of Spain* was played as the original Paso Doble it was written to be—and Michael’s treatment of the verse and lyrics was superb. Michael and Sheri are popular performers in the SF Bay Area, and are available for YOUR party! You can contact them at [www.eurocafemusic.com](http://www.eurocafemusic.com)

Sheri Mignano has accordion lead sheet arrangements of all songs performed Sunday, July 18. The *Lady of Spain* arrangement (with unique modulation) is her own and she will be selling it at the Cotati festival on Saturday morning after Due Zighi Baci performs: 10:20—11 a.m. She will also be selling Italian dance lead sheets and French bal musette lead sheets.

The Italian lead sheets, **3<sup>rd</sup>** edition (with chord symbols) contain 140+ dances in all genres (mazurkas, polkas, waltzes, tarantellas, tangos, rhumbas, and pasos dobles). The French lead sheet collection will be a **1<sup>st</sup>** edition, coming out soon and will have about 40-50 arrangements

plus historical information on technique and style, as well as a photographic gallery. These books are only available on a CD. Each song is saved as a PDF (portable document file), so the collection is easily printed electronically from your computer/printer or a copy house. You can learn the tunes by either studying the dance genre or organizing the book alphabetically, whichever, and however you prefer. More information on Sherri’s sheet music publishing company can be accessed at [www.zighibaci.com](http://www.zighibaci.com)

Sherri is available for many musical services including music transcriptions and arrangements. She likes to take old (& rare or hard to find) music and give it new life!

*Lynn Ewing*



*Sheri Mignano*

## Club Elections

MaryAnn Romanowski, Barbara Winter, Val Kieser, and Randi Hicks will make up our nominating committee for the 2010 Board Candidates. Anyone interested in running for the Board, or who has suggestions for Candidates PLEASE contact one of these members and let them know ASAP.

## Dates to Remember

### Absolute Accord

**August 8** Rengstorff House, Mountain View CA  
[www.r-house.org/calendar\\_of\\_events.html](http://www.r-house.org/calendar_of_events.html)

### 20th Annual Cotati Accordion Festival

**August 21-22** Cotati, CA  
[www.cotatifest.com](http://www.cotatifest.com) [info@cotatifest.com](mailto:info@cotatifest.com)

### 2010 Las Vegas International Accordion Convention • November 1-4

Gold Coast Hotel and Casino, Las Vegas NV  
Phone (800) 472-1695 or visit  
[www.accordionstars.com](http://www.accordionstars.com)

## Accordion Instruction

Gene Bartolomei (209) 886-5532  
 Bart Beninco (707) 769-8744  
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 Irving Cardoza (408) 264-9755  
 David Chelini (916) 428-8764  
 Peter Di Bono (415) 753-1502  
 Lynn Ewing (650) 365-1700  
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 Lou Jacklich (510) 317-9510  
 Marjorie Konrad (707) 539-5308  
 Marian Kelly (650) 854-1896  
 Vincent Rinaldi (415) 824-7609  
 Sharon Walters-Greyhosky (415) 621-8284  
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Members may place one small ad (business-card-size) for one month free of charge in a given year; after that the charge is \$6 per issue or \$60 per year. **Monthly ad prices for members:** quarter-page ad \$15.00; half-page ad \$25, and a full-page ad \$50. Discount available for ongoing ads. Ads placed by non-members will cost twice the above-quoted prices. A flyer (no larger than 5" x 8") advertising an event may be included in one issue for \$50 for members, \$65 for non-members.

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Kieser, 3437 Crane Way, Oakland, CA 94602.*

**Newsletter Deadline**

Submissions are welcome for consideration and inclusion in the Newsletter. The deadline for time critical information is the second Monday following the Monthly Musical Meeting. All other submissions will be considered as time and space permit. Please be mindful that copyrighted material cannot be reprinted without the author/publisher's permission.



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**Musical Meeting • August 15 @ 2 p.m.**

- Paul Pasquali • SFAC Accordion Band
- OPEN MIKE—bring your accordion and sign up to play!

*Join our club! Meet new friends, listen to Accordion music from various performers—relax and have fun!*

Oyster Point Yacht Club, 911 Marina Blvd, South San Francisco—**DIRECTIONS:**  
From 101 traveling either North or South, take the Oyster Point exit. Turn right onto Marina Blvd. (be careful not to turn right onto Gull Drive, just before Marina Blvd.) Continue past the gate house to the sign Oyster Point Yacht Club. There is plenty of parking and ramp access.  
Visit us online @ [www.sfaccordionclub.com](http://www.sfaccordionclub.com)

**Cotati Tickets**

Tickets to the Cotati Accordion Festival August 21-22 are available for advance purchase through the Club. Two-day tickets are \$25 and single-day tickets are \$15. If you purchase your tickets through us, part of the purchase price comes back to help support our Club. Contact Val Kieser at (510) 531-4836 or email [vtkacc@ifn.net](mailto:vtkacc@ifn.net)

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